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A Practical Study of SONG OF SOLOMON: Make Full My Joy

“The Biblical Marriage Manual”

STUDY NUMBER ONE – THE DEFINITION OF LOVE

– RUTH 1:14-18; 2:8-16; 3:1-11 & 4:6-11

NOTES

The Definition of Love: The Book of Ruth

I. Responsibility (Ruth 1:14-18)

v. 14 And they lifted up their voices and they wept again and Orpah, kissed her mother-in-law but Ruth clung to her.

v. 15 “Behold, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her gods. Return after your sister-in-law.”

v. 16 But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you. For wither you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people and your God my God.

v. 17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the Lord do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you from me.”

v. 18 When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

II. Respect (Ruth 2:8-16)

v. 8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Listen carefully my daughter, do not go to glean in another field, furthermore do not go from this one, but stay here with my maids,

v. 9 let your eyes be on the field which they reap and go after them, indeed I have commanded the servants not to touch you. When you are thirsty go to the water jars and drink from what the servants draw.

v. 10 Then she fell on her face bowing to the ground and said to him, “Why have I found favor in your sight that you should take notice of me since I am a foreigner?”

v. 11 And Boaz answered and said to her, “All that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of her husband and your husband, has been fully reported to me and how you left your father and your mother in the land of your birth and came to a people that you did not previously know,

v. 12 may the Lord reward your work and your wages be full from the Lord the God of Israel under whose wings you have come to seek refuge.”

v. 13 Then she said, “I have found favor in your sight my lord, for you have comforted me and indeed have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maid servants.”

v. 14 And at meal time Boaz said to her, “Come here that you may eat of the bread and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar so she sat beside the reapers and he served her roasted grain and she ate and was satisfied and had some left.

v. 15 When she rose to glean, Boaz commanded his servants saying, “Let her glean everywhere. Even among the sheaves and do not insult her.

v. 16 And also you shall purposefully pull out for her some grain from the bundles and leave them that she may glean and do not rebuke her.”

III. Relationship (Ruth 3:1-11)

v. 1 Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, shall I not seek security for you? That it may be well with you?”

v. 2 Now is not Boaz our kinsman of whose maid you were? Behold he winnows barley at the threshing floor tonight.

v. 3 Wash yourself therefore and anoint yourself and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.

v. 4 And it shall be when he lies down that you shall notice the place where he lies and you shall go and uncover his feet and lie down, then he will tell you what you shall do.

v. 5 And she said to her all that you say, I will do.”

v. 6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law commanded her.

v. 7 When Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. She came secretly and uncovered his feet and lay down.

v. 8 And it happened in the middle of the night that the man was startled and bent forward, behold a woman was lying at his feet.

v. 9 And he said, “Who are you?” and she answered, “I am Ruth your maid, so spread your covering over your maid for you are a close relative.”

v. 10 Then he said, “May you be blessed of the Lord my daughter. You have shown your last kindness to be better than the first. By not going after young men whether poor or rich.

v. 11 Now my daughter do not fear. I will give you whatever you ask. For all my people in the city know that you are a woman of excellence.”

NOTES

IV. Redeemer (Ruth 4:6-11)

v. 6 And their closest relative aid, "I can not redeem it for myself lest I jeopardize my own inheritance. Redeem it for yourself, you may have my right of redemption for I can not redeem it.

v. 7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning the redemption and exchange of land to confirm any matter. A man removed his sandal and gave it another. And this was the manner of attestation in Israel.

v. 8 So the closest relative said to Boaz, buy it for yourself so he removed his sandal.

v. 9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses today that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon.

v. 10 Moreover I have acquired Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, to be my wife in order to raise u the name of the dead on his inheritance so that the name of the dead may not be cut off from his brothers or from the court of his birth place, you are witnesses today."

v. 11 And all the people who were in the court and the elder said, "We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah both of whom built the house of Israel and may you achieve wealth in Ephratah and become famous in Bethlehem

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER TWO – MAKE FULL MY JOY – PHILIPPIANS 2:1-5

NOTES

2:v. 1 If there is therefore any encouragement in Christ, if there is any persuasion of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit; if there is any tenderheartedness and compassion,
v. 2 make full my joy in order that you may be of the same mind, having the same love of one mind thinking the one thing.
v. 3 Doing nothing according to self-seeking nor according to empty glorying, but in lowliness of mind, considering one another as excelling themselves.
v. 4 Not considering each one his own things, but also each one the things of others.
v. 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER THREE – INTRODUCTION TO THE SONG OF SOLOMON

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER FOUR – “COURTSHIP” – SONG OF SOLOMON 1:1-2:17**NOTES**

v. 1 The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

A. SHULAMITH'S FIRST DAYS IN THE PALACE (1:2-11)

The King's fiancée, Shulamith, in soliloquy

v. 2 How I wish he would shower me with kisses for his exquisite kisses are more desirable than the finest wine.

v. 3 The gentle fragrance of your cologne brings the enchantment of springtime. Yes, it is the rich fragrance of your heart that awakens my love and respect. Yes, it is your character that brings you admiration from every girl of the court.

v. 4 How I long for you to come take me with you to run and laugh through the countryside of this kingdom. (You see, the King has brought me to the kingdom's palace.)

Women of the court to the King

We will always be very thankful and happy because of you, O King. For we love to speak of the inspiring beauty of your love.

Shulamith in soliloquy

They rightly love a person like you, my King.

Shulamith to women of the court

v. 5 I realize that I do not display the fair and delicate skin of one raised in the comfort of a palace. I am darkened from the sun—indeed, as dark as the tents of the humble desert nomads I used to work beside. But now I might say that I am also as dark as the luxurious drapery of the King's palace.

v. 6 Nevertheless, what loveliness I do have is not so weak that the gaze of the sun should make it bow its head in shame. And if the glare of the sun could not shame me, please know that neither will the glare of your contempt. I could not help it that my stepbrothers were angry with me and demanded that I work in the vineyard they had leased from the King. It was impossible for me to care for it and for the vineyard of my own appearance.

Shulamith to King

v. 7 Please tell me, you whom I love so deeply, where you take your royal flock for its afternoon rest. I don't want to search randomly for you, wandering about like a woman of the streets.

Women of the court to Shulamith

Women of the court to Shulamith

v. 8 If you do not know, O fairest among women, why not simply go ahead and follow the trail of the flocks, and then pasture your flock beside the shepherds' huts?

King to Shulamith

v. 9 Your presence captivates attention as thoroughly as a single mare among a hundred stallions.

v.10 And how perfectly your lovely jewelry and necklace adorn your lovely face.

Women of the court to Shulamith

v.11 We shall make even more elegant necklaces of gold and silver to adorn her face.

B. IN A PALACE ROOM (1:12-14)

Shulamith in soliloquy

v.12 While my King was dining at his table, my perfume refreshed me with its soothing fragrance.

v.13 For my King is the fragrance and my thoughts of him are like a sachet of perfume hung around my neck, over my heart, continually refreshing me.

v.14 How dear he is to me, as dear as the delicate henna blossoms in the oasis of En-Gedi. What joy I have found in that oasis!

C. IN THE COUNTRYSIDE (1:15-2:7)

King to Shulamith

v.15 You are so beautiful, my love. You are so beautiful. Your soft eyes are as gentle as doves.

Shulamith to King

v.16 And you are handsome, my love, and so enjoyable. It's so wonderful to walk through our home of nature together. Here the cool grass is a soft couch to lie upon, to catch our breath

v.17 and to gaze at the beams and rafters of our house—the towering cedars and cypresses all around.

2:v.1 Lying here I feel like a rose from the valley of Sharon, the loveliest flower in the valley.

King to Shulamith

v. 2 Only the loveliest flower in the valley? No, my love. To me you are like a flower among thorns compared with any other woman in the world.

Shulamith to King

v. 3 And you, my precious King, are like a fruitful apple tree among the barren trees of the forest compared with all the men in the world.

Shulamith in soliloquy

No longer do I labor in the heat of the sun. I find cool rest in the shade of this apple tree. Nourishment from its magical fruit brings me the radiant health only love brings. And he loves me so much.

v. 4 Even when he brings me to the great royal banquets attended by the most influential people in this kingdom and beyond, he is never so concerned for them that his love and his care for me is not plain as a royal banner lifted high above my head.

v. 5 How dear he is to me! My delightful peace in his love makes me so weak from joy that I must rest in his arms for strength. Yet such loving comfort makes me more joyful and weaker still.

v. 6 How I wish he could lay me down beside him and embrace me!

v. 7 But how important it is I promise, with the gentle gazelles and deer of the countryside as my witnesses, not to attempt to awaken love until love is pleased to awaken itself.

D. ON THE WAY TO THE COUNTRYSIDE (2:8-17)

Shulamith in soliloquy

v. 8 I hear my beloved. Look! He is coming to visit. And he is as dashing as a young stag leaping upon the mountains, springing upon the hills.

v. 9 There he is, standing at the door, trying to peer through the window and peep through the lattice.

v.10 At last he speaks.

NOTES

King to Shulamith

Come, my darling, my fair one, come with me.

v.11 For look, the winter has passed. The rain is over and gone.

v.12 The blossoms have appeared in the land. The time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove has been heard in the land.

v.13 The fig tree has ripened its figs, and the vines in blossom have given forth fragrance. Let us go, my darling, my lovely one; come along with me.

v.14 O my precious, gentle dove. You have been like a dove in the clefts of the mountain rocks, in the hidden places along the mountain trails. Now come out from the hidden place and let me see you. Let me hear the coo of your voice. For your voice is sweet and you are as gracefully beautiful as a dove in flight silhouetted against a soft blue sky. My love, what we have together is a valuable treasure; it is like a garden of the loveliest flowers in the world.

v.15 Let us promise each other to catch any foxes that could spoil our garden when now at long last it blossoms for us.

Shulamith in soliloquy

v.16 My beloved belongs to me and I belong to him—this tender King who grazes his flock among the lilies.

Shulamith to the King

v.17 How I long for the time when all through the night, until the day takes its first breath and the morning shadows flee from the sun, that you, my beloved King, might be a gazelle upon the hills of my breasts.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

Lesson #1: True love heightens the self-image.

Lesson #2: Love must blossom of itself. The four dimensions: (1) spiritual; (2) mental; (3) emotional; and (4) physical.

Lesson #3: Both partners must watch for little foxes that spoil the relationship.

Lesson #4: It is what a man is more than what a man does that makes him a lover.

Lesson #5: A real lover is a sensitive servant.

Lesson #6: The physical was designed by God to be pure and beautiful.

Lesson #7: You dissipate your potential when you surrender your principles.

Lesson #8: The woman was designed by God to respond to what she receives.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER FIVE – “COMMITMENT” – SONG OF SOLOMON 3:1-5:1

NOTES

A. SHULAMITH WAITS FOR HER FIANCÉ (3:1-5)

Shulamith in soliloquy

3:v.1 How I miss the one I love so deeply. I could not wait to see him.

v. 2 I thought to myself, “I must get up and find him. I will get up now and look around the streets and squares of the city for him. Surely I’ll be able to find this one I love so much.” But I could not find him.

v. 3 When the night watchmen of the city found me, I immediately asked them if they had seen this one I loved so deeply.

v. 4 But they had not. Yet no sooner did I pass from them than I found my beloved. I held on and on and would not let him go until I could bring him to my home. I still held on until my fearful anxieties left me and I felt peaceful once again. How hard it is to be patient!

v. 5 You women of the court, we must promise ourselves, by the gazelles and deer of the field, not to awaken love until love is pleased to awaken itself.

B. THE WEDDING DAY (3:6-11)

Poet

v. 6 What can this be coming from the outskirts of the city like columns of smoke, perfumed clouds of myrrh and frankincense, clouds of the scented powders of the merchant?

v. 7 Look! It is the royal procession with Solomon carried upon his lavish couch by his strongest servants. And take a look at all those soldiers around it! That is the imperial guard, the sixty mightiest warriors in the entire kingdom.

v. 8 Each one is an expert with his weapon and valiant in battle. Yet now each one has a sword at his side only for the protection of the king and his bride.

v. 9 Look at the luxurious couch Solomon is carried on. He has had it made especially for this day. He made its frame from the best timber of Lebanon.

v. 10 Its posts are made of silver, its back of gold, and its seat of royal purple cloth. And do you see its delicate craftsmanship! It reflects the skill of the women of the court who gave their best work out of love for the king and his bride.

v. 11 Let us all go out and look upon King Solomon wearing his elegant wedding crown. Let us go out and see him on the most joyful day of his life.

C. THE WEDDING NIGHT (4:1-5:1)

4:v.1 You are so beautiful, my love, you are so beautiful. Your soft eyes are as gentle as doves from behind your wedding veil. Your hair is as captivating as the flowing movement of a flock descending a mountain at sunset.

v. 2 Your full and lovely smile is as cheerful and sparkling as pairs of young lambs scurrying up from a washing.

v. 3 And only a thread of scarlet could have outlined your lips so perfectly. Your cheeks flush with the redness of the pomegranate's hue.

v. 4 Yet you walk with dignity and stand with the strength of a fortress. Your necklace sparkles like the shields upon the fortress tower.

v. 5 But your breasts are as soft and gentle as fawns grazing among lilies.

v. 6 And now at last, all through the night—until the day takes its first breath and the morning shadows flee from the sun—I will be a gazelle upon the hills of your perfumed breasts.

v. 7 You are completely and perfectly beautiful, my love, and flawless in every way.

v. 8 Now bring your thoughts completely to me, my love. Leave your fears in the far away mountains and rest in the security of my arms.

v. 9 You excite me, my darling bride; you excite me with but a glance of your eyes, with but a strand of your necklace.

v.10 How wonderful are your caresses, my beloved bride. Your love is more sweetly intoxicating than the finest wine. And the fragrance of your perfume is better than the finest spices.

v.11 The richness of honey and milk is under your tongue, my love. And the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of the forests of Lebanon.

v.12 You are a beautiful garden fashioned only for me, my darling bride. Yes, like a garden kept only for me. Or like a fresh fountain sealed just for me.

v.13 Your garden is overflowing with beautiful and delicate flowers of every scent and color. It is a paradise of pomegranates with luscious fruit, with henna blossoms and nard,

v.14 nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon with trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes with all the choicest of spices.

v.15 And you are pure as fresh water, yet more than a mere fountain. You are a spring for many gardens—a well of life-giving water. No, even more, you are like the fresh streams flowing from Lebanon which give life to the entire countryside.

Shulamith to King

v.16 Awake, O north wind, and come, wind of the south. Let your breezes blow upon my garden and carry its fragrant spices to my beloved. May he follow the enchanting spices to my garden and come in to enjoy its luscious fruit.

King to Shulamith

5:v.1 I have rejoiced in the richness of your garden, my darling bride. I have been intoxicated by the fragrance of your myrrh and perfume. I have tasted the sweetness of your love like honey. I have enjoyed the sweetness of your love like an exquisite wine and the refreshment of your love like the coolness of milk.

Poet to couple

Rejoice in your lovemaking as you would rejoice at a great feast, O lovers. Eat and drink from this feast to the fullest. Drink, drink and be drunk with one another's love.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

Lesson #1: I am impressed with the sensitivity of Solomon to Shulamith's needs.

Lesson #2: Sex involves more than just the physical.

Lesson #3: The joy of the wedding night is seen by the purity preceding the occasion.

Lesson #4: Lovemaking involves free communication.

Lesson #5: Lovemaking is a process.

Lesson #6: The divine blessing is pronounced upon the relationship.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER SIX – “CHALLENGE” – SONG OF SOLOMON 5:2-6:13**NOTES****A. A PROBLEM ARISES (5:2-6:3)**

Shulamith in soliloquy

v. 2 I was half asleep when I heard the sound of my beloved husband knocking gently upon the door of our palace chamber. He whispered softly, “I’m back from the countryside, my love, my darling, my perfect wife.”

v. 3 My only answer was a mumbled, “I’ve already gone to sleep, my dear.” After all, I have already prepared for bed. I had washed my face and put on my old nightgown.

v. 4 But then my beloved gently opened the door and I realized I really wanted to see him.

v. 5 I had hesitated too long though. By the time I arose to open the door, he had already walked away, leaving only a gift of my favorite perfume as a reminder of his love for me.

v. 6 Deep within my heart I was reawakened to my love for him. It was just that the fatigue and distractions of the day had brought my hesitating response. I decided to try to find him. I threw on my clothes, went outside the palace and began to call out to him.

v. 7 But things went from bad to worse. The night watchmen of the city mistook me for a secretive criminal sneaking about in the night. They arrested me in their customarily rough style, then jerking my shawl from my head they saw the face of their newly found suspect—a “great” police force we have!

v. 8 O, you women of the court, if you see my beloved King, please tell him that I deeply love him, that I am lovesick for him.

Women of the court to Shulamith

v. 9 What makes your husband better than any other, O fairest of women? What makes him so great that you request this so fervently of us?

Shulamith to women of the court

v.10 My beloved husband is strikingly handsome, the first to be noticed among ten thousand men.

v.11 When I look at him, I see a face with a tan more richly golden than gold itself. His hair is as black as a raven’s feathers and as lovely as palm leaves atop the stately palm tree.

v.12 When I look into his eyes, they are as gentle as doves peacefully resting by streams of water. They are as pure and clear as health can make them.

v.13 When he places his cheek next to mine, it is as fragrant as a garden of perfumed flowers. His soft lips are as sweet and scented as lilies dripping with nectar.

v.14 And how tender are his fingers like golden velvet when he touches me! He is a picture of strength and vitality. His stomach is as firm as a plate of ivory rippling with sapphires.

v.15 And his legs are as strong and elegant as alabaster pillars set upon pedestals of fine gold. His appearance is like majestic Mt. Lebanon, prominent with its towering cedars.

v.16 But beyond all this, the words of his heart are full of charm and delight. He is completely wonderful in every way. This is the one I love so deeply, and this is the one who is my closest friend, O women of the palace court.

Women of the court to Shulamith

6:v.1 Where has your beloved gone, then, O fairest among women? Where has he gone? We will help you find him.

Shulamith to women of the court

v. 2 I know him well enough to know where he has gone. He likes to contemplate as he walks through the garden and cares for his special little flock among the lilies.

v. 3 I know him, for I belong to him and he belongs to me—this gentle shepherd who pastures his flock among the lilies.

B. THE PROBLEM RESOLVED (6:4-13)

King to Shulamith

v. 4 My darling, did you know that you are as lovely as the city of Tirzah glittering on the horizon of night? No, more than that, you are as lovely as the fair city of Jerusalem. Your beauty is as breathtaking as scores of marching warriors.

v. 5 (No, do not look at me like that now, my love; I have more to tell you.) Do you remember what I said on our wedding night? It is still just as true. Your hair is as captivating as the flowing movement of a flock descending a mountain at sunset.

v. 6 Your lovely smile is as cheerful and sparkling as pairs of young lambs scurrying up from a washing.

v. 7 And your cheeks still flush with the redness of the pomegranate's hue.

King in soliloquy

v. 8 The palace is full of its aristocratic ladies and dazzling mistresses belonging to the noblemen of the court.

NOTES

v. 9 But my lovely wife, my dove, my flawless one, is unique among them all. And these ladies and mistresses realize it too. They too must praise her. As we approached them in my chariot, they eventually perceived that we were together again.

Women of the court to one another

v.10 Who is that on the horizon like the dawn, now fair as the moon but now plain and bright as the sun and as majestic as scores of marching warriors?

Shulamith in the chariot in soliloquy

v.11 I went down to the garden where I knew my King would be. I wanted to see if the fresh flowers and fruits of spring had come. I wanted to see if our reunion might bring a new season of spring love for my husband and me.

v.12 Before I knew what happened, we were together again and riding past the palace court in his chariot.

v.13 I can still hear them calling out, "Return, return O Shulamith; return that we may gaze at the beloved wife of the King."

King to Shulamith

How they love to look upon the incomparable grace and beauty of a queen.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

Lesson #1: There are going to be times of adjustment in any marriage relationship.

Lesson #2: Hurt pride, bitterness, resentment, unwillingness to forgive and forget can spoil the deepening of the marriage relationship.

Lesson #3: Solomon and Shulamith show you how to overcome these adjustments with real victory.

Lesson #4: Forgiveness must often be granted freely and received graciously.

Lesson #5: Change produces closeness.

Lesson #6: Love is sensitive to needs in the midst of conflict.

Lesson #7: Recalling the wedding night is a smart thing to do in a conflict.

Lesson #8: It is much better to respond to conflict than to react to it.

Lesson #9: Conflict always presents two alternatives: 1) a chasm or 2) closeness.

Lesson #10: The closer your expectations are to reality, the happier you're going to be.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER SEVEN – “COMMUNION” – SONG OF SOLOMON 7:1-8:14

NOTES

A. IN THE ROYAL BEDROOM (7:1-10)

7:v.1 How delicate are your feet in sandals, my royal prince's daughter! The curves of your hips are as smooth and graceful as the curves of elegant jewelry, perfectly fashioned by the skillful hands of a master artist.

v. 2 As delectable as a feast of wine and bread is your stomach—your navel is like the goblet of wine, and your stomach is the soft warm bread.

v. 3 Your breasts are as soft and gentle as fawns grazing among lilies, twins of a gazelle,

v. 4 and your neck is smooth as ivory to the touch. Your eyes are as peaceful as the pools of water in the valley of Heshbon, near the gate of the populous city.

v. 5 Yet how strong you walk in wisdom and discretion. You are, indeed, as majestically beautiful as Mt. Carmel. Your long, flowing hair is as cool and soft as silken threads draped round my neck, yet strong enough to bind me as your captive forever.

v. 6 How lovely and delightful you are, my dear, and how especially delightful is your love!

v. 7 You are as graceful and splendid as a palm tree silhouetted against the sky. Yes, a palm tree—and your breasts are its luscious fruit.

v. 8 I think I shall climb my precious palm tree and take its tender fruit gently into my hand. O my precious one, let your breasts be like the tender fruit to my taste, and now let me kiss you and breathe your fragrant breath.

v. 9 Let me kiss you and taste a sweetness better than wine.

Shulamith to King

And savor every drop, my lover, and let its sweetness linger long upon your lips, and let every drop of this wine bring a peaceful sleep.

Shulamith in soliloquy

v.10 I belong to my beloved husband and he loves me from the depths of his soul.

B. IN THE COUNTRYSIDE (7:11-8:14)

Shulamith to King

v.11 Spring's magic flowers have perfumed the pastel countryside and enchanted the hearts of all lovers.

v.12 Come, my precious lover; every delicious fruit of spring is ours for the taking. Let us return to our springtime cottage of towering cedars and cypresses where the plush green grass is its endless carpet and the orchards are its shelves for every luscious fruit.

v.13 I have prepared a basketful for you, my love, to give you in a sumptuous banquet of love beneath the sky,

8:v.1 I wish we could pretend you were my brother, my real little brother. I could take you outside to play, and playfully kiss you whenever I wished.

v. 2 But then I could also take your hand and bring you inside and you could teach me and share with me your deep understanding of life.

v. 3 Then how I wish you would lay me down beside you and love me.

Shulamith to women of the court

v. 4 I encourage you not to try to awaken love until love is pleased to awaken itself. How wonderful it is when it blossoms in the proper season.

v. 5 Do you remember where our love began? Under the legendary sweetheart tree, of course, where every love begins and grows and then brings forth a newborn child, yet not without the pain of birth. Neither did our love begin without the pain, the fruitful pain of birth.

v. 6 O, My darling lover, make me your most precious possession held securely in your arms, held close to your heart. True love is as strong and irreversible as the onward march of death. True love never ceases to care, and it would no more give up the beloved than the grave would give up the dead.

v. 7 The fires of true love can never be quenched because the source of its flame is God Himself. Even were a river of rushing water to pass over it, the flame would yet shine forth. Of all the gifts in the world, this priceless love is the most precious and possessed only by those to whom it is freely given. For no man could purchase it with money, even the richest man in the world.

King to Shulamith

v. 8 Do you remember how it was given to us?

Shulamith to King

My love, I truly believe I was being prepared for it long before I even dreamed of romance. I remember hearing my brothers talking one evening. It was shortly after my father died, and they were concerned to raise me properly, to prepare me for the distant day of marriage. They were like a roomful of fathers debating about what to do with their only daughter.

v. 9 They finally resolved simply to punish and restrict me if I were promiscuous but to reward and encourage me if I were chaste.

v.10 How thankful I am that I made it easy for them. I could see even when I was very young that I wanted to keep myself for the one dearest man in my life.

v.11 And then you came. And everything I ever wanted I found in you. There I was, working daily in the vineyard my brothers had leased from you. And you “happened” to pass by and see me. That’s how our love began. I remember when I worked in that vineyard that a thousand dollars went to you and two hundred dollars for the ones taking care of its fruit for you.

v.12 Now I am your vineyard, my lover, and I gladly give the entire thousand dollars of my worth to you; I give myself completely, withholding nothing of my trust, my thoughts, my care, my love. But my dear King, let us not forget that two hundred dollars belongs to the ones who took care of the fruit of my vineyard for you. How thankful we must be to my family who helped prepare me for you.

King to Shulamith

v.13 My darling, whose home is the fragrant garden, everyone listens for the sound of your voice, but let me alone hear it now.

Shulamith to King

v.14 Hurry, then, my beloved. And again be like a gazelle or young stag on the hills of my perfumed breasts.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

Lesson #1: There is increased freedom because of the self-image and security.

Lesson #2: There’s growth in their commitment.

Lesson #3: Love is painful, possessive, persevering and priceless.

Lesson #4: It’s good to go back and relive past meaningful experiences.

Lesson #5: The best lover is the best servant.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER EIGHT – “UNCONDITIONAL LOVE” –
1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 & LUKE 10:25-37

NOTES

A. Defined - (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

v. 4 Love is patient about everything, and is kind; love is not filled with jealousy; love does not brag, is not conceited.

v. 5 Love does not behave disgracefully, does not strive for one's own advantage, does not become irritated, does not take evil into account;

v. 6 love does not rejoice over injustice, but rejoices in the truth;

v. 7 love keeps confidential all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

B. Demonstrated - (Luke 10:25-37)

v.25 And behold, a certain legal expert stood up, putting Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, by doing what shall I inherit eternal life?"

v.26 And He said to him: "What is written in the Law? How are you reading?"

v.27 And answering he said: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

v.28 And He said to him: "You answered correctly. Be doing this and you shall live."

v.29 But he, desiring to show himself righteous, said to Jesus: "And who is my neighbor?"

v.30 Jesus replied and said: "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell into the hands of robbers who stripped him and beat him, departed, leaving him half dead.

v.31 Now, by coincidence, a certain priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.

v.32 So, likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side.

v.33 But a certain Samaritan who was on a journey came upon him; and when he saw him, he had compassion.

v.34 And having come to him, he bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine, then having set him upon his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him.

v.35 And on the next day, having taken out two denarii he gave them to the innkeeper and said: 'Take care of him; and whatever you spend in addition, when I return, I will repay you.'

NOTES

v.36 Which of these three seems to you to have been a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?"

v.37 And he said: "The one who showed mercy upon him." Then Jesus said to him: "Go and do likewise."

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER NINE – “FREE FORGIVENESS” – MATTHEW 18:21-35

NOTES

1. The Principle of Forgiveness – verses 21-22

v.21 Then Peter having come, said to him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I shall forgive him? As many as seven times?"

v.22 Jesus is saying to him, "I am not saying to you as many as seven times but as many as seventy times seven.

2. The Picture of Forgiveness – verses 23-34

v.23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man, a king who desired to settle accounts with his servants.

v.24 And when he began to compute the accounts, one was brought to him who owed him twelve million dollars.

v.25 And not having that by which to pay the debt, his master ordered him to be sold, and his wife and his children and all that he had, and payment to be made.

v.26 Then the servant fell on his knees and was touching the ground with his forehead before him, saying, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay back all to you.'

v.27 And being moved with compassion, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.

NOTES

v.28 But that servant, having gone out, found one of his fellow servants who owed him twenty dollars; and he seized him and tried to strangle him saying, 'Settle up if you are owing anything.'

v.29 Then his fellow servant fell down, begging him, saying, 'Be patient with me and I will pay you.'

v.30 However he was not willing, but having gone off, he threw him into prison until he should pay back that which he was owing.

v.31 When his fellow servants saw the things which had taken place, they were greatly distressed and they went and made clear to their master all the things which took place.

v.32 Then his master, having called him, is saying to him, 'You wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.'

v.33 And ought not you to have shown mercy to your fellow servant, just as I also was merciful to you?'

v.34 And having been aroused to anger, his master handed him over to the jailers until he should pay all that he owed him.

3. The Practice of Forgiveness – verse 35

v.35 So also my Father in heaven will do to you, if you do not forgive each one his brother from your hearts."

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER TEN – “LEARNING TO SERVE & GIVE” – MARK 10:35-45

NOTES

1. The Request—verses 35-37

v.35 And James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, are coming up to Him, saying to Him, “Teacher, we are desiring that whatever we are asking of you, you will do for us.”

v.36 And He said to them, “What are you desiring me to do for you?”

v.37 And they said to Him, “Grant that we may sit in your glory, one on your right and one on your left.”

2. The Response—verses 38-40

v.38 But Jesus said to them, “You are not knowing what you are asking for yourselves. Are you able to be drinking the cup which I am drinking? Or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?”

v.39 And they said to Him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup which I am drinking, you will drink; and the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized.

v.40 But the sitting on my right or on my left, this is not mine to give; but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

3. The Reaction—verse 41

v.41 And hearing this, the ten began to feel indignant toward James and John.

4. The Revelation—verses 42-45

v.42 And having called them to himself, Jesus is saying to them, “You are knowing that those who are recognized as ruling over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men are exercising authority over them.

v.43 But it is not so among you, but whoever is desiring to become great among you, He shall be your servant.

v.44 And whoever is desiring to be first among you, he shall be slave of all.

v.45 For even the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.”

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER ELEVEN – “FAITHFUL TO FINISH” – HEBREWS 12:1-17**NOTES**

1. The Call to Endurance—verses 1-2

v. 1 For that very reason then, we also having so great a cloud of those who are bearing testimony surrounding us, having laid aside every impediment and the easily ensnaring sin, with patience let us keep on running the race that is lying before us,

v. 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the source and goal of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

1. Developing Endurance—verses 3-17

v. 3 For let us consider the one who has endured hostility by sinners toward himself, in order that you may not become weary, fainting in your souls (lose heart).

v. 4 You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your struggle against sin.

v. 5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which is speaking to you as sons, “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor do not lose heart when you are reprov'd by Him;

v. 6 “For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He is whipping every son whom He is receiving favorably.”

v. 7 It is for discipline that you are enduring; God is dealing with you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

v. 8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have been made partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not real sons.

v. 9 Furthermore, we used to have fathers of our flesh to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather put ourselves in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?”

v.10 For they used to discipline for a short time as seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our profit, that we may share his holiness.

v.11 In fact all discipline for the time being does not seem to be joyful but sorrowful, yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

v.12 Therefore, strengthen the drooping hands and the weakened knees,

v.13 and be making straight paths for your feet, in order that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

NOTES

v.14 Be eagerly seeking after peace with all, and holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord.

v.15 Seeing to it that no one is being excluded from the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up be troubling you, and through this many be defiled;

v.16 that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.

v.17 For you know that even afterwards, when desiring to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for repentance, even though he sought for it with tears.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

STUDY NUMBER TWELVE – “OUR TRIUMPHANT LORD” – JOHN 5:19-29**NOTES**

1. God's Son—verses 19-23

v.19 Jesus, therefore, answered and was saying to them: “Truly, truly I am saying to you, the Son is not able to be doing anything by himself, except that which He is seeing the Father doing; for whatever things that One is doing, these things also the Son in like manner is doing.

v.20 For the Father is loving the Son, and He is showing Him all things that He himself is doing; and greater works than these will He show Him, in order that you may be marvelling.

v.21 For just as the Father is raising the dead and giving them life, even so the Son also is giving life to whom He wishes.

v.22 For not even the Father is judging anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,

v.23 in order that all may be honoring the Son, even as they are honoring the Father. He who is not honoring the Son is not honoring the Father who sent Him.

NOTES

2. Great Savior—verse 24

v.24 Truly, truly I am saying to you, He who is hearing my word and is believing the One who sent me is having eternal life; and he is not coming into judgment, but has moved out of death into life.

3. Giver of Life—verses 25-29

v.25 Truly, truly I am saying to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those having heard, shall live.

v.26 For just as the Father is having life in himself, so also He gave to the Son to be having life in himself.

v.27 And He gave him authority to be executing judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

v.28 Stop marvelling at this, because an hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs shall hear his voice,

v.29 and shall come forth; those who did the good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced the evil things, to a resurrection of judgment.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
