

Song of Songs Chapter 1:9 – Chapter 2; John Karmelich

1. When it comes to marital advice there are endless books and endless proverbs on this topic.
 - a) Some are better than others.
 - b) Some have good biblical principles behind them.
 - c) Some come from a successful marriage and the writer figures, “Well, everyone else out there needs to be just like us”.
 - d) The passage we have today, I kept reading over and over again. I kept thinking, “This is good. This is how a marriage should be”.
 - i) I don’t claim this chapter has all the answers on marriage.
 - ii) But I do like the principals taught here, and I would like to apply them more to my own life as well as to pass them on to others.
 - iii) The one principal I see more than any other is, “The secret to a good marriage is to try to outdo each other”.
 - iv) God’s love in the greatest sense is the giving of oneself for another. That meaning of the word “love” is used both in the Hebrew and the Greek. There are other words for erotic love and brotherly love in both languages, but the word meaning to “give of oneself completely” is thought of as the highest form of that love.
 - v) I see that action all over this passage of Scriptures.
 - a) Yes, there are erotic overtones, but I see that as secondary in importance.
 - b) Eroticism in marriage is an expression of God’s love for us to be used in marriage.
 - (1) It is the ultimate physical expression of a gift God has given us.
2. Song of Songs can be read on a number of levels, as I discussed in the last lesson.
 - a) The first level is to see the literal expression of love between a bride and a groom.
 - b) The underlying tone is to see the expression of love between God and us.
 - c) A healthy relationship between a man and a woman grows in stages.
 - i) The first is conversational, then moving on to hand holding, then kissing, and then post-wedding night, it becomes sexual.
 - a) As the relationship grows through the years, it becomes more and more intimate as a couple stay together through good and bad times of life. They share joyous times together and support each other through difficult situations. The Godly concept of “completely giving oneself” to one’s partner is a constant maturing in relationship.
 - b) I have a friend who gave a great quote on his 50th wedding anniversary. He said, “Well, the first 25 years were the hardest. It was downhill after that!” As cute as that is, one can see the principal of constantly working at a marriage to make it a better relationship.
 - ii) That same principal also applies in our relationship with God.
 - a) Jesus calls God the Father “Abba”, which can correctly be translated “daddy”. God wants an intimate relationship with us.
 - b) God also designed marriage to be a model of that relationship.
 - c) Like a relationship with a spouse, our relationship with God starts in the “handholding” relationship.
 - d) Ever seen a young person who has first committed their lives to Christ?
 - (1) They are usually excited and filled with joy.
 - (2) I remember when I went through that phase for a while.
 - (3) They don’t know all the details of Christianity, they are just happy to be one. We often nickname people like that “baby Christians”.

- (4) Personally, I see that as the “honeymoon” relationship with God. They are just so thankful for what Jesus did for them. They have that sense of peace for the first time in their lives and they don’t care about the details.
 - (5) Finally, the maturity process begins, just like that of a marriage. They share the joy with God through gratitude for all that is going well in their lives. They cry out to God for support through all of the trials and difficult times.
 - (6) Like a healthy marriage, it struggles at time, but the commitment stands no matter how severe the trial.
- iii) With all that thought in mind, it is a good time to pick up where we last left off at Verse 9 of Chapter 1.
- a) The dialogue is between the groom (Solomon) and the bride, called the “Shulamite” in many of your study bibles.
3. Chapter 1, Verse 9: I liken you, my darling, to a mare harnessed to one of the chariots of Pharaoh.
- a) Verse 9 begins with Solomon comparing his bride to a prized horse.
 - i) In our culture, having your husband compare you to his prize horse doesn’t exactly sound like something you want to hear. ☺
 - ii) “Oh darling, you are like a beautiful horse pulling my chariot.” ☺
 - a) Somehow, that doesn’t work today.
 - b) Let me explain how beautiful this compliment actually is.
 - i) A “mare” is a female horse.
 - ii) The “chariots of Pharaoh” represents an Egyptian made chariot.
 - a) That was something Egypt was known for.
 - iii) Solomon himself was a horse trader.
 - a) “Solomon had four thousand stalls for chariot horses, and twelve thousand horses. (1st Kings 4:26)
 - b) On a side note, God told that the kings of Israel were not to collect horses (See: Deuteronomy 17:16). Horses were used for war. God wanted Israel to be dependant upon Him, and not their own strength.
 - c) The point here is Solomon knew a lot about horses and Egyptian chariots.
 - (1) He gained a lot of personal wealth by breeding horses and selling horses and Egyptian chariots to other nations.
 - (a) (Reference: 1st Kings 10:29).
 - iv) Let’s get back to the bible verse. Solomon compares the beauty of his bride to a female horse, also known as a mare.
 - a) Only male horses were used for chariots.
 - b) The female horses would distract the male horses.
 - c) Solomon is saying in effect, “you are so beautiful, you would be a like the only beautiful women in the company of men, who would all look at you.
 - d) I suspect that because Solomon was such a horse-lover, he probably had already explained to his bride all about male and female horses.
 - (1) Therefore, I suspect she understood this compliment.
4. Verse 10: Your cheeks are beautiful with earrings, your neck with strings of jewels.
- a) Some of the translations give the impression that her cheeks were pierced with jewelry. That is bad interpretation. It simply refers to long earrings dangling from her ears on her cheeks.

- b) Ok guys, time to pay attention: ☺
 - i) Notice that Solomon complimented her and not the jewelry.
 - a) It does not say how beautiful the jewelry is on her.
 - b) It says how beautiful she looks with the jewelry.
 - c) It is stating how the jewelry compliments her looks.
 - c) On a related note, the bible is not anti-jewelry for women.
 - i) Paul says in 1st Timothy 2:9 that women are “to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes” (NIV).
 - a) Paul’s point in 1st Timothy refers to our dress ware in church.
 - b) His point is that we should not make such a spectacle of ourselves when we gather for church that people look at us and get our focus off of God.
 - c) Sorry guys, you can’t use 1st Timothy as an excuse to not buy jewelry. ☺
5. Verse 11: We will make you earrings of gold, studded with silver.
- a) Here is one of those verses where people debate over who is speaking.
 - b) The Hebrew noun is in plural form, thus it says, “we will make” you this jewelry.
 - c) Some believe this is the “Daughters of Jerusalem” is describing a wedding gift.
 - d) Others believe this is still King Solomon speaking, and he is talking to his jeweler and together they will make more jewelry for his bride.
 - e) Verse 10 describes how beautiful the bride looks with jewelry.
 - i) Verse 11 moves on to say how we will give you additional jewelry, assumedly for the purposes of complimenting your beauty.
 - ii) Remember that love for your partner is doing things that please them. To take the time, effort and resources to court your love, before and after the marriage.
 - f) There is a wonderful word picture that many commentators draw out of this verse of our relationship with God.
 - i) Some see the “we” in Verse 11 as being God in the trinity.
 - a) First of all, it is not unusual to describe God in the plural.
 - b) In Genesis it says, “Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness,” (Genesis 1:26a, NIV).
 - (1) The point is, “who is God talking to? It is God in the plural form.
 - ii) The word picture for gold in the bible, speaks of kings, or deity. We think of a king as wearing a gold crown. (Reference: See Revelation 9:7)
 - iii) The word picture for silver in the bible, speaks of redemption. “Silver” is associated with blood, as in the blood-price for redemption. Remember that Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. (References: Zechariah 11:13, Matthew 26:13)
 - iv) The word picture being painted here is that “you, my bride have been redeemed. You haven’t been redeemed to be a slave, or a lowly person, but redeemed to rule with me in glory. Thus the picture of the gift of the silver and the gold.
6. Verse 12: While the king was at his table, my perfume spread its fragrance.
- a) Now we have the bride speaking for the next few verses.
 - b) The “king’s table” may refer to the banquet table of the wedding ceremony.
 - c) The bride is speaking about her perfume being “sent” up to the king.
 - i) It is a form of a love offering. It is saying in effect, “I love my man, and I know he loves the smell of my perfume. I want the scent associated with me to be a sweet smell to him and he to be attracted to that scent.
 - d) In the book of Leviticus, there is a “word-picture” commonly associated with aromas.
 - i) The burnt offerings of the animals and the incense offerings were often described as “sweet aroma’s” or a similar phrase, depending upon your translation.
 - a) I heard a cute application of this principal: Does your live, living for Christ, “smell” to God of a beautiful scent, or does it stink? ☺

- ii) The word-picture for us, by the concept of scent-to-heaven is prayer.
 - a) Just like the smoke of these offerings is a visual picture of a sweet aroma rising up to the heavens, so is our prayers a sweet aroma rising up to God.
 - iii) Here we have the bride offering up her aroma to the king.
- 7. Verse 13: My lover is to me a sachet of myrrh resting between my breasts.
 - a) This is still the bride speaking.
 - b) “Myrrh” is a sweet smelling powder substance. A “sachet” is a small pouch, hanging from a string. So here is this necklace, featuring a small pouch resting between the bride’s breasts, giving off this wonderful aroma.
 - i) In ancient times where bathing is less frequent, this sweet smelling pouch was often used as a form of deodorant to mask the body smell.
 - ii) When the bride smells this smell, she thinks of the man she loves.
 - iii) Myrrh is an expensive eastern substance. It has to be grounded up.
 - a) Myrrh was one of the gifts brought to Jesus at his birth (See Matthew 2:11).
 - b) Myrrh is used in burial rituals and is also associated with death.
 - c) Some commentators try to tie this reference here in Song of Songs to Jesus’ death, but I think that is a stretch, even by my imagination. ☺
 - c) Here is another comparison. When Moses was given the instructions for the recipe used for making incense for the tabernacle altar, that particular sweet smelling recipe was only to be used for the incense alter. It could be used for no other purpose. (See Exodus 30:37)
 - i) To set something apart just for God’s use is the idea behind the Christian buzzword “sanctification”. The idea of sanctification is to set something apart just for the use in our relationship between God and us.
 - ii) When we first commit our lives to Christ, we are described as being “sanctified, or set apart”. (See 1st Corinthians 6:11 as an example.)
 - d) This leads us back to the bride and her scented pouch.
 - i) That scent reminds her of the one she loves.
 - ii) She put that pouch there is a reminder, every time she took a “whiff”, of her love for Solomon. One could take that a step further and see the desire for erotic relationship by placing it between her breasts.
- 8. Verse 14: My lover is to me a cluster of henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi.
 - a) Remember that one of my opening themes was to see how the bride and groom are so in love they try to outdo each other in compliments and their love.
 - b) Solomon compares her to his prized horse, and compliments her beauty with jewelry.
 - c) In the last few verses, she is showing her love by showing the effort she has taken to give out her perfume to him and wears a “perfume necklace” to remind herself of him and to peak her sexual interest in Solomon.
 - d) Now here in Verse 14, she is comparing Solomon to “a cluster of henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi.”
 - i) Remember that this girl has an agricultural background. She is using expressions and cliché’s that are based on her background.
 - ii) “En Gedi” in ancient and modern Israel is an oasis in the Dead Sea.
 - a) The Dead Sea area is the lowest land elevation on the planet earth (that is not under water). It is below sea level.
 - b) Most of the area is desolate desert.
 - c) The exception is En Gedi. It is a beautiful oasis, surrounded by a desert.
 - (1) For those who travel to Israel, it is considered a highlight of the trip. Here, in the middle of a desert, is a gorgeous flower filled oasis with waterfalls and beautiful plant life.
 - d) “Henna blossoms” is a type of flower growing in that region.

- iii) So notice the compliment. Let me try to paraphrase. “Oh my darling, in the horrid, lifeless desert, there is a beautiful oasis. In that oasis grows some of the most beautiful flowers on earth. You my love are like those flowers. In comparison to you my love, the surrounding world seems like a desert wasteland.”
 - a) I can’t top that, so I’ll move on to Verse 15: ☺
- 9. Verse 15: How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes are doves.
 - a) This is Solomon speaking again. He compares her eyes to “doves”.
 - i) One of the progressive things to notice about Song of Songs is that the compliments start off with the facial items like the eyes and cheeks, and then will eventually move on to more of the sexual locations of the body.
 - ii) That is something for men to remember in romance.
 - a) A fault of men is we are often too “goal oriented”.
 - b) I leave the rest to your imagination and move on. ☺
 - b) So why does Solomon say she has “dove’s eyes?”
 - i) An interesting thing about Solomon’s life is that he studied and learned a lot about plant and animal life:
 - a) He (Solomon) described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. (1st Kings 4:33, NIV)
 - b) My point is Solomon knew his birds!
 - c) Why did Solomon pick a dove as a symbol for eyes?
 - ii) There are lots of theories, but no perfect answer.
 - a) The opinion I like the best is the fact that doves mate for life.
 - (1) Once a dove’s partner dies, he or she never mates again with anyone else.
 - iii) Given that, let me paraphrase what I believe “dove’s eyes” means, “My love, I only have eyes for you!”
- 10. Verse 16: How handsome you are, my lover! Oh, how charming! And our bed is verdant.

¹⁷The beams of our house are cedars; our rafters are firs.

 - a) Now the bride is speaking again.
 - b) Our bed is “verdant” means “green”, as in fresh.
 - i) It is similar to the way we describe a new product as “fresh out of the box”.
 - ii) Think of a brand new car “fresh off the lot, with that new-car-smell”.
 - c) The whole idea behind these two verses is that all these compliments and talk of love is arousing the bride. In our musical of Song of Songs, it is building up the anticipation in describing the bedroom and the beautiful house of the wedding night.
 - d) To paraphrase, “oh honey, I love you so much. I’m looking forward to being with you and making love to you. Our brand new bed is waiting for us. Our beautiful new house is waiting for us. I can hardly stand the wait.”
 - e) Before I move on to Chapter 2, I want to keep on discussing how these verses can also be applied to our relationship with God. Jesus made a statement with a similar theme
 - i) “In my Father’s house are many rooms (or mansions); if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” (John 14:2-3, NIV)
 - ii) The idea is that we should remember that a beautiful “house” is being prepared for us as well. We need to live with that same sort of anticipation toward our eternal destiny.
 - iii) There was a cute, traditional quote I always liked: “If God spent only 6 days creating the universe, and he has spent the last few thousand years preparing a “mansion” for us in heaven, what must that be like?”

11. Chapter 2, Verse 1: I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.
- a) This is one of the more famous verses in Song of Songs.
 - b) There have been songs, gospel hymns and poems based on this verse.
 - c) Let's start with the basics:
 - i) Sharon is a plain region in Israel.
 - ii) The word has also become a type of rose, apparently common in that region.
 - d) This is the bride speaking. Notice she acknowledges her own beauty, but she adds the fact that in a sense, "being beautiful is no big deal".
 - i) Notice the verse does not say she is the rose of Sharon, nor is she the lily of the valleys.
 - ii) This verse is a self-put down.
 - iii) She is acknowledging all of Solomon's compliments, but still doesn't see herself as being that special.
 - iv) Let's read ahead to Verse 2 and see Solomon's response:
12. Verse 2: Like a lily among thorns is my darling among the maidens.
- a) Notice the compliment in response.
 - b) Solomon is saying in effect, "oh no my darling, you are not just one beautiful woman I'm adding to my harem, you mean everything to me. You stand out among the beautiful maidens of the land. You are so special to me. I love you far more than any other woman alive." Guys, I hope you're getting the idea here. ☺
 - c) Now let's tie these verses to our relationship with God.
 - i) We as Christians may understand that we are saved for eternity.
 - ii) We as Christians understand that God loves us and cares for us.
 - iii) But we look at other Christians and say, "I'll never be as good or as talented as that person over there. Look how much (or better) that person does for God.
 - iv) Just as Solomon does not see the bride that way, neither does God see us that way. God does not want us to compare ourselves to other Christians. God wants us to live for Him and just do what he has called us to do. He loves us so much, just as we are. We are all individually special to Him, no matter what we do.
 - a) We may see ourselves as inferior to others, but God sees each of us as being special, being his prized possession and standing out among the crowd.
13. Verse 3: Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my lover among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste.
- a) Since I'm on the topic of our relationship with God, I'll start with that topic and then come back to the sexual part. ☺
 - i) In Verse 2 Solomon calls his bride special. God sees us as special.
 - ii) Because of the realization of that fact, we should live a life of gratitude to God.
 - iii) We should praise Him because he loves us and desires the best for us.
 - iv) Verse 3 is the bride calling out how special her man is among men.
 - v) We need to call out to God how special he is among the cares of this world.
 - b) OK, back to the bride. She compares Solomon to an "apple tree among the forest".
 - i) The word for "forest" implies, as it should for us, a wild, uncultivated growth of bushes and trees. There is no end product to be cultivated from a forest unless it is first managed. The bride compares the "forest" to the other young men.
 - a) But among that "forest of wild trees" is a beautiful apple tree.
 - b) The apple tree represents Solomon.
 - c) Like the garden of Eden, it is the place of desire and the "apple tree" is the ultimate delight." Fortunately, for the bride, it is not be a sin to eat of this apple tree, and thus the comparison to the Garden of Eden ends there! ☺

- c) Let's go on to the second sentence of this verse: "I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste."
 - i) Here we are reading about the desire of the bride.
 - ii) First and foremost, it is her desire to just "sit at his shade". Her love is so strong, she just wants to be with him, to lie next to him, to have him at his side.
 - a) That is a great model for both our marriage and our relationship with God.
 - b) That is a good model of "adoration" in prayer. This is a time in prayer where we are not making requests of God, but just telling Him how much we love Him and how much we enjoy his presence.
 - iii) Next, it says, "His fruit is sweet to my taste".
 - a) This is sexual in its meaning.
 - b) It might be best to leave that to your imagination. ☺
 - iv) As to this verse and our relationship with God, there is a good Psalm reference:
 - a) Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. (Psalm 34:8, NIV)
- 14. Verse 4: He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love.
 - a) This verse is used in some renown Christian songs and hymns.
 - b) The banquet hall probably refers to the wedding hall.
 - i) It is similar to our idea of the "head table" at a large wedding reception.
 - c) "Banners" as in flags, were used as location markers.
 - i) For example, when the 12 tribes of Israel were wandering in the desert for 40 years, there were banners as location markers. (See Numbers 2:2)
 - ii) Banner is a simply a sign to show the audience a message.
 - iii) I suspect the poetic reference is figurative and not literal.
 - iv) A paraphrase might be, "his love for me at the wedding feast is so wonderful, it is like a big banner hanging over the head wedding table.
 - a) Another paraphrase might be, "His love for me is so strong, it is as if there is a big banner over the table telling me how much he loves me".
 - d) I should also mention here that the Hebrew word for "love" in this sentence is not the word used for sexual love, but the word associated with "totally giving of oneself to another". It is similar to the Greek word for "a-gap-ee" love.
 - i) The banner over Solomon is a testimony of not only an emotional, romantic love, but a promise of a lifetime commitment and the giving of himself to her.
 - ii) That is the type of love God the Father has for us.
- 15. Verse 5: Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love.
 - a) Jewish commentaries emphasize that the "raisins and apples" are sexual in their meaning.
 - i) By that interpretation, she is crying out in her anticipation of sexual love.
 - b) These verses themselves are building up to the wedding night itself.
 - i) They are being used in arousal to stir up the sexual passions.
 - c) OK, John, lets see you tie this verse to our relationship with God. ☺
 - i) Here goes: Our passion for our relationship with God needs to be stirred up every now and then. It is acceptable for a married couple to build each other up, to compliment each other, to speak sexually to each other in order to stir up the beautiful gift of lovemaking that God gave to us.
 - a) It is also acceptable, in fact "biblical", to stir up our emotional response to God by praising God, telling Him how much we love Him, by telling Him how much we adore God and are grateful for all He does for us.
 - (1) We don't do this for God's sake. He is quite aware of all He does.
 - (2) We do this for our sake. It is to remind us of our dependency upon God and to "stir up" our gratitude and remind ourselves of our relationship with God.

- (3) That is one of the reasons we should be going to church. A major purpose is to publicly and corporately worship God and remind ourselves of our dependency upon Him.
- (4) Paul said, “Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. (2 Tim 1:6 NKJV)

16. Verse 6: His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me.
- a) Based on the surrounding text, I don’t think this is an actual event as much as a fantasy of how she pictures her groom embracing her in the early moments of sexual passion.
 - b) Men, pay attention here, and reread this. Your wife wants to be protected and embraced.
 - c) The Hebrew word for “arm”, as translated here is the same word for “hand”, and the word hand is used in most translations. It can be translated “left hand” and “right hand”.
 - d) With all apologies to the “lefties” out there, the right hand, biblically is associated with strength.
 - i) The psalms are filled with wonderful references to God’s “right hand” a symbol of strength. Notice the similarity of this verse in Songs with this Psalm reference:
 - a) “Save us and help us with your right hand, that those you love may be delivered.” (Psalm 60:5 NIV)
 - ii) One more “hand” topic and we’ll move on. Jesus used the analogy of hands as a picture of security of salvation.
 - a) Jesus said, “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. (John 10:28 NIV)
 - b) Notice the next verse in John: My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. (10:29)
 - c) The point is with these “two hands”, one of God the Father and the other of God the son, one can see a picture of love and security, just as one can see it in our verse here in Song of Songs.
 - d) Remember the TV commercial, “You’re in good hands with Allstate? Well, as Christians we are in Jesus’ hands and God the Father’s hands. That’s much better than anything Allstate can do. ☺
17. Verse 7: Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.
- a) The bride is still speaking, but she is now speaking to the “Daughters of Jerusalem”.
 - i) The verse is the advice to singles to not practice the idea of stirring up sexual emotions until the proper time in a marital relationship.
 - b) The first part of the verse says, “I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field”.
 - i) “Does and gazelles (both are males) are two of the fastest animals on earth.
 - a) They both have the ability to run very fast from a stand still position.
 - ii) The bride will use the term “gazelle” a number of times in Song of Songs.
 - a) A gazelle in ancient Jewish thought is a word picture of how a man should act physically. It was very graceful in the way it walked and ran.
 - iii) As to the quote itself, it mostly refers to the speed of this animal. This is simply a very colorful way of saying how strongly the bride feels about this advice. It is to say, “Let me tell you this as quickly as a gazelle can sprint”.
 - c) Let’s talk about the advice itself, “Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.”
 - i) The idea is the advice to single women to not “stir up” this passion until it is time.
 - ii) I could go on for pages on this. This is classical biblical advice for a dating couple.
 - a) The basic idea is to hold out on sexual passions until one is married.

18. Verse 8: Listen! My lover! Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills.
- a) The next set of verses is a fantasy dream told by the bride.
 - b) If you read these verses in context of the sequence of leading up to the wedding night, I believe she is speaking to Solomon about her love to him via a visual fantasy.
 - i) It could also be based on some past memory she has of seeing him.
 - c) In the opening verse, it describes Solomon “leaping” over hills to him.
 - i) Personally, I picture Solomon on a horse here. I don’t personally see Solomon bouncing up and down. ☺
 - ii) Based on our earlier verses about horses, that also makes horse sense.☺
 - a) Sorry about that last joke. I couldn’t resist.
19. Verse 9: My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! There he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice.
- a) Here is another compliment. The bride is describing how handsome he is in a simple concept of looking out the window.
 - b) All right guys, time to pay attention again. ☺
 - i) Women want you to pay attention to them, to notice the little details.
 - ii) Remember back when you were first in love with someone?
 - a) You wanted to know everything about them. You wanted to just look at them, doing the simple things.
 - b) That is the picture we have here.
 - c) It applies to our relationship to our spouse as well as to God.
 - d) God desires that we pay attention to Him as well. That is where a detailed study of God’s word comes in and thinking about its meaning.
20. Verse 10: My lover spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me. ¹¹ See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. ¹² Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land. The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance. ¹³Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me."
- a) As I stated, I believe this whole section is a fantasy vision, but one can argue it is literal.
 - b) In Verse 9, the groom is standing by the window looking out.
 - i) Here in Verse 10, we see the bride in bed, and the groom gives an invitation for her to go outside with her.
 - c) All right, pay attention men: ☺ Men tend to think romance is simply the sexual passion.
 - i) To women, romance is just spending time together, to do things with her.
 - a) This is how women feel “connected” to their men.
 - ii) In this illustration or fantasy, the bride is thinking “I was laying in bed on this beautiful spring morning. My wonderful man was looking out the window and seeing the beauty of the day. He calls for her to go outside with him for a walk and see the beauty of nature.”
 - a) Guys, women love this sort of thing.
 - b) Men, as “bottom-line, get-to-the-point” thinking creatures, often miss this.
 - d) One of the greatest illustrations I ever learned about the way men and women think is the following: “Men’s brains are like waffles and women’s brains are like a plate of spaghetti”. That means that men have separate little “squares” for each thought. What is happening in one square has no bearing on what is happening in the next waffle square. Each concept or thought is in its separate square. Women’s brains are like inter twining strands of spaghetti, where each concept and thought connects with every other concept.
 - i) In biology, this can be explained by the fact women have more “connections” between the left and right hemisphere of the brains.

- ii) With that introduction, let me paraphrase this verse again, “Solomon is so handsome. It is a beautiful day outside. I would love to go for a walk and see the beautiful sites of springtime walking and being protected by my man. I’m with him, and I see all the beautiful things of spring. It would be so romantic”.
 - iii) Now reread this verse and notice how all the senses are coming into play.
 - a) She mentions the flowers to be seen and sniffed.
 - b) She mentions the sounds of the cooing of the doves.
 - c) The opening word of verse 11 is to “see”.
 - iv) On that happy note, let’s move on to the next set of verse.
21. Verse 14: My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places on the mountainside, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.
- a) A few verses back Solomon says she has “dove’s eye’s”.
 - i) Now she is returning the compliment by saying “my dove”.
 - b) As part of this fantasy picture, Solomon now leaves her for a moment.
 - i) It describes Solomon being in the clefts of the rock.
 - ii) Typical of a man, he leaves her for a moment to go study the birds. ☺
 - iii) See girls, even Solomon gets distracted from his mate to go see something. ☺
 - c) She is crying out to see him again and to hear his voice.
 - d) For all of you Bible experts out there, this verse is very similar to something in Exodus:
 - i) But,” he (God) said, “you (Moses) cannot see my (God’s) face, for no one may see me and live.” Then the LORD said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.” (Exodus 33:20-23, NIV).
 - ii) I don’t believe in “coincidences” when studying my Bible.
 - iii) In Song of Songs, here is the women describing how Solomon is in the clefts of the rock, and she desires to see him, but she can’t.
 - iv) In Exodus Chapter 33, God instructs Moses to go into the cleft of the rock, where you will see God’s “backside” but not his face”.
 - a) Personally, I don’t believe God has a front and backside. This means that there is a limited concept of what we can understand about God. God is infinite, and we are finite, and therefore, there is a limit as to how much about God that we can understand or comprehend.
 - v) The “connection” between Song of Songs and Exodus is the limitation of how much the “bride” can see her man and how much we can see of God. We desire more, but there is a limitation.
 - vi) As strange as this sounds, the “cleft of the rock” is a word-picture of Jesus. Paul himself says that the “rock” that followed the Israelites in the desert (the one Moses struck to bring out water) is a picture of Jesus. (See 1st Corinthians 10:4).
 - a) A “cleft” is an opening in the rock. I believe it is a picture of Jesus being opened (spilling of blood) for our sake so that we can approach God.
22. Verse 15: Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom.
- a) Verse 15 is a change of topics. Some study bibles believe somebody else is speaking other than the bride or Solomon. A plural word is used here “catch for us the foxes”.
 - i) Because it is in the plural, others believe it is Solomon or the bride speaking on both their behalf to someone else.
 - b) So what does this “fox” reference refer to?
 - i) Remember that the bride has a vineyard-raising background.
 - ii) Foxes are a problem to a vineyard keeper.
 - a) They hide in the rocks and come out at night and eat the roots.

- c) I don't believe this is meant to be taken literal.
 - i) Song of Songs is most word-pictures of a love relationship between a man and a wife and can also be applied to our relationship with God.
 - ii) With that stated, why this "fox" reference?
- d) I believe the topic is about problems in relationships.
 - i) Here is the bride and groom, and everything is wonderful and they are both are so in love with each other, and don't have a care for the world.
 - ii) And as they say, and then reality set in. ☺
- e) This verse is a word-picture to working out some of the potential problems in a relationship before they get started.
 - i) The "foxes in the rocks" is a plea to get rid of the potential pitfalls of a relationship before they become bigger problems.
 - ii) I can't recommend highly enough premarital (as well as post-marital!) counseling.
 - iii) Most Christian churches now require premarital counseling prior to the ceremony.
 - iv) This verse is a good biblical support for such counseling.
 - v) This is the best time to work out some of the pre-conceived notions about marriage.
 - a) Most people believe marriage should be just like the way they were raised by their parents. After all, that is the only real example they have of married life. This is a time to discuss a couple's expectations within marriage and what they expect of each other.
 - b) It is also a time a time to learn the biblical principals of marriage and what God expects of a partner in marriage.
 - c) OK, back to the men again. ☺ Let me show you a frightening Bible verse:
 - (1) "Husbands, likewise, dwell with them (wives) with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered." (1st Peter, 3:7, NKJV)
 - (2) What does that mean? It means that your prayer relationship with God is based upon how you treat your wife! Do you want God to answer your prayers? Then we need to obey the principals taught in this verse!

23. Verse 16: My lover is mine and I am his; he browses among the lilies. ¹⁷ Until the day breaks and the shadows flee, turn, my lover, and be like a gazelle or like a young stag on the rugged hills.
- a) Now we have the girl speaking again by herself.
 - b) She is watching Solomon standing among the flowers.
 - c) Remember earlier in this chapter how she thought of herself as "just" a lily of the valley and Solomon complimented her on being something special.
 - d) Here, she is just watching him and telling of her desire to be with him.
 - e) This whole fantasy takes place at the dawn's early morning.
 - i) The cry of passion in Verse 17 is for Solomon to return to her.
 - ii) The "fleeing" is to return to her.
 - f) The last part of Chapter 2 has "hints" that their (fantasy) walk turned into Solomon leaving her.
 - i) We had the verse about Solomon standing in the clefts of the rock.
 - ii) We had the discussion about "foxes" causing problems in the relationship.
 - iii) Now, the chapter is concluding by the bride's desire for Solomon to return as soon as possible. She just desires to be with him again.

- g) God always desires to be with us. There are times, especially in difficult times, that God has somehow, disappeared for a time and we long to see him again.
 - i) We cry out in our love for God for his to “return” to us.
 - ii) Like the bride, we fear the times when we don’t sense God’s presence. He is still there, but He is working in ways we cannot sense.
 - iii) God is trying to mature us to walk on our own, the same way parents teach their children to be independent.
 - h) One technical note. Some of your translations will say that bride compares Solomon to “the mountains of Bether”. (NASB, NKJV)
 - i) In this case, I think the NIV does a better job of translation.
 - a) There is no literal Bether-mountain anywhere in Israel.
 - (1) The NIV translation paraphrases this as “rugged hills”.
 - b) The word “Bether” means separated.
 - c) The cry of the bride in these verses is for her man to return to her. The “mountains of Bether” is a pun in the concept of “being separated” vs. the brides desire to have Solomon return to her.
 - i) Let’s get back to these verses and wrap this up.
 - i) The cry of the bride is to be with her bride.
 - ii) Through these 1½ chapters we read of her compliments of her husband, her longing for him, her desire just to be with him.
 - iii) They are all word pictures of our adoration for our partner as well as our adoration for God.
 - a) They are a model of how God desires our love to be in both our marriage and our relationship with him.
 - iv) Song of Songs has no “godly type words” like salvation, prayer or even the mention of God’s name. But by now, you can see how this is a beautiful picture of the wonderful and yes, romantic relationship that God desires for all of us.
 - v) On that happy ending, I’ll turn to the closing prayer.
24. Let’s pray: Father we thank you for the love you have shown us. We thank you for that love that you have in you, and you reached out in a desire of a loving relationship with us. For those of us who are married or desire to be married, help us to learn the lessons that you have for us for a loving healthy relationship with our spouse. For those of us who are single, help us to see the principals that apply in our relationship to you father through this study. For we ask this in Jesus name, Amen.