

Song of Songs Chapter 7 -- John Karmelich

1. If I had to teach you the most important thing to remember from this chapter it is the following:
 - a) The greatest expression of lovemaking in Song of Songs is not describing the wedding night. It is used in the restoration of the relationship.
 - i) Stop and think about for a while. Why would Song of Songs describe in detail physical lovemaking at a point in the relationship where it has been restored? It is not a put down of the wedding night, but it does teach us some lessons about perspective.
 - ii) If you have the answer, you are excused for this week, skip on to the prayer. ☺
 - iii) For the rest of us, let's move on and learn a few things.
2. Chapter 7 focuses on a lovemaking session between the bride (the "Shulammitte") and the groom, who is King Solomon.
 - a) To review, in Chapter 5 we began a study of a post-wedding period of the relationship.
 - i) Chapter 5 is where the bride became contempt in their relationship. Solomon was at the door. She was too lazy to get up to let him in and he went away. (A modern paraphrase is, "Not tonight, I have a headache" ☺).
 - ii) Solomon, in his love for her, says in effect, "that's ok my dear, I love you so much, I will accept this and move on."
 - iii) The Bible teaches that in marriage, the wife's body belongs to the husband and the husband's body belongs to the wife. (See 1st Corinthians 7:4). By that verse, one can make an argument that it is a sin of taking your partner for grant it. If it is not a sin, then, at the least it is unbiblical and displeasing to God.
 - iv) Chapter 5 and 6 go on to focus on how to restore the marriage. The lessons taught in those two chapters are excellent models on how to make your marriage strong again. They are also models on how to draw closer to God.
 - v) One of the main themes of Song of Songs is that this book is a marriage manual and it is a model of our relationship with God.
 - a) In direct context is about marriage.
 - b) One can also see word-pictures in every chapter about our relationship with God. One can see the bride as a model of "us", being believers in God. One can see Solomon in many cases as word-pictures of God, showing his love toward us and responding to our love for Him.
 - b) Now in Chapter 7, we get into physical lovemaking.
 - i) Sexual lovemaking is one of the greatest ways to show your martial partner of your love for them. The mistake people make is they worship sex as an entity all to itself. God intended that His gift of sex to be used as an expression of love.
 - a) The point is we should make love with our spouses because we love our spouses, not make love with our spouses because we enjoy making love.
 - ii) One can also study the passage in our relationship with God. Physical lovemaking with the one we love is one of the greatest feelings of joy one can have. The overall sensation of happiness and joy that comes from making love to the one you love (in marriage!) is a feeling that little else can match.
 - iii) God wants our relationship with Him to have that level of joy. It is not about physically making love to God, but to have a relationship with God the Father that is so intimate it brings joy to His heart and your heart. The biblical word for joy can literally mean "to jump and down with excitement". That is the type of joy being described here. We'll talk more about that as we go. But first, I want to talk about "the prodigal son" story. (Bet you didn't see that coming! ☺)

3. One of the most beloved stories in the Bible is Jesus telling the story of “the prodigal son”.
 - a) It occurs in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 15, Verses 11-32.
 - b) Let me summarize and paraphrase the story with the points I want to emphasize:
A father had 2 sons. One son said, “Dad, when you die, I get half of everything. I don’t want to wait for you to die, so give it to me now.” The father in his love for his son, agrees, even though he doesn’t have to give it to him now. The son goes out and blows the money over some period of time. When the son hits “rock bottom”, he says in effect, “You know, I’m better off being a hired servant of my father than my low-life job now that I’ve blown all of my inheritance.” I’ll go home, apologize and grovel to dad, and maybe he’ll give me a job as one of his servants.”
 - i) The son then heads home convinced he no longer has status as a son. The father, seeing his son down the road, starts jumping up and down (a paraphrase of Verse 20). He is excited that his son has returned home. The father throws a big party for him and welcomes home his son.
 - ii) The last part of the chapter is the father explaining to the other son why the celebration was necessary. The other son still had his half of the estate and his father’s love. But now it is “party-time” as the lost son has come home.
 - c) Before I explain the relevance of this verse to Song of Songs, let me bring in the Bible verse right before this story begins: “In the same way, I (Jesus) tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” (Luke 15:10, NIV).
 - d) OK, John what’s the point? The point is that God has tremendous joy over the restoration of a relationship with Him. In some ways, that joy is even greater than the joy over when one first commits their life to God. Why is that?
 - i) The whole point of the prodigal son story is that the lost son never lost his “sonship”. The father loves his son unconditionally. A father will weep and grieve over the mistakes made by his child. The father wants them to change their ways, but they never stop loving that person. To see a child realize their mistake and turn back to the love of the parent brings great joy to the parent. That is what we see here!
 - ii) Jesus said in Verse 10 of Luke that the angels rejoice (again, visualize “jumping up and down in excitement”) when a sinner repents.
 - iii) God, who loves with a perfect love, wants us to grow in our relationship with Him. To see us with a perfect love, realize that our relationship with Him is greater than any other thing we could possibly desire, brings great joy to God and to us.
 - iv) Which, leads me back to the Song of Songs.
 - v) I opened with the premise of this lesson that the greatest expression of lovemaking in the Song of Songs is not in the honeymoon, but in the restoration of the relationship. It can be seen an expression of joy between God and those who love him. It is a “celebration” of the fact that the relationship is restored.
 - a) By the end of Chapter 6, that relationship is restored. Chapter 7 is “party time”. It is an expression of joy of that restored relationship.
 - b) On that positive note, lets go to Verse 1 of Chapter 7:
4. Chapter 7, Verse 1: How beautiful your sandaled feet, O prince's daughter! Your graceful legs are like jewels, the work of a craftsman's hands.
 - a) Verses 1-9 are Solomon doing all the talking.
 - b) The bride is busy too! ☺ During this whole section she is dancing in a sexually enticing manner in order to arouse her man. It was a custom of that time and era for a bride to dance to sexually entice her man. This is an intimate scene for just the two of them.

- c) The last few verses of this section describe the physical lovemaking itself.
- d) I'm going to describe the verse-by-verse details to help explain the meaning of some of the poetic pictures being painted. But first, it would help to explain some of the broader concepts being portrayed.
 - i) In this section, Solomon specifically gives her ten compliments.
 - ii) In Hebrew numerology (study of patterns of numbers in the Bible) the number "ten" is associated with perfection in the human-state.
 - iii) We discussed a few weeks back how the number "seven" is associated with perfection from God's perspective. The world was created in six days and God rested on the seventh. Thus, "seven" is a model of perfection from God's perspective.
 - iv) The number ten in the Bible is associated with human perfection. I believe that is why God gave us ten fingers and toes. Almost all cultures base their numbering system is on a "zero to ten" basis. In the creation account in Genesis Chapter 1, the Bible says "And God said" ten times. It is associated with His creation. There are also the Ten Commandments. In a Jewish thought, ten is associated with human perfection.
 - v) The point of all of this is for Solomon to pay her "10 compliments" is an expression in Hebrew Poetry of saying "you are a perfect creation." Solomon saw her in perfect beauty, with no faults at all.
 - vi) The last thing to notice about the compliments is that Solomon goes from "feet to head". He is working his way up the body.
 - a) Remember that she is dancing for him, so complimenting her footwork is a good place to start. ☺
- e) Let's start with specifics of Verse 1: How beautiful your sandaled feet, O prince's daughter! Your graceful legs are like jewels, the work of a craftsman's hands.
 - i) The original Hebrew is emphasizing the motion of the feet and thighs.
 - ii) When Solomon is complimenting her sandaled feet, it is not saying she has a nice pair of shoes. As all women know, men know nothing about shoes. ☺
 - iii) He is complimenting the motion of her feet as she dances for him.
 - iv) Remember that these are the feet of a farm girl. I suspect they are callous and worn from the work. Solomon doesn't notice the imperfection, but just sees the beauty. This is one of many reminders in Song of Songs how God sees us in our perfected state, and not by our faults.
 - v) Next thing to notice is that he calls her "O prince's daughter."
 - a) Again, this is a farm girl. Solomon is now married to her. He is complimenting her by saying in effect, "I don't see you as a simple farm girl, I see you my love as one of the beautiful women of the palace. You are a princess, my cherished one. You are royalty."
 - b) Guys, women want to be cherished. They want to be treated like royalty. They want to be put on a pedestal. As much as possible, they want you to meet their needs. (You can start by trying to find out what their needs are and finding out how you can best minister to those needs. You will be amazed at how your partner will then respond to your needs!)
 - vi) Finally, he compares her legs to jewels.
 - a) That sounds funny in our language. As beautiful as jewelry can be, we have a tough time thinking how that can be compared to legs.
 - b) One has to remember that Solomon is describing her motion. Specifically, he is describing the motion of her thighs as she dances for him.

- c) A modern paraphrase of this verse would be to say, “Oh I love the motion of your legs as you dance for me. The precision is like a jeweler designing fine jewelry. (It still doesn’t work in our culture, but you get the point. ☺)
 - (1) The comparison isn’t so much to jewelry itself, as to the fine art of cutting and designing jewelry. It takes precision, timing and patience. Solomon is complimenting those qualities in her dancing.
- vii) This leads to some applications for you and me.
 - a) What are we doing to “turn on” our partners?
 - (1) Now let’s face it, if we just start dancing like this, especially after years of marriage, the first reaction of our spouse is that we have mentally lost it. ☺ If I came home from work and saw my wife dancing with veils, I’m just going to stand there puzzled. ☺
 - (2) The correct answer is to find out (ask him or her!) what excites them? It could be an outfit, it could be a set of compliments, it could be something as simple as helping out around the house. Half the fun is finding out what your spouse enjoys. Pray to God for help. God wants us to build up our marriage.
 - b) Whatever the specifics, the bride in her love for Solomon goes through the ritual and custom of that day in order to entice her husband.
 - c) She just went through two chapters of a mistake, wondering what to do, and finally responding to His love for her and restoring the relationship.
 - d) Remember that the lovemaking is a word-picture of us having the extreme joy of a wonderful relationship with God. In the literal sense, it is an expression of love between a husband and wife. Sex itself is not the goal, but a way of expressing love with the one whom you have made a commitment.
- 5. Chapter 7, Verse 2: Your navel is a rounded goblet that never lacks blended wine. Your waist is a mound of wheat encircled by lilies.
 - a) Many of the commentators believe that “navel” is a bad translation. Many believe the word actually refers to the genitals. Notice that Solomon goes from feet to thighs/legs to navel to waist in the first two verses. The navel is out of order if he is working his way up the body. That is why some believe the Hebrew word refers to the genitals. The “goblet that never lacks blended wine” can be interpreted as having sexual references to the joy of contact with the genital area.
 - b) Others commentators say that navel is the correct word. She is probably dancing with some sort of eastern style “lingerie”. Visualize some of the classic movies where the women do the “dance of the seven veils”. The navel is often exposed.
 - c) At this point Solomon is being enticed. I believe the actual attack is still to come. ☺
 - d) Wine in the Bible is associated with joy. In biblical weddings, wine is present. It is a word-picture of ultimate joy.
 - i) To paraphrase Solomon is saying the beauty of her navel (or genital areas) brings me joy to behold.
 - e) The second part describes your waist as a “mound of wheat encircled by lilies.”
 - i) “Oh honey, your waistline looks like a pile of wheat with flowers all around it”. ☺
 - a) Guaranteed guys, that would make your woman stop dancing on the spot as she says, “Huh?, what do you mean by that?” ☺
 - ii) Remember this is a farm girl. Solomon is using vocabulary she can understand. The application in our compliments is to use love-language that our spouses can comprehend. Compare your spouse to things that they find beautiful.

- iii) The mound of wheat refers to refined wheat. This is where the wheat is already harvested and the chaff is separated. That mound is very soft at this point. That material was often used for pillows. So here is this pile of soft wheat surrounded with lilies for embellishment.
 - a) The point is although we may not think of this as being attractive, this picture worked for this culture and time era.
- 6. Verse 3: Your breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.
 - a) Solomon is still doing the describing while she is dancing.
 - i) A fawn is a baby deer, or in this case a baby gazelle. If one goes a zoo in the Middle East, they have these types of gazelle fawns on display. They are very cute and cuddly. You want to touch and pet them. I think Solomon is saying that her breasts are “inviting” the same way one wants to touch and fondle a baby animal.
- 7. Verse 4: Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are the pools of Heshbon by the gate of Bath Rabbim. Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon looking toward Damascus.
 - a) OK, we’re up to the neck. The emphasis of her neck is not on the size but on the color.
 - i) If you remember back in the early chapters, she put herself down for being dark in color (Songs 1:5-6). Having tan skin in that culture was a bad thing.
 - ii) Ivory is very white in its color.
 - b) The next compliment focuses on her eyes. He compares her eyes to “pools of Heshbon by the gate of Bath Rabbim.”
 - i) These pools are man made reservoirs that existed at that time and location.
 - ii) Instead of me giving geographical details about this reservoir, let me try to give you an illustration. Picture a serene pool of water, like in a pond or a reservoir on a calm sunny day. It brings a picture of peace and tranquility.
 - iii) I believe that is what Solomon, in a poetic way is trying to get across. A visual picture of the peace that her eyes bring to him.
 - iv) The application is, “Do you look at your wives or husband’s eyes and see peace and contentment? Is your relationship grown to a point of trust where you can look at your lover’s eyes and see peace?” That is what Solomon is saying here.
 - v) Remember that this whole scene is a celebration of the restoration of a relationship. It is a celebration of joy that their love is restored. It brings peace to Solomon to see the beauty of her eyes.
 - c) The next compliment is on the nose. He says it is, “Like the tower of Lebanon looking toward Damascus”.
 - i) I will spare the big nose jokes right now and just say it is bad interpretation. ☺
 - ii) Remember that he compares her eyes to a reservoir, her head to a mountain (next verse), her nose to a tower. The girl is not 90 feet tall, so none of these compliments have to do with size. This nose compliment about the tower probably simply means it is straight and majestic.
 - iii) Another clue to meaning of this compliment goes back a verse or two when he compares her neck to an ivory tower. The emphasis is on the white or purity.
 - iv) There are white cliffs off of Lebanon overlooking Damascus. They are quite beautiful when the sun hits them. I believe that is the compliment Solomon was shooting for. He is described a geographical location she can relate to.
 - v) Again, if he is describing a literal tower, the emphasis is on the beauty of the nose and not the size. He is emphasizing its majestic quality.

8. Verse 5: Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel. Your hair is like royal tapestry; the king is held captive by its tresses.
- a) If one takes a tour of Israel, a common stop is up to Mt. Carmel. From there, one looks down on the town of Hafia. It is one of the most picturesque scenes in all of Israel. Mt. Carmel stands out in majesty over this landscape. The word-picture created here is a picture of the head as it stands over a beautiful setting.
 - i) For you bible trivia buffs, Hafia is the spot where Elijah called down fire from heaven to consume a sacrifice to God. (See 2nd Kings 4:25).
 - ii) Back to the comparison of her head to Mt. Carmel. Let me try to give a modern paraphrase, "Honey I love to look at you. Your head stands out like a crowning achievement over a work of beauty.
 - iii) More advice to the guys: Your wife always looks good. Never find faults in your spouse's looks. "Honey, does this dress make me look fat? Of course not!"
 - a) On a side note, I try to be honest about clothes on my wife. She takes my opinion more seriously when I tell her what does and does not look good on her. The correct answer to the question is "oh no, it doesn't make you look fat, it just doesn't compliment you very well. How about this one?"
 - b) Our love for our spouse reflects God's love for us. We should see our spouse in God's perfect love, and be blind to any imperfections. (We're talking about physical beauty). I can go on from here, but you get the idea.
 - b) The "hair" reference literally translates to a "royal-purple" color.
 - i) I don't believe she dyed her hair purple. It may be a reference to a veil. It may also be a reference to the sun or light shining on very black hair that reveals a purple-like color.
 - ii) I believe the purple reference is a word-picture of royalty. The same way Solomon called her a "princess' daughter" a few verses back is similar to this reference.
 - a) In his love for her, he doesn't see her as a simple farm girl, but as the beautiful princess bride for a prince.
9. Verse 6: How beautiful you are and how pleasing, O love, with your delights!
- a) Verse 6 is a summary statement. For those of us who see Chapter 9 as a story of lovemaking, I believe this is where the action begins. ☺
 - b) The allegorical interpretation of God and us is to see this verse and realize how much God loves us just as we are. We see ourselves with our faults and defects, but God in his perfect love for us, delights in us especially as we live our lives for Him.
 - i) These verses are all about the bride trying to please her man. One can read this allegorical as believers in God living their lives to glorify him. It can be as simple as praising God and praying to him, or in our actions through others. In all cases, God the father delights in those who live their lives to serve Him.
10. Verse 7: Your stature is like that of the palm, and your breasts like clusters of fruit. ⁸ I said, "I will climb the palm tree; I will take hold of its fruit."
- a) Palm trees are amazing plants. They survive in some of the worse climates of the world. They survive desert heat, desert wind and still grow tall in stature with flowing leaves far above the ground. It is amazing to think how that tree can survive in that climate and flourish that far off the ground.
 - i) Remember that Solomon is using word pictures that she can relate to. Much of that territory is desert. He is comparing her stature to a tall palm tree.
 - ii) It is a wonderful compliment to compare her whole body to the stature of a palm tree, standing majestically over the ground.
 - b) Solomon then focuses on the breasts. They are enticing to him at this point.
 - i) Solomon compares her breasts to the sweetness of fruit. The rest I'll leave to your imagination. ☺

- c) Visualize a person climbing up a palm tree. Now visualize a man “climbing” up a woman in lovemaking. I believe that is the picture here. He is working his way up the body. At this point, he is at the breasts and compares it to fruit. It is sweet to the taste and desirable to Solomon.
- i) This again well ties in to what Solomon advised men in Proverbs:
 - a) “May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.” (Proverbs 5:18-19, NIV)
 - ii) Remember this is not the honeymoon, this is the restoration of their relationship. The joy of the union is being expressed once again in their ever-growing love for one another.
 - a) A healthy marriage should be like that, ever growing. We should love our spouses far more now than we did when we first get married. As we grow in our relationship, we grow in our trust of our spouse. Love is a commitment, and as time moves on, one can trust more and more of our desire to strengthen and bind that commitment.
 - b) The same should be with our love for God. Our love for God should naturally grow with time. The more time we spend with God, the more we should desire Him and be with him. Just as absence from our spouse draws us back again, so should any absence in time with God himself.
11. The rest of Verse 8: May your breasts be like the clusters of the vine, the fragrance of your breath like apples, ⁹ and your mouth like the best wine.
- a) Here is Solomon making a request. He is asking that
 - i) 1) your breasts be like the clusters of grapes growing on a vine
 - ii) 2) your breath be like apples
 - iii) 3) your mouth by the like the best wine. (Biblically, wine is associated with joy.)
 - b) What Solomon is saying in effect is, “I want this to go on forever. I love making love to you. I want your breasts to satisfy my love for you the rest of my life. Like grapevines, may they bloom sweet grapes for me. Further, I love to kiss you. May the breath and taste of your mouth always be sweet to me.”
 - i) That type of request is what all husbands and wives should desire for each other. They should only have eyes for each other. They should want to live their lives as pleasing to their spouse. We should use mouthwash for our spouse’s sake. ☺ The main point isn’t so much the specifics as it is to state to your partner your desire to having a loving relationship with them all the days of your life.
 - ii) Hopefully you can see by now why God set up marriage as a model for the ideal relationship between himself and us. God also wants to have a healthy and loving relationship for all the days of our lives and on into eternity. He wants us to praise him out of gratitude of love for the love he has bestowed on us. This applies through the good and bad times of live. Just as we cling tighter to our spouses during the difficult times, so we should cling that much harder to God during those rough days. During the positive moments, we should have joy and lovemaking with our loves just as we can show God our gratitude for the wonderful things He provides for us.
12. The rest of Verse 9: May the wine go straight to my lover, flowing gently over lips and teeth.
- a) From this point forward to the end of the chapter, the woman (Shulammitte) is speaking.
 - b) In the first half of verse 9, he says, “and your mouth like the best wine.”
 - i) Now she is returning the compliment! Read the verse again at this point.
 - ii) I believe they are complimenting each other verbally as they are kissing. He is describing how the taste of her mouth is like the best wine.

- iii) Remember this is a girl who worked the vineyards. This is a compliment that she can relate to. She is responding to that love and saying in effect “that wonderful wine is only for you my love.”
 - c) To me, this section of Song of Songs is one of the great high points of the book. It is the bride, in the realization of Solomon’s love for her responding back to him.
 - i) Solomon just spent 8½ verses describing her beauty. There is no mention of any of her faults nor flaws. There is no mention of, “I’m still angry about this”. There are no past hurts being discussed.” Solomon loves her with a perfect love and describes her beauty from head to toe and his desire for her.
 - ii) We as believers in God, have a difficult time believing that God loves us perfectly just as we are. We see our own imperfections and then have doubts. Part of the problem is actually our egos. We want to be better so we can say or think “look at all the good things I can do for God. We can’t be better people. There has a come a point in our relationship with God where we realize that God loves us perfectly just as we are. A perfect God can only love us perfectly. We can mess up our lives by not being obedient to God, but we can’t mess up God’s perfect love for us.
 - d) I believe the bride in this song is realizing that at this point. That will become more evident in Verse 10. Notice what the first words are out of her mouth:
 - i) Not, “Gee honey thanks for all the compliments.
 - ii) Not, “I don’t think I’m all that great”.
 - iii) Her first response is, “May the wine go straight to my lover, flowing gently over lips and teeth.”
 - a) Modern translation: “Yeah, baby!” ☺
 - b) She is taking the love offered to her, and responding back to him.
 - c) Personally I suspect she is kissing him as she says this compliment.
 - d) The point is she responds accordingly to the love that Solomon offers her.
 - e) Some of you can see where I’m going with this. ☺ God, who loves us with perfect love, is looking for us to respond to that love. (
 - (1) I’ll talk more about this point in the next verse.
13. Verse 10: I belong to my lover, and his desire is for me.
- a) This verse is one of the key verses in Song of Songs.
 - b) It is repeated three times, each with a different emphasis. This is the third time.
 - i) In Chapter 2, Verse 16, she says, “My beloved is mine, and I am his;”
 - ii) In Chapter 6 Verse 4, she says, “I belong to him and him to me”.
 - iii) In Chapter 7 (here), it is saying, “I belong to my lover, and his desire is for me”.
 - iv) One can study these three and see the growth in maturity as a believer.
 - a) Chapter 2 is about when one first discovers God. God calls out to us, and we respond. The emphasis in Chapter 2 is “God first, then us”.
 - b) Chapter 6 is about the restoration. It is a point of realization that this is a stable relationship and we can trust in God. The statement in Verse 6 focuses on their unity as a couple once she realizes His love for her.
 - c) Chapter 7 is about the joy of trusting and understanding that relationship.
 - d) Here’s a shocker to a lot of Christians. God gives us all our power and gifts the moment we accept Christ as our savior, period.
 - (1) “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. (Ephesians 1:3-4, NIV).
 - (2) There comes a point in the maturity of a believer where we realize in effect “hey, God has given me all this power and love. I just have to realize I have it.” There is tremendous joy in that realization.

- (a) Here's a related quote I heard on this topic: "I just realized to be a Christian is to stop trying to push the car and just get in and enjoy the ride. Why am I pushing a car that has a working engine?" ☺ (Source unknown).
- (3) It does not mean we now lie on our bed and wait for God to send angels with daily instructions. It means we pray, study our bibles, and then trust that God is guiding us. He gave us brains, he gave us instructions, we pray for guidance, now we get moving!
 - (a) As the bride says "his desire is for me!" That applies to us!
 - (b) With that in mind, we can have tremendous joy of knowing we can't mess it up as long as we are focused on that task. If things aren't going well, it may be that God is trying to "close a door" and move us in a different direction. We need to thank God for closing the door instead of complaining about the fact.
 - (c) The realization of God's perfect love for us should bring us joy. That joy, expressed as a word-picture in Song of Songs in physical lovemaking. This is the bride's realization that Solomon loves her with a perfect love.
 - (i) Remember back on page 1 I made the statement that the greatest scene of lovemaking in this story takes place after the restoration of the relationship.
 - (ii) Hopefully by now, you can see why.
 - (iii) Marriage is a model of our relationship with God. We show our love to our spouses through lovemaking. That joy can equally be expressed in our hearts when we realize God the Father loves us with all the power and perfection of His deity.
 - (d) On that happy note, lets move on to Verse 11. ☺
- 14. Verse 11: Come, my lover, let us go to the countryside, let us spend the night in the villages.
 - a) The next set of verses is a request by the bride to get away.
 - b) Here is all of this sweet talk and love making and now she says in effect , "hey honey, lets go away for the weekend to somewhere romantic".
 - i) In Verse 11 she is saying in effect, "I want this to go on some more. I'm so happy right now, and I don't want you to go back to all of the king-business. Let us continue this joy and celebration and just get away from it all."
 - ii) One can use these verses as biblical support for the occasional need for vacations. There are times when just you and the spouse (not the kids, not friends, not the parents) to just get away and spend time with each other.
 - iii) For a healthy marriage to grow and bloom requires time alone with each other. It is important to have date nights as a couple or occasional getaways. This is healthy for the marriage.
 - iv) That same principal can also apply to time alone with God. A healthy relationship with God requires regular time with just him. The balance of course, is not to ignore your spouse or family, etc. for God.

- a) Jesus taught this principal as part of the “Sermon on the Mount” speech: “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33, NIV).
 - (1) The point of that verse is that if we dedicate alone time for God, then through the power of God he will *give* to us the desire, the time to be with others that he loves. We draw upon God’s strength and love to reflect that love toward the others we are committed to.
 - c) Let’s get back to the verse itself: “Come, my lover, let us go to the countryside, let us spend the night in the villages.
 - i) Remember that this is a farm girl. She knows the beauty of nature. She is asking to get away from the palaces of the king out into the countryside. To the girl, this is her idea of a romantic weekend.
 - ii) The point isn’t the physical location, but the idea of finding a place both you and your wife like to go as a getaway.
15. Verse 12: Let us go early to the vineyards to see if the vines have budded, if their blossoms have opened, and if the pomegranates are in bloom-- there I will give you my love.
- a) I need to intervene here that some commentators believe the lovemaking doesn’t actually begin until they go out to the countryside, and everything up to this point is foreplay. They base that view on Verse 12.
 - i) Personally you can tell by now I disagree with that view. I couldn’t get past the description of the climbing the palm tree. ☺ Others see it that way and I wanted to mention it in case you ever came across that interpretation.
 - b) Girls, you want to entice your man into a vacation? Try something like this, “Hey honey, why don’t we go drive off to that spot we both like, all quiet, just the two of us, and there we can make love all night.” Most guys will start packing right away. ☺
 - c) I also think it is healthy for any person to look forward to some special future event. The day-to-day tasks of life can get boring and routine, and the thought of a special planned event that brings joy to both of you can keep you going through the monotonous times.
 - d) Notice also it isn’t just about making love, it is about getting away to the things they enjoy. This girl, who grew up around vineyards is saying, “It’s springtime. Let’s go see if the vines are blossoming and the fruit (pomegranates) is starting to come off the trees”.
 - i) There is something wonderfully romantic about springtime. It is fun to watch nature that has been dormant all winter to start to bloom again. It was springtime. The time when dormant fruit starts to blossom. She wanted Solomon and herself to get in on the action. ☺
 - e) Speaking of the “proper time”, Solomon also wrote a poem in the middle of the book of Ecclesiastes about how everything in life “has its time”. This part is relevant here:
 - a) There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven—(Ecclesiastes 3:1, NASB)
 - b) Now lets jump to Verse 8a: “A time to love and a time to hate;” (Ecc. 3:8)
 - (1) That sounds unbiblical. You mean there are times when we should love people and times when we should hate people? That is not what this verse means.
 - (2) The key word is season. There are times when we have to punish a child. There are times when war is necessary. There is also times when physical love is appropriate. Let’s face it, if all we did lie in bed and make love all day, nothing would get done. ☺ There is a time and season for everything.

16. Verse 13: The mandrakes send out their fragrance, and at our door is every delicacy, both new and old, that I have stored up for you, my lover.
- a) Mandrake is a fruit. It is associated with lovemaking.
 - i) Mandrakes are mentioned in Genesis Chapter 30. Jacob had two wives and two other concubines who produced a total of 12 sons for him. There was an argument in Verses 14-16 between the two wives over mandrakes. It was believed that mandrakes were a sexual stimulant to a man. In Genesis 30, Verse 17, Jacob impregnated his wife Leah after snacking on mandrakes. That was Jacob's 5th son.
 - a) I don't know if this is medically true, but in a Jewish mind, to mention mandrakes is to say "hey honey lets get some mandrakes and see if it helps you like it did Jacob!" ☺
 - b) Next, we have this final statement by the girl to Solomon "at our door is every delicacy, both new and old, that I have stored up for you, my lover."
 - i) This is a neat phrase where we could have a lot of fun with word pictures.
 - ii) She is describing a getaway, and now she mentions "our door".
 - a) In Chapter 8 they head back to her childhood home, and it could refer to that door, but I think that is beside the point.
 - iii) Remember this whole chapter is about the joy that comes from restoration. The realization that Solomon loves her with a perfect love causes her desire to be thrown back at him.
 - iv) She is saying in effect, "All I have is yours. Let us go to our house. Everything I have is stored up for you".
 - v) Folks, that is a description of the Christian life. God blesses us with incredible power and love. He blesses us with individual spiritual gifts. All we have comes from him. What do we do with it? We offer it right back to God! The joy of the Christian life is to live it for God as well as from God. To do work, pleasure, service, prayer, time with our spouses and loved ones all for the glory of God. That is the word picture being painted here, and it is reflected through marriage.
 - a) As to marriage, the great joy in marriage comes from when we let God work *through* us. A marriage is not a marriage of two, but a marriage of three. A God-centered marriage brings a lifetime of joy as you work as a couple to "lift each other up", compliment each other, try to "out do one another" and as much as possible minister to each other's needs. That is how one brings joy to a marriage and joy to God the Father who is part of that marriage.
17. On that positive note, let's pray for God's guidance: Father, our marriages fall short, because we often take matters into our own hands instead of looking for your guiding hands. We lift up our marriages to you that you may be glorified through that marriage. We also pray for those who among us are not married. If that is what they desire, work on preparing them to be the type of husband or wife you want them to be before the right person comes along. For those who are single, help them see the applications of the joy of their relationship with you. We ask all of this in Jesus name, amen.