

The Cross in the Song of Songs

The Cross in The Song of Songs



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Table of Contents

Preface	5
Chapter One: Ecclesiastes	7
Chapter Two: The Song Can Finally Begin	17
Chapter Three: Black but Radiant!	25
Chapter Four: New Maturity	33
Chapter Five: Being Established in Union	39
Chapter Six: Rise Up and Come Away	43
Chapter Seven: She Applies the Altar	51
Chapter Eight: Experiencing Resurrection	55
Chapter Nine: Learning To War From Above	65
Chapter Ten: Open To Me	75
Chapter Eleven: Fellowship In His Sufferings	83
Chapter Twelve: A Greater Beauty	91
Chapter Thirteen: The Virtuous Woman	99

The Cross in the Song of Songs

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Preface

On my first trip to Ireland, the Spirit began to sing the Song of Solomon to my heart as I traveled across the island for the first time. The words of this sacred script flowed like rivers of Life from the heart of God into mine. It was like the Day-Spring from on high visiting me and gathering my being up into Divine Fellowship. I found Him whom my soul loveth above the earth where Life is untouched by the earth's dark trials and the enemy's fierce attacks. The Life that quickened me as I held these words deep within during that time will remain testimonies of the reality that we are in an uncontestable Life-union with the Living Son Himself.

And now, eleven years later, I find the voice of my Beloved singing to me again. With each verse, and every word within I hear Him I feel Him... drawing and wooing my heart to apply His Cross like never before. For twenty years I have been taught that life comes out from death. I have consistently listened to the preaching of the Cross throughout that same time. Although I knew it was true and had embraced it in some measure, in many ways it was like a shrouded mystery, still dim and unclear, like an image viewed through a mirror darkly. Yet God's timing is perfect, and only by His Spirit can we truly see and receive anything from His realm. Now, by the grace of God, the light of Calvary is dawning with more clarity, shining into my darkness to bring forth His life.

The writings that are found in these following pages flowed forth effortlessly from the Spirit. As soon as I put pen to paper, the Lord would begin to speak... to sing... to share His heart in these scriptures. With each line He would continue to guide my heart in the ways of the Cross as they are to be found at work in His Bride. My prayer is that these pages would bring you into the realm of His Face, where the Spirit can make real to your heart that which God has for you at this time.

Introduction

Much of what will be shared from these scriptures can be heard or received in a way that brings condemnation rather than the sweet drawing of the Spirit to know Christ more intimately. There is a "spirit" behind everything we hear, read and communicate. Even when the Lord opens up truth in the scriptures, there is still an attitude of heart in God that we need to receive concerning those things. We can bear witness to the truth in the scriptures, and still

The Cross in the Song of Songs

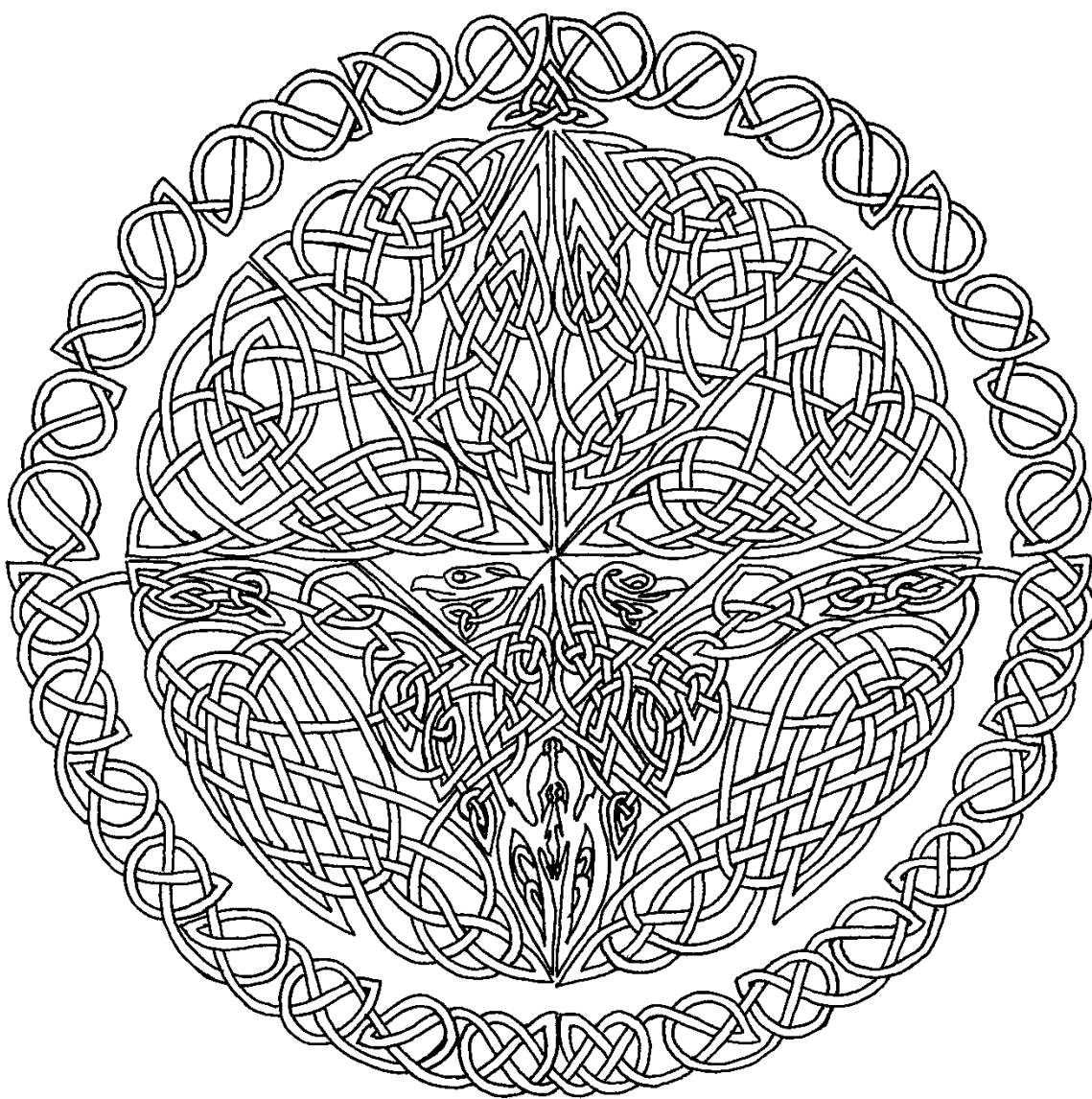
miss the heart and spirit behind it. We need to not only hear the truth, but receive the Spirit of Truth, which is another name for the Holy Spirit (John 14:17). Please seek to hear these things by the Spirit of the Truth as One Who is declaring the very heart of Jesus towards His beloved bride. We must press past our understandings until we hear the attitude of God's heart in all things. What He is saying is not condemnation; it is pure love. If you are born again, you have already been accepted in the Beloved, you are joined to Jesus, you are the place where He dwells, and your salvation and position in Christ is secure and settled. Allow that foundation of love and acceptance in Christ to be laid in you so that you might receive these things from God's heart and not through your fears.

Much of these following articles will refer to the Cross. If there was ever a truth that was heard through a veil of misunderstanding and condemnation, it would be the Cross. There is a process and awakening through which God must lead each of us through to show us the absolute blessedness of the Cross of our Lord Jesus as it relates to us every day of our lives. We cannot fully appreciate the Cross as God's tool of our decrease until we see just how beautiful Jesus is and just how horrible it is that our flesh (our old self nature of sin) would try to take His place in us. Many times as we listen to wonderful words of life about Jesus it may seem as if we are hearing the most beautiful song ever sung floating over a great chasm and tickling our ears for more. We want to be filled with that Song, but self is always in the way. It is at this point that we can begin to appreciate the ministry of the Cross. The Cross is the tool that God used to remove the self-life through crucifying it in His Son at Calvary. There is much to be embraced regarding the full work of Christ's Cross that the scriptures declare at length. This book emphasizes the believer's need to daily apply the reality of their death with Christ so that self will not hinder the flow of Christ's Life from within. With our own hands we must embrace the finished work of Calvary and enforce its power over everything in us that is still drawing sap from that old dead tree. Only Christ could and did crucify that old nature on His Cross; our place is simply to enforce and apply that reality. The Cross is a tool in the hands of God's lovers! The ultimate expression of love towards the Lord is to love Him more than our own lives, even unto applying our death with Him through a daily embrace of His Cross (Rev. 12:11).

***“As we apply His Cross, we embrace Him in eternal ways.
The applied Cross is an expression of love.”***

Chapter One

“Ecclesiastes”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

“Not I, But Christ”

The book that comes before the Song of Songs is Ecclesiastes. Before we can properly enter the Song of Songs, we must pass through the book of Ecclesiastes. There is a divine order to this, for until we come to an end of ourselves we will never be able to truly hear His song. The wretchedly deceptive “I” will infiltrate every chorus and verse.

Ecclesiastes 1:2 “Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.”

The great crisis of Ecclesiastes is an awareness of the emptiness and vanity of living by our own resources under the Son. The person (branch) in Ecclesiastes is shriveling under the heat of the sun as he/she strives to bring forth fruit while functioning separately from the Vine. All is unfulfilling and fruitless in an existence of separation from the Son.

Ecclesiastes 1:3 “What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?”

As we labor and search for fullness apart from the indwelling Christ, we groan becoming increasingly aware of our deep and aching emptiness.

Ecclesiastes 1:8a “All things are full of labor; man cannot utter it.”

When someone strives to serve God and bring forth fruit through their own works, there is a fullness that is experienced. Everything is full of “labor” rather than being filled with Christ. These scriptures literally say that ALL things, are “full” of labor. “All things” are “full” of labor. Do you ever feel that way?

There are times when we may feel that we are doing all that we know to do, and yet where is the joy? Feelings come such as, “I am exhausted, I am so tired and I am still empty!” We are doing everything we know to do FOR God, and we are still coming up empty, dry and unfulfilled. In our hearts we may wonder, “What is wrong, Lord? What more can I do? What more can I try? What more can I be for you? Where is the problem?” The next sentence in verse eight says,

Ecclesiastes 1:8b “the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.”

Such a person could have such thoughts as, “Lord, I am listening to all these sermons. I am looking at my bible, my eye is searching, my ear is listening, and I am not satisfied. There is no satisfaction in it. I am empty and exhausted. It is all vanity of vanities.” The problem with all this is that it is all under the Son. All things are produced in a state of separation from the Son. Therefore everything is exhaustingly empty. It is important to remember that if we are born again, we are indeed in the Son. But it is possible to be in Christ and yet still relate to Him in ways of separation.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

The Un-Crucified "I"

We may think that the remedy to such a condition of relating in separation is to stop working in the flesh and try to get closer to Jesus. But the real cause of this separation is not found in the realm of changing our actions or attitudes. The true mortal enemy of our deepest need for properly relating in Jesus is the UN-CRUCIFIED "I". It is our old nature that continues to press forward separate from the Son causing all these problems. Until this "I" embraces the Cross of its own crucifixion, it will continue to usurp Christ as Source and fill everything with self-life instead of being a vessel filled with the Life of the Son.

We find evidence of this un-crucified "I" motivating all things done in chapter two:

Ecclesiastes 2:4-10 "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I got men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy."

In these verses we find the word "I" used over and over again. Here, everything that is accomplished happened by the "I". We must remember that these are King Solomon's writings, and these accomplishments are pertaining to His service as the king of Jerusalem.

- *"I made me great works; I builded me houses."*

The Lord builds the house through His Cross, yet this one is doing it through the great works of "I". Psalm 127:1 says, *"Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that built it."*

- *"I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees."*

"I" is trying to bring forth the fruit... "I" is trying to produce water... "I" is trying to grow trees... Here the flesh is trying to produce and grow what can only come from the Life of God.

- *"I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house."*

"I" is trying to bring forth service through the arm of the flesh."

The Cross in the Song of Songs

- *"I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces."*

"I" is trying to produce precious beauty, like silver, gold and kings' treasure.

- *"I got me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts."*

"I" is trying to produce worship.

We find in these verses that "I" is literally taking the place of God, and trying to produce what only God can bring forth through Christ in us.

The Ugly End of the Un-Crucified "I"

Ecclesiastes 2:9 "So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem."

The end of doing everything in the strength of our own flesh is heard in this verse: "I WAS GREAT AND INCREASED". The ultimate end of living in such a manner is that CHRIST is not great and increased - WE are. We find these verses declaring that the flesh is trying to fulfill what only the Eternal Christ in us can produce.

To the eyes of man and much of the church-world, such an ambitious and prosperous minister as Solomon was in these verses could be held in high acclaim. Such a person may be set forth as an example of Christian success in the things of the Kingdom. This one has been building great buildings, planting gardens, gathering many servants, organizing huge worship sessions, and doing all that any human could set forth to do for God. The real question must be, "Is God receiving an increase of His Son through it"? In other words, does our Father get Christ when we offer up the "I"? Although the ministry may be a best-seller on earth, it will never even touch the heart of the Father Whose only desire and satisfaction is in His Son. Therefore we must question who is getting satisfaction from all these grand endeavors. The next verse will address that very thing:

All For My Pleasure

Ecclesiastes 2:10 "And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy;"

When someone functions through their own life rather than Christ's, the self-life is deeply motivated for its own pleasure. There is a deep inward feeding of one's soul when it is yet "I" doing the living. Even the holy things of God will become a means for our own ends and pleasure. Yet the scriptures declare that all things were created for God's pleasure (Rev 4:11). The Bride of Christ does not exist for her own satisfaction but to satisfy her Husband. For the bride to come forth, the "I" must die.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

On the surface we may feel that all we do is truly for God, but we must probe deeper into the motives and intents of our hearts. Wherever self remains, there will be the hidden motive of self-serving. We will be glorying in our own greatness, humility, abilities, accomplishments, sacrifices. We will continue to draw strength and motivation to do more to continue sustaining the inward needs of self, feeding our ego and keeping self alive. The Cross goes right to the real problem - "self" - and lays the axe to the root. Once self is dealt with by the Cross, the Son can begin to live instead. Christ in us will always do that which pleases the Father because He is the Son!

No Longer I

Before we are truly ready to enter into the realm of the Song of Songs, this point must become our experiential reality. We must be ready to say, "no longer I", no matter what the cost. The Cross must become more than a teaching, but a tool to break free from the motivation of self in all things. The Cross did not fix or refine our flesh; it crucified it. We must apply His death to all that yet functions "under the Son" in us. Everywhere we find that it is "I" not Christ that is doing the living, we must apply the Cross. Paul said in Gal. 2:20 that it was "NOT I" but Christ living in Him. The "I" must be submitted to its death in Christ's death. As long as "I" lives instead of Christ, all will be vanity and vexation. Until the "I" dies, life will be an existence under and separate from the Son. There will be no Song or gardens of fruit, just a life full of labor and the works of the flesh.

"Unless A Man Hate His Own Life"

Luke 14:26-27 "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

*Ecclesiastes 2:17 "**Therefore I hated life**; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit."*

Ecclesiastes 2:18 "Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun."

While still in Ecclesiastes there will be a sense of pride and self-righteousness that causes one to glory in their own flesh. But when we begin to awaken to the reality of what the self-life is and how it usurps Christ as Lord and Life, we begin to hate the "I" that once reigned supreme. We are no longer filled and satisfied with an existence "under the Son". The houses we built, the fruit we produced, the service we rendered, the worship we offered, and the precious things we made are all nothing because they are not filled with Christ but with our labors (John 15:5). We see them as vain, worthless things that have no eternal value because they are devoid of God's Son. What we once called incredible we now call pitiful. The treasures we held up as rare and precious are now worthless. All the fruit of our labors for God that we once took so much pride in are now weighed in the balances and found to be lacking, for they are devoid of

The Cross in the Song of Songs

the Son. We no longer want to offer up the works of our hands (Hosea 14:3). We are ready to worship God through His Son and not our own virtues. The idol of self is beginning to fall in the heart of such a one. They are ready to die to self instead of offer it up to God.

Not Failure but Finally Ready

At such a time as this, one may feel they are further from God than ever before in their life. They feel like a supreme failure with no strength left. Yet this is exactly what God has been waiting for: someone who is ready for Christ to be all and in all! A vessel must be emptied of self before it can be filled with the Son, and that is just what has been happening to this person.

This principle can be better understood through the example of a drowning man. The lifeguard knows that the person needs to weaken before he/she can be saved, or they will still have too much fight left and start to drown the lifeguard with him. In like manner, we need to come to the end of our strength and striving to become something special for God. We need to be completely emptied of our own resources that God might fill us up with the resources of His Son instead.

Ready for the Cross

It is often shared that the Song of Songs begins with a woman who is madly in love with the Lord. She is breaking loose from lethargy and dullness and encountering this time period of passion, intimacy and new life in her relationship with the Lord. Many times this way of sharing from this book leaves people with the impression that they must become extremely passionate and spiritual to be able to identify with the Shulamite. One may feel impressed to start earning a relationship of intimacy with the Lord based on increasing their affections and becoming more "spiritual". In a very real sense this is simply another version of Ecclesiastes! The "I" is still alive and trying to be passionate and affectionate. The person is yet filled with their own labors and therefore pride and superiority will flourish in them. They will make other maidens feel "lesser" and stir up jealousy, strife and competition in the midst of the daughters of Jerusalem.

I believe the person entering into the Song of Songs looks drastically different than the one described above. This girl is weak, empty, burnt out and finished. She has come to an end of herself, hates her old life, is burnt out with laboring under the Son and has nothing more to offer the Lord, including any special affection. She sees her self-life as the enemy of God and is willing to plunge in Calvary's sword that Christ may now have pre-eminence. She loves the Lord deeply yet cannot bear to continue in a relationship that functions in separation and pride.

Rather than being depressed and obsessing over her own wretchedness, she is experiencing the blessed relief of finding her way out of Ecclesiastes. She has run out of fuel and is ready to be energized by the power of an Endless Life (Hebrews 7:16). She has begun to see herself for what she is: someone who is desperately in need of another Life. As burnout sets in, she begins

The Cross in the Song of Songs

to confess that she is not the hope of God's plan, the strength of God's service, or the delight of God's heart. In fact, such a one is crying out for "WHO" shall deliver me from ME!! (Romans 7:24). Before this point everything was centered on self as the term "I" is echoed all throughout Ecclesiastes 2:1-9 and Romans 7. But by the end of it all, we are finally ready for the "I" to die. The Cross that once sounded so offensive and harsh starts sounding like the best thing we have ever heard. We are ready for LIFE, for HIS LIFE. The righteousness and gain that we once clung to as our way of serving the Lord is now easily released at the foot of the Cross where Christ crucified it all and gave us His Life. When someone's heart really begins to be in this condition, God's reality begins to burst forth like the morning star rising from within.

Conclusion

And so we find that our exhausting days of relating to God UNDER the Son in Ecclesiastes are meant to prepare our hearts for the incredible relationship of oneness IN Son discovered in the Song of Songs. These things written thousands of years ago in the scriptures are for us TODAY that our hearts might find comfort in knowing that God desires to bring us into a relationship with His Son greater than we ever dreamed of! The exhaustion, depression and burnout you may be experiencing right now is simply a heart turn away from discovering a relationship of fullness in union with Christ beyond all we could even comprehend. The Cross is our friend, not our enemy. Be not ashamed of it! Do not run away from it in fear! Rather embrace the Cross of Christ with purpose of heart knowing that through His death "I" was crucified that Christ might fill the depths of our being with His unspeakably wonderful Life!

***"The Cross is our friend, not our enemy.
Be not ashamed of it! Do not run away from it in fear!
Embrace the Cross of Christ with purpose of heart
knowing that through His death "I" was crucified
that Christ might fill the depths of our being
with His unspeakably wonderful Life!"***

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter One Study / Discussion Questions Ecclesiastes

1. Explain / Discuss this statement, *“Before we can properly enter the Song of Songs, we must pass through the spiritual season of Ecclesiastes.”* What happens if we try to enter into the Song of Songs with the “I” still alive?
2. What does it mean to live “under the sun” as spoken of in Ecclesiastes?
3. Why is there no satisfaction in the realm of Ecclesiastes?
4. Until the “I” embraces the cross of its own crucifixion, it will continue to usurp Christ as Source and fill everything with self-life instead of being a vessel filled with the Life of the Son. How can living a life filled with self eventually lead a believer to embrace the Cross?
5. What is our worst enemy to properly relating to Jesus?
6. Choose a verse in Ecclesiastes 2:4-10 and describe how that verse shows evidence of this un-crucified “I” motivating all things that are being done.
7. We find in these verses that “I” is literally taking the place of_____, and trying to produce what only God can bring forth through _____.
8. When “I” is functioning as source, who is receiving pleasure?
9. Comment on / Discuss this statement, *“The Bride of Christ does not exist for her own satisfaction but to satisfy her Husband. For a bride to come forth, the “I” must die”.*
10. Until the “I” dies, life will be an existence under and separate from the Son. There will be no Song or gardens of fruit... just a life full of labor and the works of the flesh. Why is the applied Cross something glorious to those who pant after the living God?

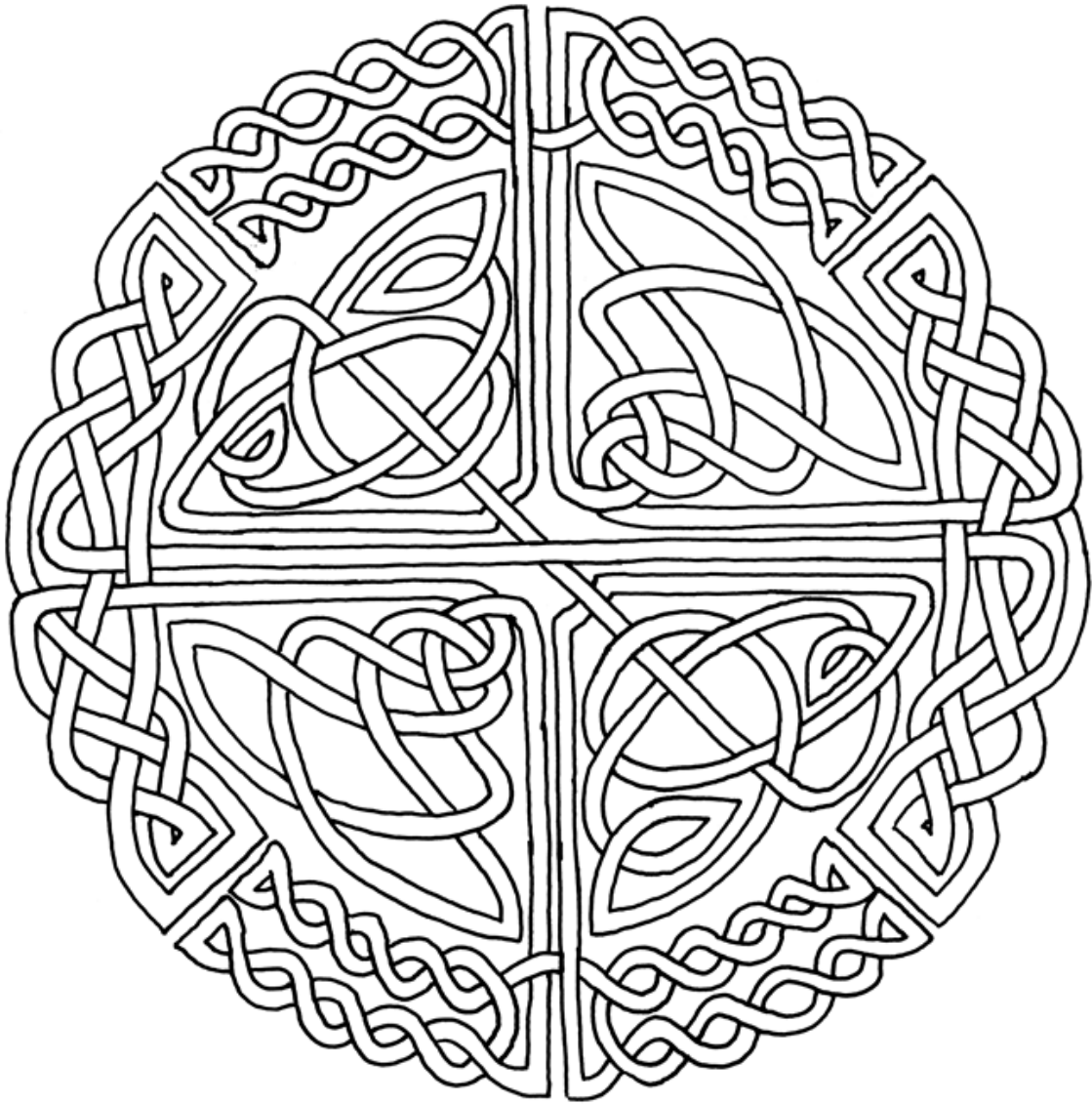
The Cross in the Song of Songs

11. Explain the dissatisfaction that comes with the houses we built, fruit we produced, service we rendered, worshiped we offered and precious things we made that are not filled with Christ but with our labors.
12. Explain / Discuss how a vessel being emptied of self so that it can be filled with the Son is not a failure or backsliding but someone in preparation for fruitful union.
13. True or False? “One must earn a relationship of intimacy with the Lord based on increasing their affections and becoming more “spiritual”. _____
14. What is the condition of someone who is ready to leave the realm of Ecclesiastes and enter into the Song of Songs?
15. When does the Cross that once sounded so offensive and harsh start sounding like the best thing that person has ever heard?
16. Describe the relationship “under the Son” in contrast with the relationship “in the Son” in Song of Songs.
17. How does this statement, “The Cross is our friend not our enemy,” describe the heart of one prepared to enter into the relationship found in Song of Songs?
18. Pray over and journal the areas that the Holy Spirit is bringing to your heart where you are ready to apply the Cross and enter into a new relationship based on Christ as your Life.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Two

The Song Can Finally Begin



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 1:1 "The song of songs, which is Solomon's"

We discussed how the exhausting days of relating to God under the Son (sun) were meant to prepare us to enter into the incredible relationship of oneness that is now ours IN the Son (sun). In Ecclesiastes, the believer has been singing their song for Him... but once we pass into the Song of Songs it will be HIS song that we hear! The very first line of the book reads: *"The song of songs which is Solomon's"*.

In the beginning of our walk with the Lord, our voice is strong with commitment, tireless effort, and high hopes filled with shining ideals. We sing loud, and we sing strong! After a while we begin to weaken, and our song starts sounding like, "I love you Lord... but I am wretched, tired, burnt out and empty." Eventually we come to the point where we are finally ready to stop singing and allow Him to sing! Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is to simply be quiet! We may expect this time of exhaustion and burnout to separate us from the intimacy we long for with the Lord, yet there is rest and a realm of endless resource prepared for those who abide in the Son. Once we stop trying to continually "do" for the Lord and "abide" in the relationship God has given us as one with Christ, we will experience a new infilling of His Life.

In the scriptures, Solomon (the son of King David) represents Christ the Son in resurrection. When Christ rose from the dead, He gained a new body to fill and dwell in. Solomon symbolizes this risen Son who now has a Body... a Bride. Therefore the "Song of Solomon" represents the song of the Risen Son! Since the time of His resurrection, Christ is ready to live in His own Body. Yet, if we are busy "living for Him", then He cannot live through His own Body. In a certain sense you could say that He wants to sing the song of His Life through His Bride/Body, but He cannot when she is singing her own song for Him. Like a wineskin ready to burst, the resurrection Life of Christ is ready to break free in us as soon as we are willing to get out of His way. What a glorious time FOR HIM when we finally come to an end of ourselves and are ready to let Him sing! In the very first sentence of the Song of Songs, we find Solomon finally singing HIS SONG! It is Solomon's song; and therefore it is the song of all songs!

***"If we are busy living for Him,
then He cannot live through His own Body."***

The Cross in the Song of Songs

The Risen Son Sings His Risen Song!

Christ in resurrection has gained a bride. She is flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone (Eph. 5:30). The Song of Songs is a book dedicated to the relationship Christ has with His Church, His Bride. What a wonderful thing it is, that what issues forth from our eternal Groom is a song! He is singing! The heart of a groom after he has joined to his bride is filled with the song of sharing His life with another. He is no longer alone but has one after his kind who shares His life! The first words that come forth from such a groom's heart are not commands, such as "wash the dishes" or "do the laundry". Rather, He sings the song He has waited so long to sing! In the Song of Songs we sense a release of God's pleasure. In resurrection Christ has a Body that partakes and fellowships in His nature and brings forth an increase of God's Life, all of this redounding to the glory of the Father. She (the believer) has always belonged to Him, even in the fields of Ecclesiastes, but now she is ready to relate to Him properly. Once again, she had to come to an end of herself, causing her to finally open up to knowing Him in the oneness that only the Cross can bring. Her darkest hours were right before the dawning of knowing Christ as her very Life.

Song of Songs 1:2a "LET HIM... kiss me with the kisses of His mouth"

The first words in the second verse of the book exhort us to "LET HIM". We have been singing. We have been working. Now it is time to stop, be quiet and LET HIM LIVE! Let Him be the Life of His resurrected Body. Let Him be the Source of the Church. We may think it is easy to simply "Let Him", but oftentimes we are so busy trying to be righteous and holy apart from Christ that it is hard to stop and allow Christ to live.

Specifically, she is to let Him kiss her with the kisses of His mouth. Here again we find that in the realm of "in the Son" all is of Life. A song replaces mere words, and kisses replace commands. We expect disappointment and servants' quarters once we confess our utter wretchedness, but instead of curses we get kisses since now Christ becomes our everything. The prodigal son experienced the same phenomenon. Many will hold onto any shred of dignity or righteousness they can find in themselves, fearing failure and rejection from the Lord. On the other hand, God waits for us to let go of our own righteousness, virtues, and all that is US, so that He can reveal Christ in us as our everything. Here again, we find the enormous blessedness of the Cross of our own crucifixion (Gal. 6:14). The Cross becomes a symbol of hope and represents the infinite love of God to give Himself for us as our death and to us as our Life.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

As He sings His view to her, she begins opening to the true and eternal relationship she has in the Risen Son. Now when He speaks, it is no longer the commands of a distant Lord but the “LET HIM” of the Risen Son who wants to breathe Life into His own body. She can “let Him” now because she has embraced her crucifixion in Him (Romans 6:8). She is no longer looking to herself for the resources necessary to survive. She will now “let Him” be her Life. His words are no longer heard as commands she must obey in her own strength, but the very release of His Life into her. He will be the fulfillment in her of every word He speaks. These kisses flow down from Christ the Head into those who have taken their place as His Body. A king has his commands, but a head communicates to its own body through oneness of life, and not the commands of law. Therefore His words are like kisses filled with His Spirit that quickens us to do His will. When He asks her to love her enemies, He not only shares the command but imparts into her His very nature that will fulfill that action. Because of oneness, His commands are now kisses. As her ears are being opened to hear His Song, she is able to “let Him kiss me” with the Spirit of His words rather than hearing everything He says as a burdensome command.

Song of Songs 1:2b “Your Love is Better than Wine”

As she lets Him live in her, she discovers how much better His life is than hers. When it is Christ in us, it is so much better than the “wine” of our old life. The contrast is incredible. She is well - acquainted with her own life. She knows her inward essence, the sap from that old sinful nature of self. Though outwardly she has labored in the Lord’s name and done many things for Him, inwardly she has felt the strife, tension, frustration, selfishness and pride all related to her old nature/life functioning as the source. When it is Christ living in us, our motives are so pure because it is Him, and nothing can compare.

Consecrated flesh is not the Son and therefore does not please the Father. All the best of our old nature consecrated to God is not the Son Himself living unto the Father and others in perfect love. She is not ashamed to exalt Him as the True Vine above every other source by which one could exist. She is not offended that all of her best is like filthy rags in the light of His life. In this new way she can no longer glory in herself and take the credit for the fruit. Being filled with His Spirit is a love that far surpasses all the pleasures of reveling in her own accomplishments and gifts. To be His in such a union has far exceeded living for Him in her own strength. She is filled, accepted and has found the joy of truly reaching His heart in this new relationship.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

*Song of Songs 1:3 "Because of the savor of Thy good ointments...
Thy name is like ointment poured forth..."*

Her focus is no longer on her beauty, works or affection but His beautiful nature. She realizes that she has been living off of the sap of a dead tree, and now she is living by the Life of the Risen Son. She is plugging into Christ as her Life now. His Spirit in her is like ointment poured forth. No longer is she being filled with the bitter waters of a selfish nature, but pure streams of Living waters are bubbling up from her innermost being. Like ointment poured forth, these waters bring healing to whomsoever she touches. Like the savory ointment, they bear the sweetness of love and care for others rather than the strife of self-glorying. She will not stop with only describing the essence of this precious ointment but will also declare the wonder that it is poured out rather than treasured up. Her Beloved gives His Life for others purely by love. She would seek to save her reputation and build up her stature, but He pours out unto the marring and deep loss of death because He is a Lamb. His motive is pure, and His Life is poured out.

She is experiencing the contrast of her life and His Life as Source. This contrast is causing her to glory in the Lord like never before! She becomes thankful for the work of the Cross that emptied her out and brought her to her end. She is so glad it is not about her! Aren't you glad it is all about Jesus, and His Life fulfilling every need in and through you? May our hearts be quick to return to the Lord our Life when we start straying back into the fields of Ecclesiastes. As we experientially know the blessed relationship of oneness into which the Cross brings us into, our hearts will overflow with comments such as,

- Thank You for the work of the Cross in my life so that I can now partake of the Divine Nature and draw my Life from the true Vine.
- Your Life is so much better than doing it in my own strength! Oh, how precious is the grace of God flooding my soul with the beauty of Christ!
- You are strengthening my inner man with the Spirit of Christ, adorning me with the Spirit of Christ and not my own fleshly attributes.

Some think of the Cross as an instrument of death and torment that is drawing us into a dark empty tomb. She knows that what comes forth from her death with and in Him is His resurrection Life (*Romans chapter 6*)! She is discovering that embracing His Cross is the door into the wonder of Christ living in her. She no longer views

The Cross in the Song of Songs

failure the same way as before. The minute she turns to look at herself, she leaves the realm of His beauty. Her view is being made pure by the Cross. He is bringing her into an intimacy of someone who has died with Christ and is awakening in His Image. She will continue to find her true identity only in Him and not view herself apart from Him.

Song of Songs 1:4 "Draw me after Thee and we will run after Thee".

We must realize that but for the grace of God, we will function by our fleshly nature. But for the grace of God, we will look down on other people and exalt ourselves. But for the grace of God to reveal His Son in us, we will do all these things and more because that is our nature until Christ is formed in us. But she cries out, "draw me". She is asking for the grace of God to gather her into this communion of Life in Christ. If He draws, then she will run. He will continue to awaken her from her slumber, and as she awakens, she will learn to respond quickly through the supply of His Life that quickens her.

Song of Songs 1:4b "The King hath brought me into His chambers."

"Chambers" no longer speak of just a position "in Christ" but of His heart that made us one and the living union behind that position. She is knowing Him in a way that far surpasses the doctrine and theology about being in Christ. She has begun receiving the Cross that crucified the old man as something real and practical and not just a doctrine. Now she is also beginning to experience the reality of her place in Him (in Christ) in ways that far exceed mere doctrines but function in the fullest measure of relationship and life.



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Two Study / Discussion Questions

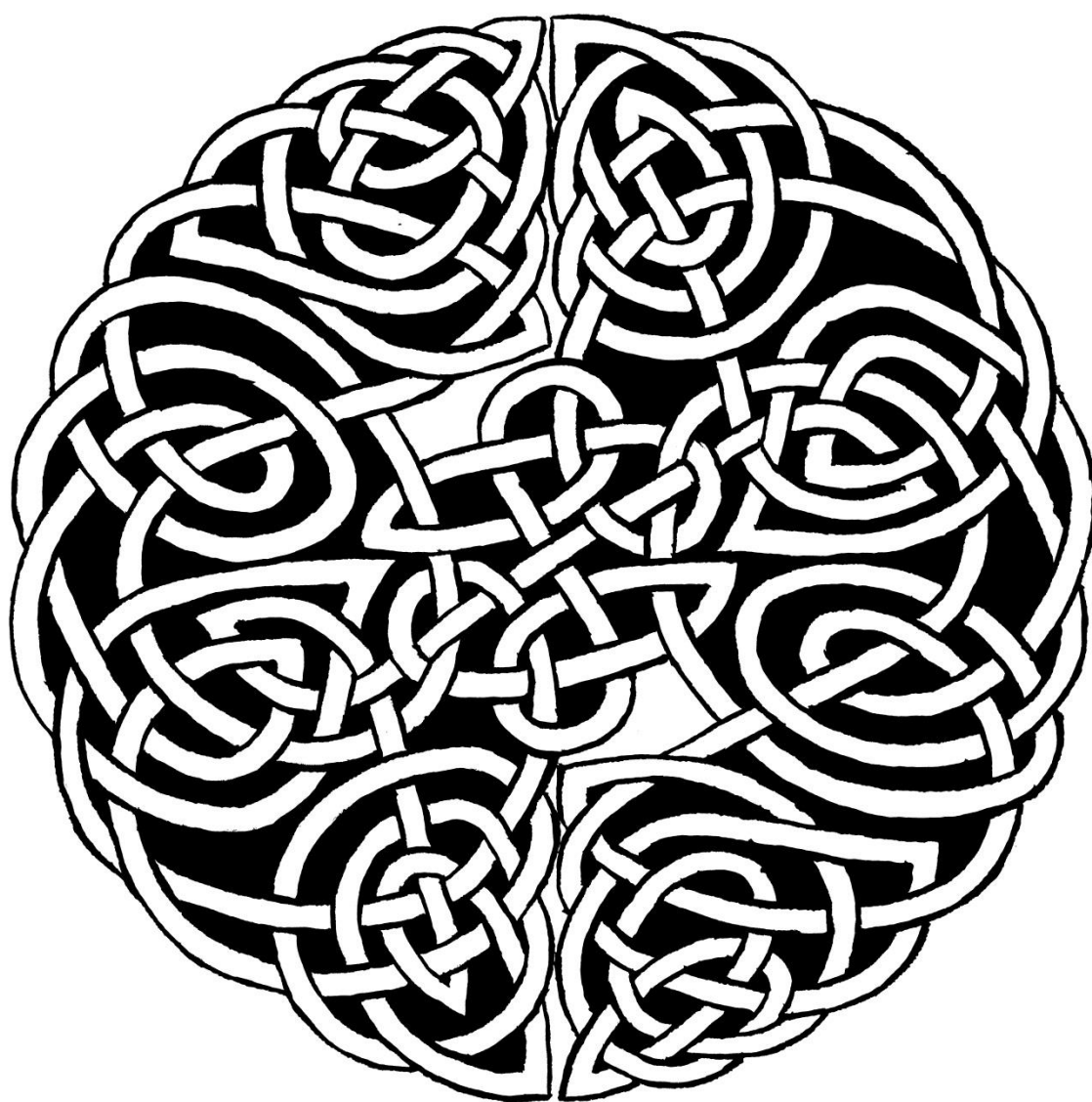
The Song Can Finally Begin

1. What are the exhausting days of relating to God under the Son (sun) in Ecclesiastes meant to prepare us to enter into?
2. Explain / Discuss the difference between us singing our song FOR Him, and the Song of Songs?
3. Comment on / Discuss this statement: *“The Risen Son wants to sing the song of His Life through His Bride/Body, but He cannot when she is singing her own song for Him”*.
4. In Song of Songs 1:2a, of what do the words “LET HIM” speak?
5. His words are no longer heard as commands that she must obey in her own strength but the very release of His Life into her. Describe in your own words how this new way of receiving His Word will affect a believer.
6. How does this statement relate to chapter one and verse three, *“She would seek to save her reputation and build up her stature, but He pours out unto the marring and deep loss of death because He is a Lamb”*?
7. We can experientially come to know the blessed relationship of oneness into which the Cross brings us into, just like the Shulamite. Can your heart open to the Holy Spirit bringing you further into knowing the Lord in this way? Take a moment to pray over the areas where you long to know Christ as your very Life and breathe in an abiding oneness that truly fills you with Him.
8. Do you believe and have you been persuaded by God and the scriptures that embracing the Cross of Christ is the door into the wonder of Him living in you?
9. Some people think of the Cross as a tormenting thing of depressing loss. What is the Shulamite discovering about the Cross?

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Three

Black but Radiant!



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 1:5a: “I am black, but comely”

“I am dark and beautiful”

“Yes! I am black and radiant”

Psalm 19:5-6 “Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.”

In Song of Songs 1:5, we find the Shulamite declaring that she is black yet also beautiful. Oftentimes when someone speaks of their lack, they are filled with a sense of depression and failure. Yet with this lady there is a sense of joy and even excitement. We hear this same tenor of heart in Paul when he says, “I am crucified... nevertheless Christ lives in me!” (Gal. 2:20). The phrase “I am black” could be referring to the fact that there is “no good thing in our old fleshly nature” (Rom. 7:18). Many people see their own flesh as beautiful and godly, therefore finding no need for the beauty of Christ within. However, after a season of working hard for the Lord under the extreme heat of sun/Son (as we saw in Ecclesiastes), we begin to see that we are unable to fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2) and melt under the pressure. The more we labor to be good and act correctly, the worse it gets (Rom. 7:17-19). Life under the Son has exposed the Shulamite’s inward selfish motives (Psalm 19:6b). She has found herself utterly black and corrupt as she sees the contrast between her life and the life in her Groom/Christ (Rom. 7:18a). She no longer clings to her own righteousness but chooses to embrace Him as her life. Her beauty is now derived from “Another”. She is no longer the source of her own virtues or her own beauty. Her “blackness” has not brought her into depression and self-loathing but rather into the wonder of being found in Him, the Son, Who is all her righteousness (Phil. 3:9). In a very real way, this crisis has caused her to relate to her Beloved as one who is joined/ married rather than one who is separate and living from their own resources.

Because we love the Lord, our desire is to be beautiful to Him. We experience a crisis when our flesh is exposed and that which we held before God as our beauty is found to be so very ugly. We fear yielding to the penetrating work of the Cross that exposes our “blackness”. It is never pleasant to see reactions and motives of utter corruption come forth from deep within! Many choose to hide from their own flesh simply to escape the sense of shame they feel as the Cross exposes their selfishness. However, this Shulamite is past all the blubbing of her own conceits. She is liberated by her lack and driven into deep and wonderful identification with Him

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Who is becoming her beauty, her all. Truly, it is worth it all to be found in Him, having nothing but Christ as our everything (Phil. 3:7-8)!

Song of Songs 1:5b "I am black but comely. O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon."

Here she is declaring that the deep in-working of the Cross is forming her into HIS habitation. The exposure of her blackness has prepared her for what is truly beautiful in His eyes. She is now likening herself to the curtains of his tent. She sees herself as a tent that houses Him, covering Him like the curtains within which He dwells. She no longer sees herself as the one filling her tent, but now He is the resident within her. She is now identifying as His vessel and declaring Him to be the treasure inside (II Cor. 4:7).

Before applying His Cross to her heart, she functioned as His worker, His preacher, and His vineyard keeper. Now she abides as His house, a member of His Body, and a vessel filled with His Life. She is in a new relationship with Him based on union. The blessed door into that relationship has been her death with Him, not her beautification for Him or a personal spirituality that sets her above the other virgins. She no longer preaches herself but Christ (II Cor.4:5). He is the treasure, and she is His container; therefore she glories in the Cross of her own crucifixion, for this blackness of her own death has brought her into the brightness of His Life shining in and through her.

The literal tents from Kedar were made from the wool of black goats. We can spend all our time focusing on the beauty of the tent and forget who is dwelling within. Our true beauty and identity comes from the One Who is dwelling in us; Christ our Life. What a blessed relief to know that He is all our righteousness. We can rejoice in the sacred trust of being His Body; His dwelling place.

"She is liberated by her lack and driven into deep and wonderful identification with Him Who is becoming her beauty, her all."

The Cross in the Song of Songs

*Song of Songs 1:6 “Look not upon me, because I am black,
because the sun hath looked upon me.”*

*“Will you disrobe me with your stares? The eyes of many morning suns have pierced
my skin, and now I shine.. black as the light before the dawn.”*

Once again, the stares of her accusers try to tear her away from the wonder of new found union. They want to take away this garment of grace whereby she is now clothed with Christ instead of her own righteousness and bring her back to the realm of works with them where they dwell. Her response is from her heart and not the realm of doctrinal correctness as she cries out, “I am in this condition because the Son is being revealed in me as my life. His appearing makes manifest my black state and pierces through all my self-glorying. God’s glory has pierced through the vanity of my own goodness and revealed the Son Who truly radiates Life. Many morning suns have pierced my skin as the Day Star Himself continues to be unveiled in me. In His Light I am undone, for now I know that I am crucified that Christ might be my life. It is no longer I but Christ who is living in me. The dark hour of discovering my blackness and embracing my crucifixion with Him has hastened the coming forth of His Life in me, like the darkest hour that comes before the dawn” (II Peter 1:19).

She has no time for melting under the stares of her accusers, those who want her to make a fair show in the flesh so that she too might escape the true circumcision of the Cross of Christ (Gal. 6:12). Rather than joining with them in their religious show, she speaks to them in a way as if to draw them into the wonder of her new discovery. The Cross is her new best friend, for it is bringing her into blessed union with her Beloved. To them the Cross is offensive, but she wants them to see in her the wonderful in-working of Calvary. Her blessed awakening is not centered on just the discovery of her dreadful black flesh but that through embracing the Cross of her own crucifixion she is being liberated into the realm of Life in the Son.

*Song of Songs 6b “And I have faced the angry glare of others,
Even of my mother’s sons who sent me out
To watch their vines while I neglected all my own.”*

Rather than being encouraged and drawn by this declaration, her brothers and sisters are angered and demand for her to leave this state of grace in union and return with them to the fields of self-effort.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

The topic of focus to her angry brethren is the keeping of vineyards. Those around her feel as if they are the keepers of the vine, and want her to keep vines with them. She is declaring that He is her vine and she is His branch (Jn. 15:1-8). She wants to abide in Him, trusting His Life to keep her as the Vine gives Life to His branches, rather than her trying to do and be something for Him apart from Him. She wants to continue in the spirit and not return to the flesh as her way (Gal. 3:3).

Now she feels alone. Those around her do not want to proceed through the Cross into union. Still, she needs to feed – to eat - so she may grow in grace and the Life of her Beloved. So she asks...

*Song of Songs 1:7 “Tell me, my love, where You feed Your sheep
And where You rest in the afternoon,
For why should I go searching blindly
Among the flocks of Your friends?”*

*“Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest,
where Thou makest Thy flock to rest at noon;
for why should I be as one that turneth aside
by the flocks of Thy companions?”*

Here she asks of Him for pure pastures in the realms of His Life. She wants to know where He finds rest and where He feeds those who have found Him in resurrection (at noon). She does not want to walk separately from those who are dwelling in His Life and functioning as His Body (His companions). She longs for fellowship and rest with those who feed on the Lamb in this new-found way of union.

*Song of Songs 1: 8 “If you don’t know, O lovely woman,
follow the tracks that the sheep have made
and feed your own little goats and lambs
in the fields where the shepherds lie.”*

He answers her by directing her to those who have chosen the way of the Cross and Christ as their life. These have made tracks for her to follow in. They have lived as examples of Christ dwelling in His Body and the Cross as the Way. She obviously has those for whom she is responsible - her own little lambs to feed. She is concerned not just for her own growth and nourishment but for theirs also. She must feed them in these paths and realms of Life that she herself is just now discovering.

Chapter Three Study / Discussion Questions

Black but Radiant!

1. Oftentimes when someone speaks of their lack, they are filled with a sense of depression and failure. Yet with this lady, there is a sense of joy and even excitement. Why is that?
2. What is the process that caused the Shulamite to no longer cling to her own righteousness but embrace her Beloved as her life?
3. Her “blackness” has not brought her into depression and self-loathing, but rather the wonder of being found in Him, the Son, Who is all her righteousness (Phil. 3:9). When we become depressed and discouraged over our failures and lack, how can we embrace the Cross in a manner that turns our focus from ourselves to Christ our Life?
4. How can the revelation of our own wretchedness cause us to relate to Christ as one who is joined / married rather than one who is separate and living from their own resources?
5. Why do we fear yielding to the penetrating work of the Cross that exposes our “blackness”?
6. Do you believe that it is truly possible to be liberated by your lack and driven into deep and wonderful identification with Christ? If so, explain why and if applying the Cross is part of that liberating process.
7. Before applying His Cross to her heart she functioned as His worker, His preacher and His vineyard keeper. Now she is abiding as His house, a member of His Body, and a vessel filled with His Life. Which relationship do you think is more fulfilling to the Lord and to her?

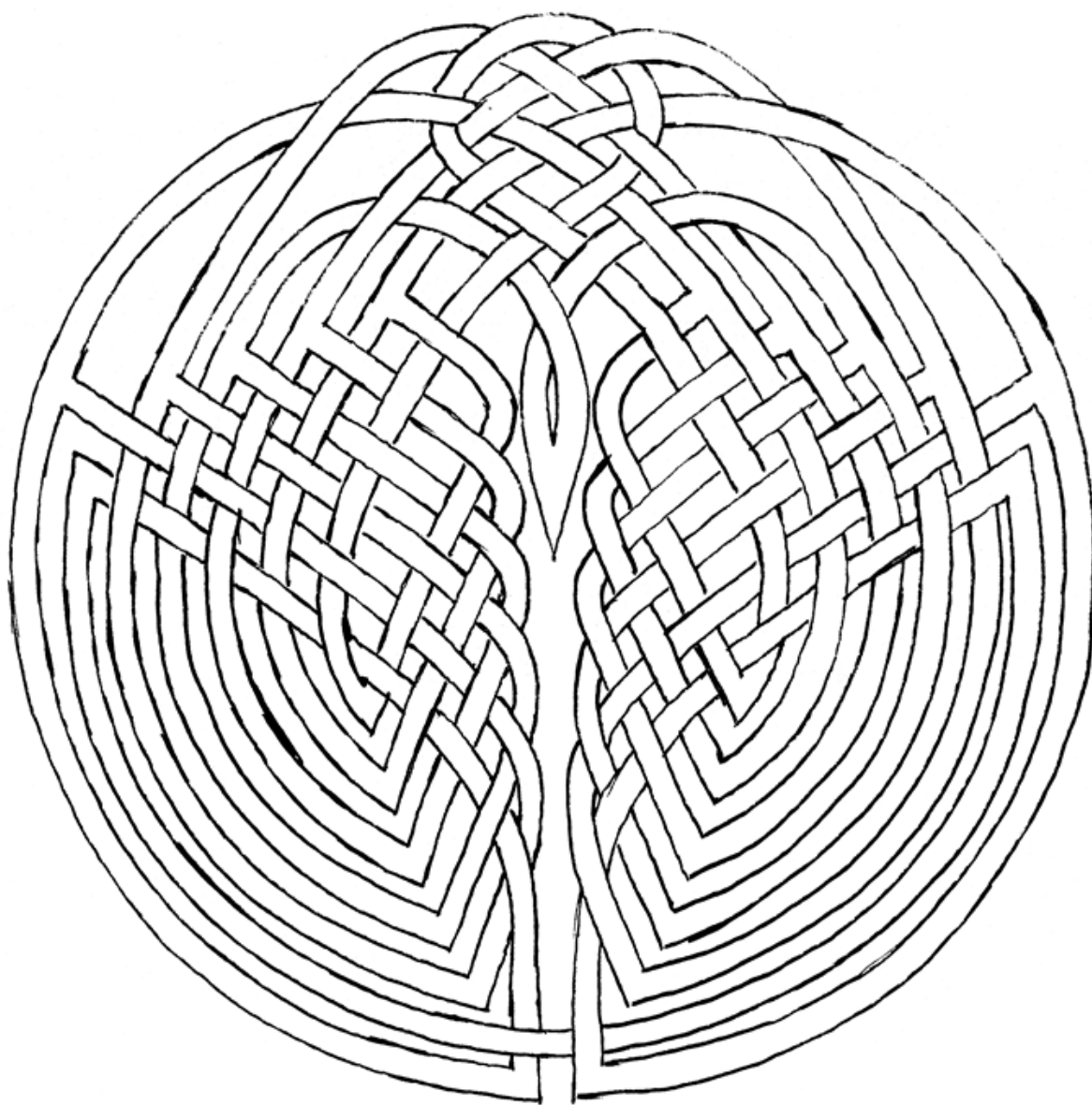
The Cross in the Song of Songs

8. Comment on / Discuss this statement: *“The dark hour of discovering my blackness and embracing my crucifixion with Him has hastened the coming forth of His Life in me, like the darkest hour that comes before the dawn (II Peter 1:19).*
9. Many times those who are close to us are offended with the reality of Christ’s Cross being applied in a personal way. She wants her friends to know that her blessed awakening is not centered on just the discovery of her dreadful black flesh, but that through embracing the Cross of her own crucifixion she is being liberated into the realm of Life in the Son. In what ways have you experienced this same dilemma as you have chosen to embrace His Cross in your daily walk?
10. The topic of focus to her angry brethren is the keeping of vineyards. Those around her feel as if they are the keepers of the vine, and want her to keep vines with them. She is declaring that He is her vine and she is His branch. Why does the way of the flesh persecute those proceeding in the Spirit as one with the Lord? Give scriptures to support your answer.
11. She wants to know where He finds rest and where He feeds those who have found Him in resurrection (at noon). Has your heart ever hungered for fellowship with those Who are embracing the Cross and Christ as their Life?
12. She is directed to those who have chosen the way of the Cross and Christ as their life. These have made tracks for her to follow in. The Way of Christ and Him crucified is a path trodden by the Bride for generations. Comment on the necessity of not only finding Him and His Way but finding those who walk in Him that we might find food, fellowship and communion with His Body.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Four

New Maturity



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Entering a Season of New Growth

There is a long dry season between the former rains of early spring when seeds are first planted to the latter rains of harvest time when fruit begins to come forth. During this dry season, the heat can be intense and the growth is hidden beneath the soil's surface. During these long hot days, the temptation comes to leave the principles of the Cross that first saved us and by which Christ was sown into hearts, and start trying to produce fruit on our own. In our attempt to appear fruitful we may labor, wrestle, and cry out for God to help us as we "take our labor under the sun" (Ecclesiastes). Like children striving to do an adult task, we try to handle the things of God on our own rather than waiting for the Lord to come forth as our fruit. Finally, we realize that our love, strength, patience, wisdom, forgiveness, etc. are utterly insufficient for the mission. We return to the Cross and fall down in surrender. This time we are not surrendering our things or our problems, but ourselves. Our heart cry is no longer, "I will try harder, I will be better, I will do your ministry," but rather now we cry; "I am not, I am crucified, not I but Christ must live through me." At this point everything changes. As we hug the Cross that crucified us (Romans chapter 6, Galatians 6:14), we find Christ's life filling us in new ways. Old, dead religious duties become gardens blossoming with God's fruit. Our bibles become brand new, each verse resonating with the living testimony of Christ Who is now in us. Scriptures that seemed boring and dry begin to open as the Spirit reveals Christ in ways that are wonderful beyond description. I share all of this to simply help the reader prepare their heart for the season the Shulamite is now in. She has just passed through the things we just discussed. In her weakness she is discovering new motives within her heart that emanate from His Life in her. His strength is quickening her in new ways. Even things like "rest" and "fellowship" are altogether new and filled with Life. It is a time of discovering the wonder of existing as one united into His fullness. She is experientially knowing that He is her Provision in all things. Her heart is continuing to turn from herself as Source unto Him as her Life. May God draw our hearts to run with her into truly knowing what Life is... Christ Himself filling us (Ephesians 3:18-19). May we surround ourselves with the company of those who "hug/embrace" the Cross that crucified us so that we might joyfully enter into knowing the fullness of Christ within!



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 1:9 “I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh’s chariots.”

Here we see her motive is no longer to carry forth her own life with its desires, will and purpose, but to carry Him forth. She is now a vessel purposed to bear His life and not her own.

Song of Songs 1:10a “Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels...”

Her cheeks are flushed, not by the exertion of fleshly efforts but by a new flow of Blood which signifies His Life in her. She is now energized by the power of an endless Life, which is Christ’s and not her own (Hebrews 7:16). She can go the extra mile and carry Him forth in ways she never could before.

Song of Songs 1:10b “thy neck with chains of gold”

Her neck is lifting Him up as her Head now. (Colossians 1:18). Her neck is gird and strengthened with chains of gold, which represent deity. The divine work of God through the Cross has now joined her to Him, body to Head. She is empowered and strengthened by the Spirit of God to bear Him as Head in the forward movement of His Life as it flows forth through His body. Before her neck was stiff, only willing to go and do what she wanted. But now she exists to lift Him up and do His will as one joined in life-union.

Song of Songs 1:11 “We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.”

A whole new emphasis has motivated her. Now she seeks to be built as His habitation rather than working on her own virtues and fruit. She seeks for Christ (gold) to be formed within, held by the silver of His redemptive Cross and not the works of her flesh. She has found that unless the Lord builds the house she labors in vain (Psalm 127:1). She will not “build in vain” again, trying to bring forth something for Him through her own works. She is discovering that all resources to be built as His habitation must come from God unveiling His Son in her. In Ecclesiastes she was concerned with beautifying the vessel, but now her emphasis is on the Treasure (II Cor. 4:7). What will make her His habitation is that HE is able to dwell in her. All that is being formed and “made” in her now is for Him alone. The focus is no longer to gain a greater measure of “spirituality” that would increase her stature. She is set apart to be His dwelling place. All activity is now focused on becoming His home.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 1:12 “While the King sitteth at His table, my spikenard sendeth forth the fragrance thereof.”

Now, not only is she being formed as His habitation, but the inhabitant is finding rest and communion within as His home (His bride). The King sitting at His table is a picture of Christ having entered into His rest in the believer (Psalm 132:13-14). He is a King, a governor, established in the place of inward fellowship that is sending forth savor. When Christ is given place as Lord and Life, we release more than correct actions or proper doctrines for His essence is released from this living union within His dwelling place. She can now “make manifest the savor of the knowledge”, because He is her fullness and not man’s religion (II Corinthians 2:14). Before this time she sat at the table and there was no savor or fragrance of Christ going forth, just the fellowship of man. Now there is a communion of His Life, both in her and through her to others.

Song of Songs 1:13-14 “A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me, He shall abide all night in my bosom. My beloved is unto me as a cluster of henna flowers in the vineyards of Engedi.”

Her heart has made a determination by faith to abide in this new found relationship of union. If darkness surrounds her and she feels nothing, or if she feels pain and persecution... she will not force Him to leave His rest. She will not let go of her faith that He is in her now as her life (Romans. 10:6-8).

Whether His fruit appears through her, or outwardly she yet looks barren... she has found Him to be her fountainhead of life and fullness. All fruit is Him to her, and she will never let Him go to separate and establish her own righteousness and outward show. All is found in Him and He is the Source of All. Whether the Son is shining like the Day Star at high noon, or hidden from sight at midnight, He is intoxicatingly Life to her now, and she will lay hold of Him by faith.

Song of Songs 1:15 “Behold, thou are fair, my love; behold, thou are fair; thou hast doves eyes”.

Now His approval of her is based on her embrace of His Cross and relationship with the Holy Spirit to see according to the resurrection. Her fairness is seen in a “beholding” of herself as in Him. She is not fair outside of Him... she is corrupt and

The Cross in the Song of Songs

crucified. But the Holy Spirit (Dove) is awakening her to His reality, and she is beginning to see as He sees, and to know as she is known (I Corinthians 13:12).

Song of Songs 1:16a “Behold, thou art fair, my beloved”

Her response to His compliment is the correct response. Immediately she identifies that anything of beauty He sees in her is actually HIS beauty, and not her own. Therefore she says, “THOU are fair. You are my beauty, my virtue, my righteousness, and my life”.

Song of Songs 1:16b “pleasant; also our bed is green”

She then goes on to exalt in the wonder that their place of rest is also a place of Life (green). She is finding that embracing her death with Him has only led her into the realm of the living... all is of LIFE in resurrection, for all things are become new, and Christ is the newness of all things (II Corinthians. 5:17)! It is the place IN SON that so far exceeds all she has known working in her vineyards “under the Son” as shown in Ecclesiastes.

Song of Songs 1:17 “The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir”.

Psalms 132:3-6 “Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, Until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood.”

She is overcome with a desire to build for the Lord a habitation. This is the same heart motivation King David had in Psalm 132. Solomon is the Son of David, and represents Christ (in type and shadow) as the risen Son who now has a Body to inhabit. The Shulamite here is discovering that as she embraces the Cross that is bringing forth His Life in her... He is getting a habitation. The house is being built as His Life finds place in her through the in-working of the Cross. Like David, her heart is stirred beyond her comfort to think about the Lord’s needs and desires. She uses words such as “OUR” bed and “OUR” house. Her rest now comes from her place in Him, and His rest comes from His place in her.

***“Her rest comes from her place in Him,
and His rest comes from His place in her.”***

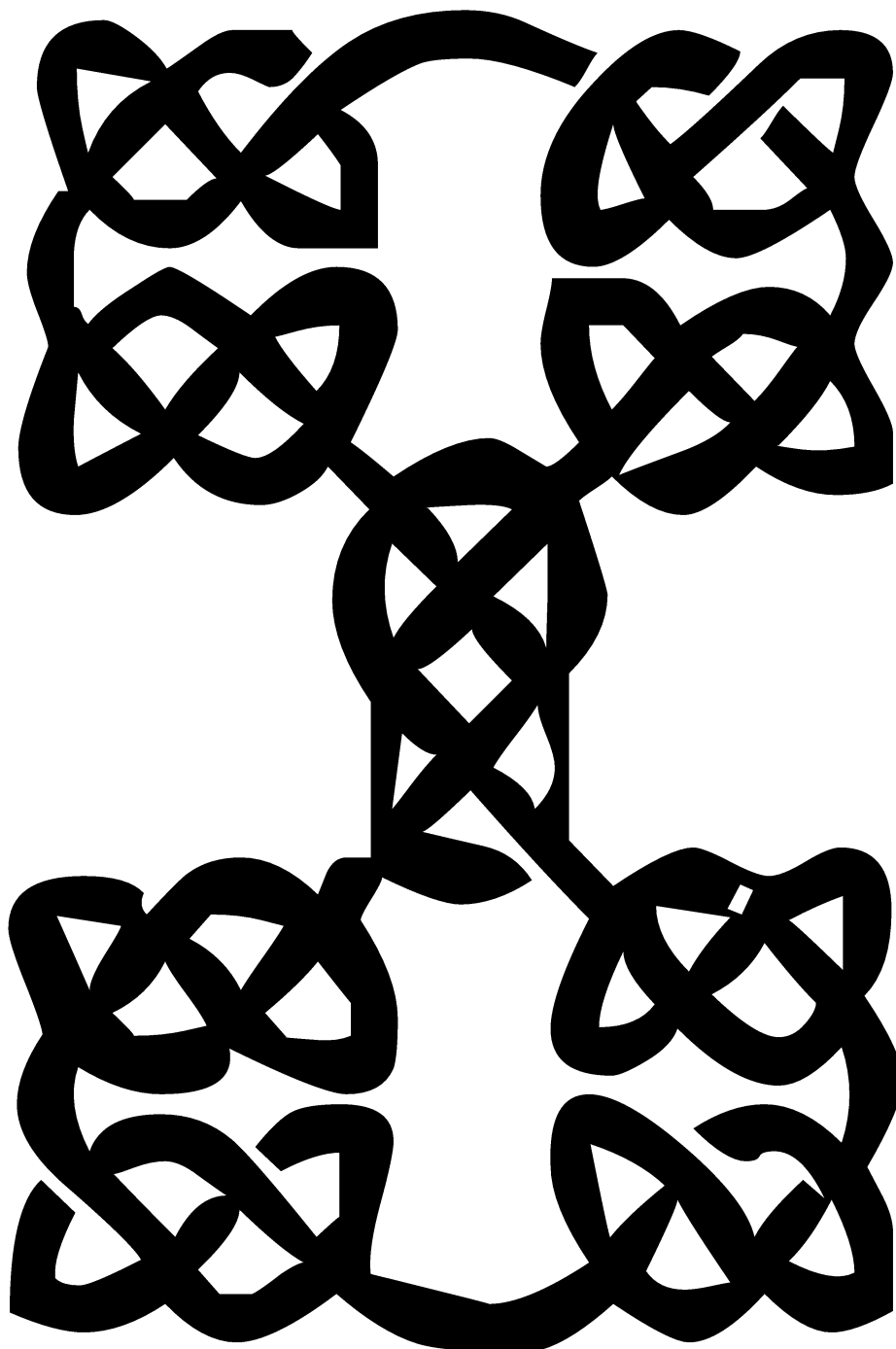
Chapter Four Study / Discussion Questions

“New Maturity”

1. Write / Discuss your commentary on the following verses. Define in specific terms how each verse helps describe the new relationship the Cross has brought her into.
 - Song of Songs 1:9 - *“I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaohs chariots”.*
 - Song of Songs 1:10a - *“Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels”.*
 - Song of Songs 1:10b - *“Thy neck with chains of gold”.*
 - Song of Songs 1:11 - *“We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver”.*
2. When Christ is given place as Lord and Life, we make manifest more than correct actions or proper doctrines for His essence is released from this living union within His dwelling place. How does chapter one and verse twelve show us that Christ dwelling in us is a position of fragrant communion and life?
3. How does chapter one and verses thirteen and fourteen help describe this new embrace of her Beloved by faith? How does Romans chapter ten verses six through eight relate to her new approach?
4. The Shulamite has a relationship with the Holy Spirit that causes her to see and know Him in Resurrection oneness. How does the Groom describe her eyes?
5. How does chapter one and verse sixteen show that the place of our rest in Him is also a place of Life?
6. Comment on / Discuss this statement; *“Her rest comes from her place in Him, and His rest comes from His place in her.”*

Chapter Five

“Being Established in Union”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 2:3-5 “As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.”

We find her identifying in Him in living ways as she is being established IN HIM. She has left the old ways of relating in the separateness of doing things for Him through the works of her flesh. She is now finding the blessed rest and fullness that before seemed like only a dream. She has found this IN the Son, whereas before she was searching everywhere UNDER the Son for rest and fullness. She is now finding the blessedness of being accepted in God's Beloved Son, and resting in Him as her identity. In Him there is exceeding abundance of fruit. He is her land of plenty. He is her true Vine filled with endless supply. Being “in Christ” to her is like resting under the shade of a fruit tree while partaking of the fruit freely. Being in Him is like being in a banqueting house, partaking of all fullness by grace because of His love. In verses 3-5 she feasts and basks in the wonder of being found in Him Who is all-sufficiency. She continues declaring the wonder of this position in Him in verse 6:

*Song of Songs 2:6 “His left hand is under my head,
and his right hand doth embrace me”.*

She is discovering the blessed relationship that is hers IN Christ; “*To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved*” (Eph. 1:6). She did not earn her place in Him, God put her in Christ based on the work of His Cross (I Cor. 1:30). Her position in Him is settled and stable, so she can rest there without constantly trying to maintain favor through her own works. She is realizing that HE has made her to SIT, and by His arm alone has God raised her up to her position in Christ. “*And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*” (Eph. 2:6). It is important to see the order here in both the Song of Songs and in the Book of Ephesians. Before any walking or standing occurs, all must first be established in the grace and permanency of being accepted in Christ. If that foundation is not laid first, then all subsequent growth could be seen as a form of earning or maintaining our position of oneness in Christ. That would make the Song of Songs a book about striving for acceptance rather than a song of love. No, all is of grace in Christ. She will grow in grace as she continues to know Him through partaking of His Divine nature. “*But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*” (II Pet. 3:18).

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Although she is beginning to receive the grace of Life as she partakes of Him as her Source, she will be ever mindful of her position of utter weakness and complete reliance in Him. She entered into this realm and season of blessedness only through accepting that “I” had been crucified with Christ. She had come to a bitter end of herself which opened her up to knowing Him as her Life. She is dead and now Christ is her life (Colossians 3:3). His left hand being under her head demonstrates that she can no longer lift herself up in her own strength. He alone carries her as Source. His right hand is embracing her in the oneness of resurrected union. He holds her in oneness with Himself, and nothing that she is or does keeps her in this blessed union. She is His now, even as a body belongs to the life filling it. She is held, secure, filled, and one.

Song of Songs 2:7 “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love until He please”.

She has found this place of rest so blessed, pure, and alive with the Son that she fears man’s influence of trying to bring it back into the activity of the flesh rather than the activity of His will. She will earnestly contend for her new-found relationship in Him, rebuking anything that would seek to move it from the realms of Life and back into the activity of the flesh.

He has complimented her and brought her into tender fellowship... even the communion of Life, but it is her place to keep her heart abiding as His hidden one, mindful of her true state as crucified and the vessel of His Life alone. She charges the daughters to not disturb this rest by trying to awaken the Lord unto our own times and purposes. He is now the Head, and her times and season are in His hands. He will live according to His purpose and timing in His own Body and not man’s will.

***“He is her land of plenty.
He is her True Vine filled with endless supply.”***

Chapter Five Study / Discussion Questions

“Being Established in Union”

1. In what new and living ways do we find her identifying and being established in Him in chapter two verses three through five? Is she learning theological facts or entering into the reality of a living relationship in ways she has yet known?
2. She is discovering that in Him is exceeding abundance of fruit and supply. She is partaking of His fullness through union by the grace of His Cross. In your own words describe the blessedness of knowing Christ in union as opposed to knowing Him through the merit of our own labors.
3. Using the examples found in chapter two, describe how being in Christ is likened unto a flowing relationship rather than a stagnant doctrine.
4. Because God put her in Christ based on the work of His Cross, her position in Him is settled and stable. List scriptures that support this reality, and upon which you can stand during times of trial.
5. What would make the Song of Songs a book of striving for acceptance rather than a song of love?
6. What specifically does his left and right hands embracing her symbolize?
7. Comment on / Discuss this statement; *“He has complimented her and brought her into tender fellowship, even the communion of Life, but it is her place to keep her heart abiding as His hidden one, mindful of her true state as crucified and the vessel of His Life alone”*.
8. Write down /Discuss ways that you have experientially known the wonder of being in Christ.

Chapter Six

“Rise Up and Come Away”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

This portion of scripture speaks of the dangers of getting comfortable. In the middle of love feasts and sweet communion, the Shulamite becomes more aware of her new found peace and position of acceptance than her Beloved. May our hearts be sensitized to always stay in tune by living union with Him Who is our Life, our All.

Song of Songs 2:8 “The voice of my Beloved! Behold, He cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills”.

Here we find that He is one place and she is another. She delights to OBSERVE Him as He lives in magnificent ways apart from her. It is as if she has started to position herself as His fan, observing Him from the sidelines, rather than functioning as the vessel of His Life. She is excited for people to “look at Him” with her, rather than manifesting His Life to them through her.

2:9 “My Beloved is like a roe or a young hart; behold, He standeth behind our wall, He looketh forth at the windows, gazing through the lattice.”

She has truly taken some wonderful steps of growth, yet it is not complete. At this point in her maturity she loves the PLACE of the resurrection, but not the PACE of resurrection. She is basking in her identification in Him while He is leaping in Life. She wants to stay in the FEEL of her new found pastures in Him. She wants the benefits of union without participating in the Life of the union. An arm may glory all day in the wonder of being the flesh and bone expression of the Head, but when the Head needs the arm to reach forth, that is the order of the day. In other words, she has come to identification, but not to participation in the oneness of the Resurrected Son.

Not only does she observe His wonderful feats of Life in realms of resurrection, but she glories in His nimbleness, having hind’s feet that are able to walk in the high places! The only problem with this picture is that this lovely creature of resurrection that she adores is standing outside her wall and peeking through her window and not dwelling in her. Up to this point she has fully embraced the benefits of being found in Him, joyfully embracing the position of rest and peace and fellowship in Oneness. But here we find her having difficulties when the time comes for action.

Before, in Ecclesiastes, resurrection was something that did not include her. She “rose up” in her own strength and did the work of the Lord. But in this new relationship, she must come to an end of herself, embrace her death with Christ, and

The Cross in the Song of Songs

turn away from herself unto Him as her All. She must leave herself as source, acknowledging her blackness apart from the Son, and begin basking in her new identity and supply. But He did not bring her out merely to bring her to resting and basking. Although, these are true elements of her new Life in Him, they are not ends unto themselves. The Land is not only about endless hours of reveling and feasting on our new identity in Christ and His supply of fullness, but continuing on to be the vessel of His Life as we yield to Him as His life arises from within. Hence, His call unto her at this stage is “come away”

She has been in the process of being built into a habitation by the Holy Spirit. She has walls and windows, but the building is not formed properly. All that she has been learning of the grace of Life in resurrection union is still being applied to her. She is the one being covered and housed by the knowledge, not the Lord. She is the one who has found shelter from her brutal past of burned out religious laboring in the flesh. But He did not come to deliver her unto her own comfort in a new doctrine called union, but to bring her into Himself as a vessel of His Life that houses Him. At this point He must look into her house through a veiled window. He sees her condition at this moment, but also knows her heart for Him (1:17). He knows her true place is with Him, so at this point instead of leaving her He calls to her;

Song of Songs 2:10 “My beloved spoke, and said unto me, Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away”.

We find this wonderful creature of resurrection life speaking to her through her window and behind her wall. It is not the voice of her life, constraining her from within, but a stranger calling her from afar. This should be her first clue.

His call is now “Rise up and come away”. At this point, she needs to come away from HER chambers of basking in new reality without walking in it. She has already come away from the law and religion. Now she must learn to allow the Life that she has received to rise up in her and manifest through her.

The Beloved’s calls to “come away” in verse ten of chapter two are not beckoning her into identification in Him, but unto rising up in the Life that she now bears. Rising up as His Body quickened with His Life. He is asking her to leave the knowledge of resurrection and enter into the Life of it where He, the Living One, truly is. Only in this way can she ever truly be built into his habitation.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 2:11-13 “For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

In verse eleven He speaks of a change of seasons in her walk (*winter is past*). She has embraced a measure of her death in Him, and she has also partaken of His Life through union. Now new life is pressing forth in her, wanting to manifest. Flowers want to **appear** on the earth! The vines have little grapes starting to grow. Seeds have been planted and branches have joined to Vine, and the result is Life. His Life in her! Christ wants to manifest through her. So again, His call to her is unto resurrection. A heart-cry is heard, “RISE UP and let Christ come forth in resurrection”! But for her to yield to this new Life in her, she must come away from relating to Him only based on reveling in His love without joining in His Life. She is not partaking of a doctrine but a Life that is starting to bring forth fruit in her because she has been abiding in and receiving of His grace abundantly through union.

In verse nine we saw that a wall had grown between them. This wall was not there in all the previous verses. Something of separation had grown between them in the midst of all the communion and joy. This wall shows a division between how she lives and how He lives. We have found her willing to be one with Him in rest and fellowship, but not in Life and her walk. And so instead of condemning her, He continues to woo her in verse fourteen;

Song of Songs 2:14-15 “O my dove, who art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely. Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.”

He affirms her in all she has been being established in. “Yes you are in Christ (in the clefts of the rock), and your new identity in me is secure. But LET ME hear and see my Life manifest through you. Let me hear your voice and see your face as they reflect my image from within”. He desires the new Life to manifest through her unto His good pleasure and eternal purpose. At this point she is not open and she cannot fully hear Him, so now we find not just a wall, but foxes have appeared. These foreign elements in her are opening the door to destructive forces that will break up the new growth that has begun flourishing based on union.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 2:16 "My beloved is mine and I am His; He feedeth among the lilies."

It is almost as if she has not heard His heart-cry or His warnings about the foxes. She stays in an almost dream-like imaginary state of soulish romance as she declares that He is just reveling in lilies, rather than acknowledging that He is outside the house, knocking on the door and trying to protect her from dangerous foxes. He is trying to wake her up, and she does not want to leave her happy dream. She has left really being plugged into Him as Head and being in tune with Him by Life. Now she has made a doctrine of the things she just experienced in reality, and would prefer to live in the fantasy of that rather than the reality of where He is in His season and movements in the present.

Song of Songs 2:17 "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether."

And now she speaks her true state forth with clarity. "You go do your thing while I stay back and do mine. I cannot go with you until every shadow, fear, and question is gone. I cannot move as your Body and Bride until everything is perfect".

Yet day does not break, for she has separated from the Day Star Who was trying to rise in her heart (II Pet. 1:19). Instead of cleaving to Him as her very life, she is clinging to her own soulish and personal safety. Therefore, she finds herself alone on her bed at night and unable to find Him.

Song of Songs 3:1 "By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth. I sought Him, but I found Him not."

Now she is willing to leave her fantasy world of lilies and raisin cakes and acknowledge that He is not there right now for that season is over for the time. She will start to seek Him. But He cannot be found on her bed and in her soulish affections. Something has to change.



Chapter Six Study / Discussion Questions

“Rise Up and Come Away”

1. In what ways can we “observe Him from the sidelines”, rather than functioning as the vessel of His Life?
2. At times we can become more excited for people to “look at Him” with us, rather than manifesting His Life to them by being a vessel of His Nature. How can we begin to cultivate our hearts to know Him as the Bride Who is His Body?
3. Is it possible to love the PLACE of the resurrection, but not the PACE of resurrection? Explain / discuss the difference between the two.
4. At a certain stage of our growth we come to identification in the Son, but have not yet fully embraced participation in the Life of the resurrected Son. How can we prepare our hearts to continue to grow up into Him in all things?
5. Discuss the problem with the picture found in chapter two and verse nine. How is it that this lovely creature of resurrection that she adores is standing outside her wall and peeking through her window and not dwelling in her as His habitation?
6. Explain / Discuss this statement; *“He did not come to deliver her unto her own comfort in a new doctrine called union, but to bring her into Himself as a vessel of His Life that houses Him”*.
7. His call to her in chapter two verse ten is; “rise up and come away”. At this point, she needs to come away from HER chambers of basking in new reality without walking in it. She has already come away from the law and religion; now she must learn to allow the Life that she has received to rise up in her and manifest through her. What does “rise up and come away” mean to you in your walk with the Lord?

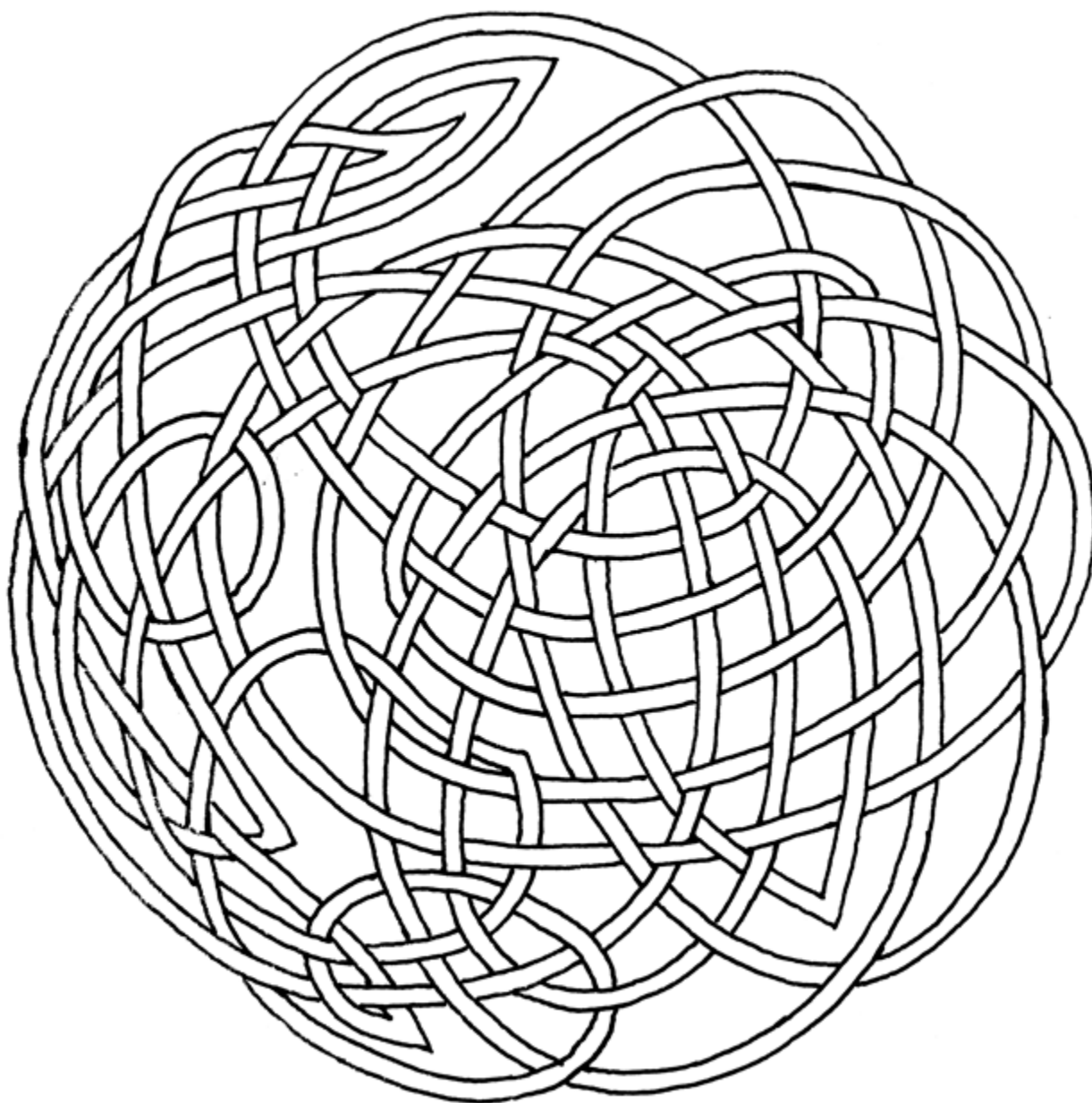
The Cross in the Song of Songs

8. The Shulamite was not partaking of a doctrine but a Life that began to bring forth fruit in her, as seen in chapter two verse twelve. Because she has been receiving of His grace abundantly through union, His Life is starting to manifest through her. Explain / discuss the wonder of Christ's Life beginning to manifest through us because we are abiding in union with the Son.
9. Explain how the wall in chapter two verse nine shows a division between how she lives and how He lives.
10. What is the Shulamite's response to her Beloved's exhortation to; *"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes"*?
11. Is it possible for us to deceive ourselves concerning our true spiritual condition by ignoring the foreign elements within that are open to destructive forces that will break up the new growth that is flourishing based on union?
12. Explain / Discuss what this following statement speaks to your heart; *"It is almost as if she has not heard His heart-cry or warnings about the foxes. She stays in an almost dream-like imaginary state of soulish romance as she declares that He is just reveling in lilies, rather than acknowledging that He is outside the house, knocking on the door and trying to protect her from dangerous foxes"*.
13. Explain what is faulty with this reasoning, *"You go do your thing while I stay back and do mine. I cannot go with you until every shadow, fear, and question is gone. I cannot move as your Body and Bride until everything is perfect"*.
14. Because of love, the Groom continues to draw her out from her place of stagnation and self-protection. Comment on / Discuss how His actions of love could be misinterpreted as rejection.
15. Explain / Discuss what this phrase means to you, "Rise up and allow His Life to come forth".

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Seven

“She Applies The Altar”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 3:2 "I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom my soul loveth. I sought Him but I found Him not."

At this point she is finally willing to arise, yet it is not the RISE UP of resurrection that her Beloved was calling her to in chapter two. This is the rising up of a panicked soul desperate to make contact again. She is now willing to walk and move and rise, but the hour is past. This is not the movement of resurrection Life in her, but fear in her soul pushing her out.

Song of Songs 3:3 "The watchmen that go about the city found me, to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?"

She is looking for Him in the externals. She is asking other people if they know where He is. She is crying out in the streets, in the dark, and to strangers saying... "WHERE IS HE". While all along He is waiting for her to realize, awaken to, and believe in the reality that HE IS IN HER. This will require faith, not answers from watchman, or external proofs in the city streets. Romans 10:6-8 must be her anthem.

Song of Songs 3:4 "It was a little while that I passed from them, but I found Him Whom my soul loveth. I held Him and would not let go, until I had brought Him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her who conceived me."

Romans 10:6-8 "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach."

Her search is no longer in the externals of her surroundings. She has searched night streets and asked city guards, but how could He be found in such places? She had to pass from them, not just in an external way, but in a spiritual way. She had to pass out from that being the realm of her searching for Him. He could not be found through the teachers or the preachers in the way that she wanted Him. He would not appear to her in a realm separate from in her. He is no longer to be known as the glorious risen Christ up there in heavenly realms separate from us, while we are down here doing His kingdom business. He is no longer to be found in soulish earthly ways and places that are outside of her. Somehow, He is found. I believe that it is her faith

The Cross in the Song of Songs

that found Him (Rom. 10: 6-8). In truth, He has always been in her, but could not “appear” because of her soul, her own mind, and her old life taking over. These internal elements of her being were some of the foxes that were so dangerously breaking down the life flow of their union.

She simply acknowledges the truth about Him being in her as her Life now. Rather than demanding a sign from Him, such as an appearing in her emotions or an outward show to her senses, she simply holds Him by faith. And she will not let Him go until something new is established in her that resonates in her being; “He is in me... found there as my Life now”. She takes Him to the realm of a mother’s house which could be comprehended as a womb... an internal place that speaks of Life within. She must continue to choose to live by her spirit, and not her old methods that allow her soul and mind to be the source. She must apply the Cross to all of the old that He might live... in her.

3:5 “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up, nor awake my love, till it please”.

This entire exercise of faith was a death to her senses and soulish ways of relating to the Lord. In this verse she exhorts her sisters to not make the same mistake she was making by trying to demand an appearing of Him in a way that violates the true essence and reality of their union. She tells them to not stir Him up or awaken Him until it is His pleasure to RISE UP and LIVE in them. When He does rise up in Life from within, then yield and allow His Life to be expressed. Come away from the selfish ways of knowing Him for your own soulish comfort and BE HIS BODY, allowing His Life to manifest through you in the earth.

*“She will not let Him go until something new
is established in her... that He is in her as Life.”*



Chapter Seven Study / Discussion Questions

“She Applies The Altar”

1. What is the difference between the RISE UP of resurrection that her Beloved was calling her into and the rising up of a panicked soul desperate to make contact again?
2. Why is the Shulamite looking for her Beloved in the externals? She is asking other people if they know where He is. She is crying out in the streets, in the dark, and to strangers saying... “WHERE IS HE”.
3. Why must she pass from the external being the realm of her searching for Him? Will she ever find Him there in the way He wants her to know Him?
4. Explain / Discuss this statement; *“Rather than demanding a sign from Him, such as an appearing in her emotions or an outward show to her senses, she simply holds Him by faith”.*
5. Why must we learn to live by our spirits where Christ dwells, and reject old methods that allow our soul and mind to be the source?
6. How is exercising our faith in believing that Christ is dwelling in us a death to our senses and soulish ways of relating to the Lord? How does Romans 10:6-8 support this?
7. How does this statement reflect the heart of a Bride determined to know the Lord according to His desire; “She will not let Him go until something new is established in her that resonates in her being where she knows that He is in her and found there as her Life”?
8. Why is it important to her continued maturity that she no longer find Him in external ways?

Chapter Eight

“Experiencing Resurrection”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 3:6 “Who is this that cometh out the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?”

This verse signifies how true and deep this death was in her in the past verses. The dark night of her soul was like a wilderness without water... without Him. To find Him she had to die to her old form and way of knowing Him, and yield to the Cross that has translated her as one SPIRIT with the Lord (I Cor.6:17). Her resurrection is not in the form of more cakes of raisins or words of identity... but as smoke ascending from an altar, rich with the fragrance of the Risen Son. She has found THEIR place now as one in His resurrection. She has put off her old form, accepting her death in Him, and is joining with Him in true resurrection, bearing His Nature and Life. She has known suffering in this transition, for she is perfumed with myrrh. Yet myrrh is a spice that signifies the sufferings of Christ, not man. Therefore, she has chosen the path of fellowshiping in His sufferings rather than feeding her soul to prove something that has already been settled through His Cross. This has come at a cost to her, for she is powdered with that which was purchased from the merchant. This time she had to buy the truth of the Cross and His Life in her. The result is a deeper conformity to His image and a greater release of His Life through her.

Song of Songs 3:6a “Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke.”

Here we see that she is coming out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke similar to the pillars of cloud found in the wilderness Exodus (Ex. 13:21). But rather than just being LED out of her crisis by following a pillar of cloud, she is ascending out like smoke does as it rises from the altar. She is coming out THROUGH the applied cross, for this smoke is perfumed with myrrh which is a sweet savor that comes forth from a free will offering.

And so we find her ascending up from her trial in a form that is hard to recognize. Because she has died to her soul, she is experiencing resurrection. She is not just finding Him who her soul loves... but His WAY... which is life out from death. Through experientially applying the Cross to her soul, she is not strengthened in her walk, but translated into His image. She has changed form, from hers to His, so that she is hard to recognize. But what is the change? There is an increase of Christ in her, and a decrease of her. In her wilderness experience in the dark night of her soul she built an altar upon which she died to self. The sweet savor of Christ is now ascending through her as she is carried in His Life rather than her own; *“those who wait upon the Lord shall exchange their strength... they shall rise up with wings like*

The Cross in the Song of Songs

eagles” (Is. 40:31). In Song of Songs 3:5 she made a determination not to stir Him up or awaken Him until He pleases. She waited on His appearing in her as Life rather than pressuring a miracle sign out of Him like one of the selfish multitudes. The sign she embraced was the work of His Cross, trusting that she indeed was crucified with Him and is now risen in Him as a member of His Body. Such faith demanded her to reject her souls pressures and “not let Him go”, establishing that His place was in her as Life (the chamber of the womb of her spirit).

Song of Songs 3:7 “Behold his bed, which is Solomon’s; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel”.

In Song of Songs 3:7 we are told to behold Solomon’s bed that is carrying her out of the wilderness. Strides have been made through her embrace of death in the past crisis. She has died to her soul’s pressure for outward affirmations and manifestations of His presence and union. She has embraced His Life within by an active faith. She is demanding no activity from Him, but is giving herself unto Him as the place of His rest. This action of faith also brings her into His rest. She is moving in a new way now, carried in the place of His rest rather than by her efforts. She emerges from her wilderness trial being carried upon His bed, surrounded by His warriors. Each time that she emerges victorious through a crisis she is in a state of deepened weakness and reliance upon Him. This lesson required her to enter into a deeper measure of His rest. She is learning how to abide in Him in ways that are carrying her forth in Life.

Our carnal minds would assume that “leaping upon mountains with Him” would result in her acquiring greater muscles, etc. But the real exchange that happened through this crisis was an exchange of beds. She has left her place of “false rest” and entered into His place of their true rest. Her “false rest” was a place of doctrines with no life. What had once been flowing brooks became stagnant without Him. What were once feasting tables are now tasteless without Him. Rest is separation if we do it apart from Him. Active living faith from the heart pressed her into the Vine and brought her into the place of His rest that is filled with Life. All is of Him now, even that which she was fearful of. She is discovering that whether feasting, “faithing”, or leaping on mountains... He is there as she abides in Him as One.

In her mind she thought leaping upon the mountains was going to be a torturous experience that would tear her from the bliss and intimacy of her experience of communion and rest in chapters one and two. But now she is finding out that she is never to leave the place of their rest, whether that be communing in the kings chambers or leaping upon the mountains. If she is truly abiding in Him, then she will

The Cross in the Song of Songs

remain in life union whether it be a season of feasting or leaping, for they are one. The true danger she just passed through was the option of staying in a place that He has left. There is nothing wrong with the banqueting house when the King is there, but to remain at the table when He has departed for the mountains is death.

Song of Songs 3:9 “King Solomon made Himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon”

As we continue to observe her ascension from her wilderness trial, we find that she is carried on more than just a bed, for a bed is not a vehicle of movement but of rest. It is a chariot upon which the bed rests. This chariot is carrying her forth and allowing her to remain at rest even while moving! King Solomon did not just make this chariot for her, because that would make it some object separate from Him. Rather the scriptures tell us that King Solomon made HIMSELF a chariot. **He IS** the chariot and He was made as such through the wood of Lebanon, which represents the Cross. When Jesus joined to us through His Cross in death and resurrection, He changed forms. Before He moved separate from us as the Son of God from Heaven. In His incarnation He was Jesus of Nazareth, just one person. But after His resurrection He moves through the instrumentality of a Body made up of many members. In Song of Songs 3:7 we are exhorted to behold this wonder; for He carries us as we rest from our own labors, and we carry Him as the vessels of His Life. He wants us to understand His new form now that we are joined with Him as One. Therefore we are again exhorted in Song of Songs 3:11 to behold an even greater wonder:

Song of Songs 3:11 “Go forth... and behold King Solomon with the crown with which His mother crowned Him in the day of His espousals”.

Proverbs 12:4 tells us that the wife is her Husband’s crown. This “crowned Solomon” is appearing as she yields to His Life within! He now has a Body that is ALLOWING Him to dwell and live within it. This is the Resurrected Jesus... the one with a Body, a wife. Therefore, we are no longer to know Jesus after the flesh as just a man from Nazareth Who walked the shores of Galilee. But rather we are to see who He is now in resurrection! Now He has a wife who is the Body that bears His Life. We are no longer to behold Him as separate from us, but to see that we are that crown, that Body, and bride to whom He is forever joined (Eph. 5:25-32).

As a crown, she is honoring Him as her Head, the Source of her Life and the government of her being. She is not ashamed to call Him Lord, and ornaments Him with her meek spirit that submits to Him as a body would to its head (I Pet. 3:1-6).

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 3:9b "... of the wood of Lebanon"

The wood of Lebanon reminds us that this glorious union and new creation could only come forth through OUR death in Him. He first joined to us in our old nature only to crucify it, and **not to "crown" it**. No flesh passes through the cross, all is crucified. What is in Him in resurrection is that which bears HIS life alone. And she truly is learning to bear Him, move with Him, and yield to His Life as it rises in her.

Song of Songs 4:1-7

In these verses He speaks of her maturity and the pleasure it brings Him. Each line of verse defines her as a vessel of His Life that is entering in through applying the Cross.

verse 1 "Thou hast doves eyes"

Here she sees Him by the Spirit, as He truly is in resurrection... joined to His Body.

verse 2 "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing, of which every one beareth twins, and none is barren among them".

She bears fruit from His Word.

verse 4 "Thy neck is as the tower of David, builded for an armory..."

She upholds Him as her Head,

All of these features developing in her reveal that she truly has been abiding in the One Who is Life, and not hiding away in her fantasy doctrines embracing a message of oneness while living separate from the One in life flow and true union. This affects the heart of her Beloved, for He feels truly received and honored from such a response in her.

Song of Songs 4:6 "Until the day break and the shadows flee away, I WILL GO UP, to the mountain of MYRHH, and to the hill of frankincense."

Verse 6 is the crowning jewel of her new stand. She is now embracing the very thing that caused her to leave him in chapter two. Now we hear a new stand, a new embrace of Him in oneness with her statement in verse 4:6, *"Until the day break and the shadows flee away, I WILL GO UP, to the mountain of MYRHH, and to the hill*

The Cross in the Song of Songs

of frankincense." Glory to God! What she refused to do two chapters earlier, she now fully embraces, even when myrrh (suffering and pain) will be involved! In verse seventeen of chapter two she had told Him, *"Until the day break and the shadows flee away, turn away from me and **you go** and leap on the mountains"*. Now she is willing to go forth as a vessel of His Life, and not be the observer of Him from afar. She is taking her place as crucified to her old separate life, and functioning as a vehicle of His resurrection Life.

Song of Songs 4:7 "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee"

This final acceptance of Him in oneness draws forth high praise from His mouth; *"Thou art all fair... there is no spot in thee"*. He is seeing His Lamb nature forming in her (no spot). Only Christ in her, the spotless Lamb, will offer Himself up to suffering if that be God's will, and do so from the heart. **This is the result of His Spirit in her. He is being expressed through His Bride in ways that are extremely dear to His heart (the cross for others).** Not only has she come away from her VIEW of being something separate from Him, but she has allowed Him to rise up in her in His eternal Lamb nature to be given for others.

Song of Songs 4:8a "Come with me"

As He comprehends her willingness to yield to the Eternal Spirit of His Life in her, He beckons her on further. In 4:8 He sees the potential for greater increase of His nature in her, and woos her onward.

Song of Songs 4:12-15 "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon".

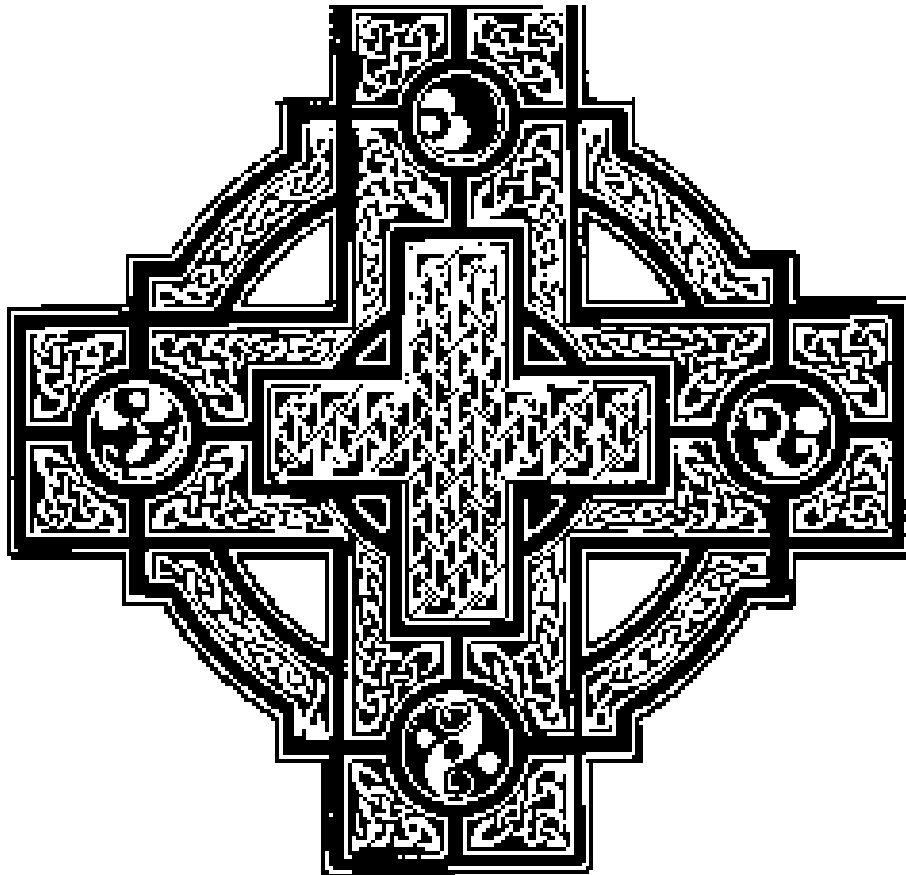
He who is faithful with little will be given more. If a seed falls into the ground and dies, it brings forth much fruit. She has been faithful with that which He has given her. She has allowed His death to work in her. She is increasing like a seed-bed, blossoming like a garden, and bringing forth His increase. His Life is in her, even as a fountain of gardens. Her potential for fruitfulness is limitless if she continues on in His way of the Cross. To her and in her, the Cross has become an instrument that leads to fruit, life and intimacy that she would never have known had she remained in her old methods.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 4:16a “Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.”

He desires more of His Life through her for others, so He invites a storm to blow upon her that the Life may be carried forth even further. A beautiful cycle of Life out from death is concluded here in one rotation, but will continue on throughout endless ages!

“There is nothing wrong with the banqueting house when the King is there, but to remain at the table when He has departed for the mountain is death”.



Chapter Eight Study / Discussion Questions

“Experiencing Resurrection”

1. To find Him she had to die to her old form and way of knowing Him, and yield to the Cross that has translated her as one SPIRIT with the Lord (I Cor.6:17). Explain / Discuss the practical steps the Shulamite took to embrace this death.
2. How do we know that there was a cost to the Shulamite to embrace her Beloved in this new way according the chapter three and verse six?
3. The Shulamite came forth from her crisis in a new form with a new essence that was likened unto perfumed pillars of smoke ascending from the wilderness. How could this be a picture of a believer embracing the work of the Cross on a deep and personal level that transforms them into His image?
4. Rather than being LED out of her crisis by following a pillar of cloud, she is ascending out of the wilderness like smoke does as it rises from the altar. What is the difference between being led by an external miracle and being filled with Christ in His eternal essence?
5. Give evidence to the validity of this statement, “Because she has died to her soul, she is experiencing resurrection”.
6. Explain / Discuss how she is not just finding Him who her soul loves... but His WAY... which is life out from death.
7. Each time that she emerges victorious through a crisis she is in a state of deepened weakness and reliance upon Him. How does her applying the cross in practical ways help her to enter into a deeper measure of His rest?
8. Explain / Discuss how the real exchange that happened through this crisis was an exchange of beds. In what manner has she left her place of “false rest” and entered into His place of their true rest.

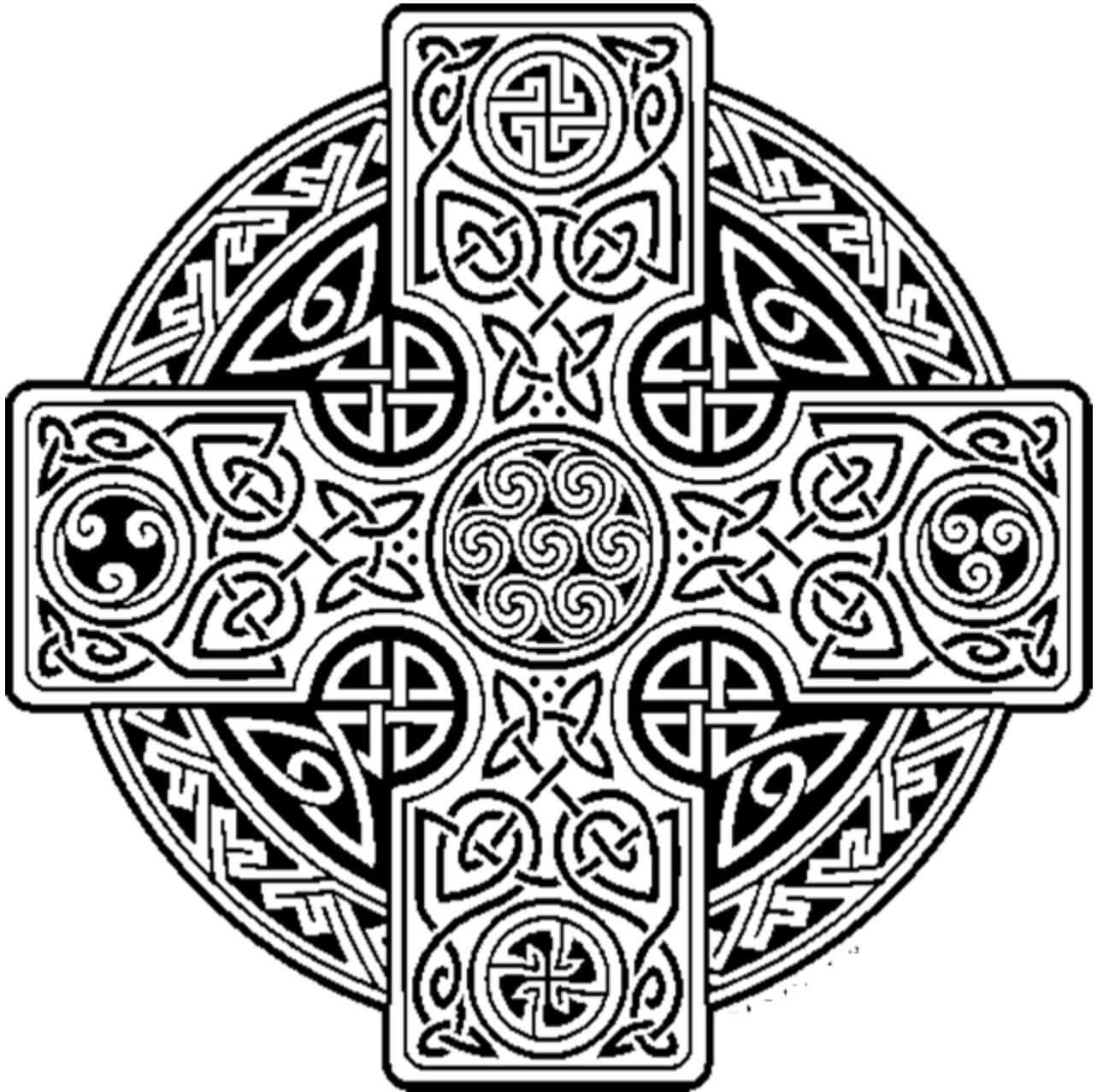
The Cross in the Song of Songs

9. What had once been flowing brooks became stagnant without Him. What was once feasting tables are now tasteless without Him. Explain /Discuss how rest is a form of separation if we do it apart from Him.
10. The true danger she just passed through was the option of staying in a place that He has left. There is nothing wrong with the banqueting house when the King is there, but to remain at the table when He has departed for the mountains is death. What ways can we experience this danger in our own relationship with the Lord?
11. How does the chariot described in chapter three and verse nine show that we can move forward while remaining at rest?
12. He carries us as we rest from our own labors, and we carry Him as the vessel bearing His Life. Explain / Discuss some practical ways we can experience this mystery of oneness in our daily walk.
13. What does the “crowned Solomon” represent?
14. How does the “wood of Lebanon” signify that Christ first joined to us in our old nature only to crucify it, and not to “crown” it?
15. Select a verse in chapter four, verses one through four, and describe in a two paragraph essay how it is picture of Christ in His Body.
16. Explain / Discuss why verse six of chapter four is the crowning jewel of her new stand.
17. How does chapter four and verse seven show that He is seeing His Lamb nature being formed in her through her embrace of His Cross?
18. Because He sees an openness of heart in her and a willingness to embrace His Cross, He begins to call her to come deeper. He also begins to send storms to her that will bring forth more of His beauty through her to others. How can we comprehend the Lord’s pleasure and drawing when He allows storms to come to us?

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Nine

“Learning To War From Above”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

4:8 “Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon... look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.”

Here is the first time He calls her “my spouse”. This is significant for He only addressed her as married to Him after she CHOSE to join with Him by actively applying His Cross in her circumstances. In truth and in His heart she always was joined to Him through His Cross, but He was not free to truly and officially declare that relationship until she rose up and walked it out in truth. Before this time she was affectionately called such names as: “my love, fair one, dove, and beloved”. But to declare that she is walking as one who is joined (my spouse) confirms that she has truly been embracing the cross of her own crucifixion whereby she can in reality walk by His Life in her rather than her soul and old selfish nature.

He is opening Himself up to her again after she opened herself up to Him through embracing the cross of their oneness. When she chose her soul at the end of chapter two, He withdrew Himself. He could not be found. He would not trust Himself into the hands of a soulish woman seeking only to meet her own soulish needs. This one was meant to be unto Him a body, a help-mate fit for Him. She rose up to His hearts cry in chapter three and embraced Him with hands set on mortifying every emotion, affection and soulish need that would separate her from abiding in Him in Life. She rejected the stagnation that would eventually have overtaken her had she continued resisting His advances to partake of His mind and will. She rose up and came away from those little foxes.

Now He is calling her to “come” again. This time it is in direct reference to her recent commitment to *“Get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense”* (Song of Songs 4:6). She told Him she was willing to go where she once had refused Him. He heard that vow and is ready to take her up on it. But there is even more than that in motion at this time. She has entered into the way of her Lord. Her life is beginning to be ordered by the Cross, which is a cycle of life out from death. He can take her to the heights now because she has embraced her death in Him. She had planted her last circumstance into her death with Christ and she is now experiencing a little resurrection. In this resurrection He is able to make known to her the wonder of the over-comer's life above in Him. He could never have beckoned her to come with Him into realms of resurrection if she had not first chosen to join with Him in His death by applying the Cross in her circumstance. This deepening of knowing Him in His ways, Person and the power of His resurrection is the direct result of her applying the Cross in her life.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

He is saying, “Come with me from Lebanon”. Lebanon is located in a mountainous region at a high altitude, representing our exalted position in the risen Son. She is experiencing the power of His resurrection in new ways through dying to self. They are in the high places now by means of life out of death, and not climbing. Many times we visualize our Lord's call to the high places as a man yelling down a mountain telling us to start climbing. But this is not the way of attaining the heights. The way up is down. Her ascent up and out from the wilderness was like a fragrant burnt offering and not a professional rock climber (Song of Songs 3:6). In chapter two He established in her the reality that she is in Him, settled at all times in that risen union. Here she is experiencing the power of living from that place in Him rather than hiding in her “safe places” of separation below in her earth. He wants her to take in the fullness of the realm of the living, above the earth. He will take her to three mountain peaks in Lebanon to teach her how to abide and war in the power of His resurrection. These are the three mountain peaks:

Amana - Truth

Shenir – Armor

Hermon – Destruction

It is in these three aspects represented by these mountains that He wants to establish her in the efficacy of the applied cross.

Amana - Truth

In resurrection “truth” is a place of communion and life far above the earth. It is not a book read behind walls of self-preservation on the earth.

From these mounts we are viewing the riches of the spoils of the battle. What we have gained through dying unto self is heavenly riches in and of Christ Jesus. That which once was merely doctrine unto us is now an unveiled reality filling us with Life. We glory in the Cross. What once was only doctrine has now exploded into Life by applying it through embracing the Cross. We become convinced, persuaded, and a little more established that this is the only way to dwell in union with the Almighty God Himself.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Before we move on to discuss Shenir and Hermon it will be helpful to first look at Song of Songs 4:8: *“from the lions’ dens, from the mountains of the leopards.”* Previous to her entering into the eternal way of life out from death, her worst enemy was little foxes. Undoubtedly these little foxes were formidable foes. They had the potential of breaking her life connection into the Vine before fruit could fully form and inward government could be established. She fought these foxes armed with the Cross of her own crucifixion, applying Christ's death to her wayward soul. As she applied the cross by planting her soul-life into His death, she entered into the way of Eternal Life, which is life out from death. She embraced her little altar and now she is experiencing resurrection. It is important to understand this so we might see what is really happening in these scriptures. The triumph, splendor and praise found in chapter four is simply a description of someone in resurrection. She is in a place of ascendancy because she is in resurrection. She is in resurrection only because she died to self. It is that simple. The beauty and peace found in her at this time is the increase of Christ in her, based on her decrease (decease) through an applied cross.

We want to progress and mature unto an attainment of spiritual knowledge and status that will propel us forward. But true spiritual progress only comes forth from the grave. If we want to grow we must die. If we want the heights we must embrace the depths as we fall into the ground, planting all into His death (Jn. 12:24). Above all lessons she has learned in the past chapters, this principle is the key to all. If she has joined with her Spouse in His eternal way, the way of the Cross, then in all things she will be able to follow Him (the Lamb) whithersoever He goeth, in oneness of nature (Rev. 14:4).

Lions roar to inspire fear and retreat; leopards devour to destroy the work of God in our lives. Where the foxes have failed on the earth, (the places where branch touches ground), the lions and leopards will try to destroy once she has found the key to overcoming all; the applied Cross. Before she got “lift off” her battles were with her own carnality and earth issues, all within the sense realm of the temporal. But now the attack will be directly upon the Seed (Christ formed in her) as He bursts forth in resurrection. The enemy no longer has the tools of her own un-crucified flesh to work through. He must change tactics, so where once there were foxes we now find lions and leopards... more ferocious beasts with appetites set to devour.

The Lord, her Spouse, prepares her for these foes by showing her the ascendancy of Zion as she abides in resurrection oneness. The lions and leopards cannot touch one who is no longer living by their old life, but abiding in union with His. This is not speaking of the doctrine of our position in Christ in resurrection oneness. The

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Spouse is speaking to one who is experientially knowing Him in the power of His resurrection. She has been lifted up out of the earth and the realm of fox attack by dying to self and coming forth in His image. Yet now there are new foes; principalities and powers, spiritual wickedness found only in high places (Eph. 6:12). These enemies function by the “wiles of the devil” (6:11) to destroy that which in reality, is uncontestable.

Such wiles are exhibited by the lion who roars and roars as if he has power to destroy us, where in reality these principalities and powers have been stripped of all authority and spoiled... completely triumphed over through the work of Christ's Cross (Col. 2:15, Heb. 2:14). The enemy is using fear tactics to cause us to doubt the triumph of the Cross. From mount Amana (truth) she can see clearly her place far above such “deceptive roars” and remain in peace abiding. She is experiencing the above position of an over comer.

While it is soundly and irrefutably true that we are ALL in Christ because GOD put us there when He raised us up together in Christ; there is an experiencing of the blessedness of this realm that can only be known when the Cross has been applied and to our flesh we have died. The devil will send a little fox to nibble on and work with our flesh before the cross has been yielded to. But once the circumcision has been received you will find one filled with the power of His resurrection. Against such, no demon can triumph... for this is Christ Himself manifesting in the believer. Now, the dark forces must change tactics and work through fear, deception, and devouring. We have just discussed fear, so let us now look at deception (another aspect of the lions attack). To more fully appreciate this spiritual weapon, let us review the location of the Shulamite and her Spouse. They are in the high places of Lebanon looking down from three mountain tops found there. I believe Lebanon represents the realm of resurrection. It is an immeasurably vast realm, and so it requires several “points” (mountain-tops) of reference to help us take in all that is true there.

Shenir - Armor

We just gazed down from Amana (truth) but let us look from Shenir, which means “armor”. Now, if the enemy cannot motivate us to remove ourselves from our Lord through fear, he will then try deception. The enemy is a master deceiver and the father of lies...therefore one can expect intense combat if they do not comprehend their vantage point of Shenir (armor). In resurrection, in Christ, we are covered, clothed, immersed into Christ so that it is Him and not ourselves the enemy is

The Cross in the Song of Songs

approaching. Goliath was trying to make things personal with David, but David knew he was standing in the name of the Living God before a monster of the uncircumcised. When we comprehend that the Christ IS the resurrection and the Life... then nothing is personal or based on us, but on our life in Christ. It is ALL HIM in resurrection. The power of the enemies deception all comes from us still identifying in a life that has been crucified, buried, and put away forever. In resurrection, we remain clothed, covered and identified in Christ like one covered with the armor of God. In this pure identification no deception can touch us for we are not to be found; only Christ. From Senir we must see that in resurrection it is CHRIST and not I that is the Life.

In resurrection, we are protected for we live ABOVE the issues below. We are shielded from the arrows of mortals who find their portion below. Our affections are set above and our life is set there too... hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). Above in Him we are safe and covered from anything the earth may do unto us.

Hermon - Destruction

When fear and deception will not work, then the enemy goes for full attack to devour the Seed of Christ coming forth in manifestation (Rev. 12). This is outright attack against the saints. It is from mount Hermon (destruction) that we must view these type of attacks. The Cross has already destroyed the works of the devil. He is a defeated foe. He has no true power anymore, except for that which we give him. Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil (Heb. 2:14). Any destruction that these enemies seek to do to us will bring no loss to the eternal Son nor the Body of His resurrection. Though the body may be martyred; the spirit is untouched and more Life will come from that death. Death has been defeated as a tool for the enemies increase, and now death, through the Spirit of the Lamb, is the tool for the increase of the Kingdom of God. It is the wisdom of God, and if the enemy had understood that he would never have crucified the Lord of Glory (I Cor 2:8).

In resurrection we view the flesh destroyed through the work of the Cross. Our old life has been slain by the power of God through a crucified Christ. We have chosen to embrace the power of that Cross by applying it to any trace of the old yet lingering in our flesh. We are then separated from that old life that kept us chained to the corrupted earth, and liberated unto Life in God through the blessed tool of the Cross. The Cross brings us into the blessed freedom of the Son actually living through us. He is free to shine through our walls, for they no longer block the rays of His glorious Life as He radiates from within (Rev. 21:23).

The Cross in the Song of Songs

The final thing that we must notice from these resurrection realm verses is that the Lord is ever deepening her establishment in the way of the Cross. In chapter one she found entrance into Life through coming to an end of herself, embracing her blackness to be a vessel of His radiance. The end of chapter one and beginning of chapter two she experienced the reality of living by another Life. At this point the Lord taught her to war against the little foxes that come at this stage of maturity. In chapter two she discovered that a daily cross is required to stay in Life union, and her soul must be weaned through dying to it. In chapter three she experienced a resurrection after her time of applying the Cross to her soul. Now in chapter four the Lord is teaching her how to war from the realm of resurrection. With each chapter and step she is becoming more established in the way of the Cross as the way of her union in the risen Son. Amen!



“Above all lessons she has learned in the past chapters, this principle is the key to all. If she has joined with her Spouse in His eternal way, the way of the Cross, then in all things she will be able to follow Him (the Lamb) withersoever He goeth, in oneness of nature”.

Chapter Nine Study /Discussion Questions

“Learning To War From Above”

1. In verse eight of chapter four is the first time the Beloved calls the Shulamite His spouse. Why is this significant and what action on the Shulamite's part may have opened Him to refer to her this way?
2. To declare that she is walking as one who is joined (my spouse) confirms that she has truly been embracing the Cross of her own crucifixion whereby she can in reality walk by His Life in her rather than her soul and old selfish nature. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you areas where you are walking as His Spouse through embracing the Cross, and areas where you are yet walking in your own life and soulish ways. It may be edifying to pray over these areas, either individually in private or for one another in a group setting.
3. Explain / Discuss the contrast between chapter three where He withdrew Himself, and chapter four where He calls her His spouse. What may have caused Him to relate in these ways during those times?
4. Explain / Discuss how that by chapter four her life is beginning to be ordered by the Cross, which is a cycle of life out from death.
5. Comment on this statement, *“He could never have beckoned her to come with Him into realms of resurrection if she had not first chosen to join with Him in His death by applying the cross in her circumstance”*.
6. She is experiencing the power of His resurrection in new ways through dying to self. They are in the high places now by means of life out of death, and not climbing. Explain / Discuss the difference between earning and climbing to gain new ground with the Lord as opposed to dying to self as we embrace the Cross of Christ in practical and daily situations.

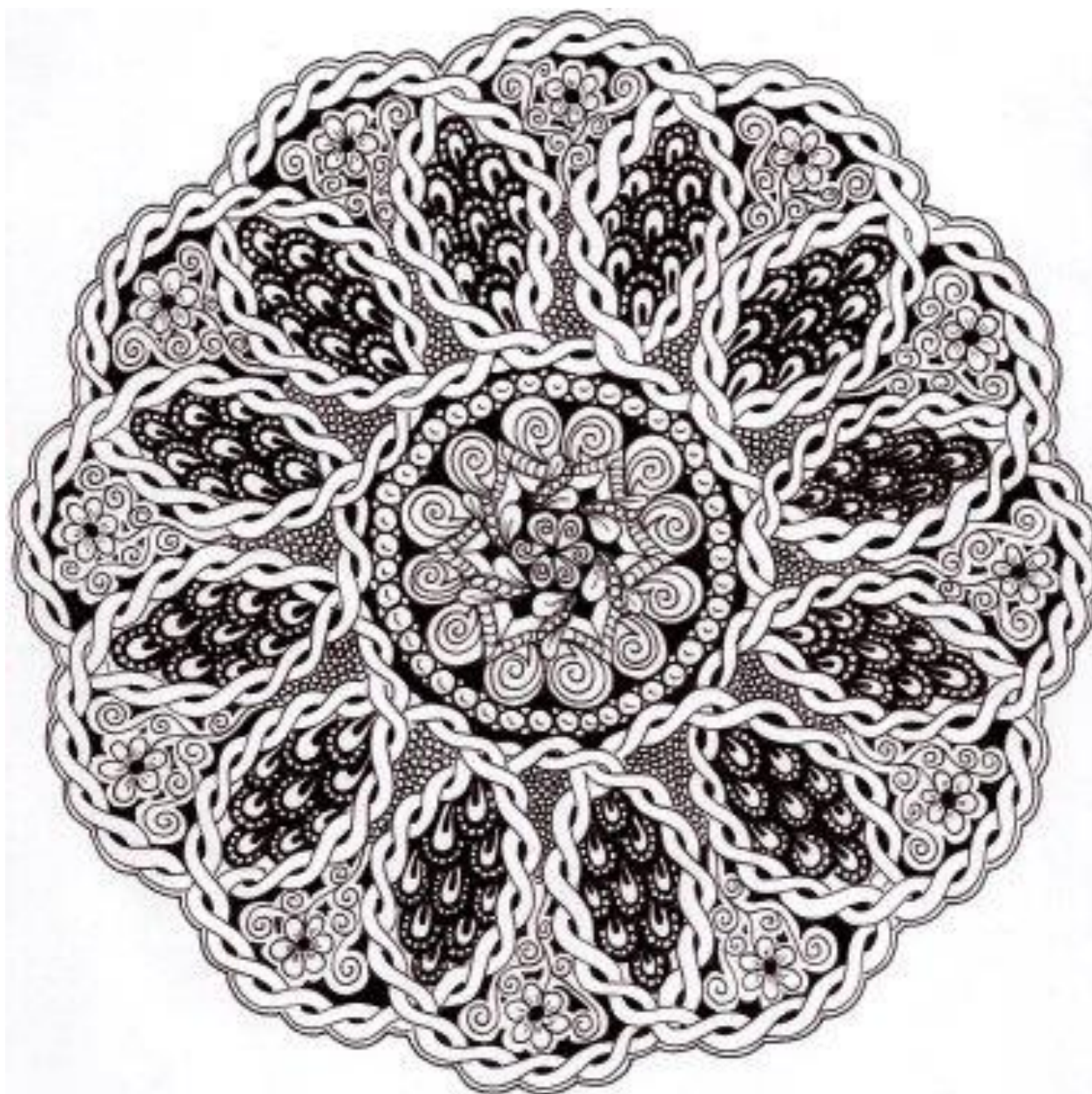
The Cross in the Song of Songs

7. Explain / Discuss how the three aspects represented by these mountains spoken of in chapter four and verse eight represent specific ways that He wants to establish her in the efficacy of the applied cross.
8. She is in a place of ascendancy because she is in _____.
She is in resurrection only because she _____.
9. Comment on / Discuss this statement; *“If we want the heights we must embrace the depths as we fall into the ground, planting all into His death (Jn. 12:24)”*.
10. Explain / Discuss why it is important to understand the principle behind this statement, *“Where the foxes have failed on the earth, (the places where branch touches ground), the lions and leopards will try to destroy once she has found the key to overcoming all; the applied Cross”*.
11. As Christ forms in us, we must continue to learn how to war. Explain / Discuss the differences in the enemies attacks before and after we apply the Cross. *“Now the attack will be directly upon the Seed (Christ formed in her) as He bursts forth in resurrection. The enemy no longer has the tools of her own un-crucified flesh to work through. He must change tactics, so where once there were foxes we now find lions and leopards”*.
12. Explain / Discuss what Lebanon, Amana, Shenir, and Hermon represent spiritually.
13. Write a one page essay outlining the stages of her maturity progressively from chapter one through the end of chapter four.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Ten

“Open To Me”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 4:9-15 “Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon”.

In Song of Songs 4:9-15 we find another time of fruitfulness and feasting. This time it is not her partaking of Him through new found union -- now SHE is the garden, and He is eating of her precious fruits. Before, in chapters one and two, HE was the garden and she was partaking of His precious fruits. In chapter two she had no fruit to offer Him yet, for she was just beginning to learn to abide in and receive of the Life of Another as her source. This is the difference resurrection makes. We become a place of fruitfulness, pleasure and fellowship in oneness for Him, and a place of nourishment for others.

This new season is not just an experience of ascendancy above in Christ, but a time where she is filled and fueled with His Resurrection Life that will be poured out for others. Her burgeoning resources are for the benefit of God and others.

Song of Songs 4:15b “A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon”

Last chapter we discussed that she is now in the high places of Lebanon because she is experiencing His resurrection Life after dying to her soul-life. The streams of His Life that are found in resurrection are to bring Life to others. Therefore these streams from Lebanon are like waters flowing down from the heights to bring Life to others.

Song of Songs 4:16a “Awake, O north wind, and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out”.

The new Life blossoming in her in this resurrection is not reaching far enough. Therefore God awakens the winds to blow upon her garden that the spices may flow out to reach others.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 5:1 "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice, I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly O beloved".

Here the Lord is declaring that He is receiving from her fruits... and others are to do so as well.

Song of Songs 5:2 "I sleep, but my heart waketh; it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night".

Again, like in Song of Songs 2:9, she is separate from Him... behind her walls and asleep. In chapter two the cry from His heart to her was, "rise up and come away"... but this time His cry is "open to me". This time it is not her fear of the unknown and desire for soulish comfort that separates her from Him, rather it is a contentment with what she has "attained" up to this point.

Ephesians 4:13 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ".

Part of her complacency is her personal satisfaction with her own individual growth. She is content with stopping and sleeping at this point because she has experienced a measure of His life within, but it is not the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ that can only be found in His corporate body (Eph. 4:13). SHE is able to rest in her own cleanness, but HE (her life) cannot rest until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth (Is. 62:7). He MUST continue in death through her until the measure of His sufferings to bring life to others is filled up (II Cor. 1:5-6). Therefore He is dripping with myrrh (suffering) as He travails in death until ALL come. He is inviting her to bear His dying in her mortal flesh (II Cor. 4:10).

Song of Songs 5:5 "I rose up to open to my Beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock".

Just like in chapter three verse two, there is another "rising up", but it is not the response of true oneness in resurrection that He was looking for. Last time, in chapter three, she was rising up to come away, but this time she is rising up TO OPEN. Something in her heart has shut down and locked up to allowing a greater conformity of His life in her. She has proven that she will open to Him and be with Him to some degree and at cost to herself. But she is not prepared for a deeper death

The Cross in the Song of Songs

and continued application of the Cross. She is satisfied with this much maturity and no further. She has yet to comprehend that the Cross is a continual reality at work daily in our lives. We never take a break from it. We never stop “swinging away” at our flesh until all is delivered to death that Christ might fully form and live. We never stop laying down our lives for others, for this is the nature and way of the Lamb's life within. But at this point, she is ready for a break... and to Him, “a break” means rejection and separation. So He leaves.

Song of Songs 5:6a “I opened to my Beloved; but my Beloved had withdrawn himself and gone...”

Eventually she opens to Him, but it is not soon enough. He wants her whole heart to be with Him in such sacred things, and not a begrudging sacrifice. The Lamb's wife is a willing sacrifice in oneness with His nature and willingly joins with His heart of pure and poured out love for others. These reactions in her are merely symptoms that show she is still, to some measure, living by her own life rather than His. If it was the Lamb within her responding, she would have immediately yielded to this call and opened to a greater suffering for others to grow.

We can read this verse; “*my Beloved had withdrawn Himself and gone...*” and assume that this is an action of rejection and abandonment rather than seeing the great love behind His actions here. We need to be where He is at in His times and seasons. When we want Him to move in response to the need of our self or soul, then we are trying to make Him be where we are at. Deep within we must embrace that we are married to the Lamb of God for His expression and purposes. His Life will appear to or through us according to His desire and season. At this point in her maturity it is time for His appearing to come forth through her as she pours Him out for others. At this time she would rather read about the Lamb in a book behind closed doors or hear a sermon in a building, than leave the comfort and safety of her house to lay down her life for the young ones, thereby expressing the Lamb she loves. He is dripping with myrrh as He travails for others to mature while she is inside feeling content because she has come into some maturity. She is being motivated by selfishness. What once was a relationship of life is once again in danger of stagnating and become dead doctrine. He cannot leave her in that place because He loves her, so He has to draw her out. He begins wooing her by trying to open her door and bring her out with Him. Because she would not respond fully to His presence and Person, He removed Himself hoping she would respond to His absence. All of this is because of His love and care for her true continued growth. Yet she could read these actions as His rejection and become offended. She may feel like she is being avoided after she

The Cross in the Song of Songs

just denied her soul to find Him in chapter three. Why would He avoid someone who had loved Him that much? It is because He loves her enough to keep her joined to Him in LIFE and not just past experiences of life. He CANNOT conform to her. When we demand for Christ to conform to what we need Him to be for our season, then we have perverted the marriage relationship making ourselves Lord and Master. We are asking Him to do our will. We have the choice to get offended with the Lord when He is quiet, or to seek His heart and find what He is trying to bring us into. If it was her decision, she may have chosen for Him to show-up through the teachings of the watchmen, and then she would have missed His appearing through her as she poured Him out to the daughters of Jerusalem. At this point He wants to appear as Her Life, but she may have chosen a good teaching. If He had responded to her soul and came into her house and fellowshiped with her there, then she would never have been drawn out to know Him in the eternal ways of the Lamb.

To reject the continual advances from the Lord is to open the door to stagnation. Had she completely refused to go out and search for Him in the next verses, the Song of Songs might have ended here. She would have spent the rest of her life looking back on her one experience of embracing the cross and experiencing resurrection. Then the rest of her life would be filled with doctrines and stagnation because she was unwilling to continue following the Lamb, her Husband. Because she did have a true experience of life out from death in chapter three, she could have held that up as justification for living for self the rest of her life because she was unwilling to continue on in the way of the Cross. It is a daily cross. Yesterday's cross does not suffice for today's need to die to self. If we are in union with the Lamb, every day is a day to lay down our lives for others. The Lamb is a Person, and not yesterday's decisions or stagnate doctrines. So He is striving to keep her in life, even though He knows she could misunderstand and become offended. The Church must learn to submit to her Husband, trusting He knows what is best for her. If we choose to go our own way, we are robbing ourselves of the most precious thing in our lives. We remove ourselves from the living and daily flow of His Spirit when we demand our way. We take that relationship away when we insist upon having our way. We must stay in tune with the Lord.



Chapter Ten Study / Discussion Questions

“Open To Me”

1. Comment on / Discuss this statement; *“This new season is not just an experience of ascendancy above in Christ, but a time where she is filled and fueled with His resurrection Life that will be poured out for others”.*
2. Because the new Life blossoming in her in this resurrection was not reaching far enough, God sent the winds to blow upon her garden that the spices may flow out to reach others. How could she have misunderstood God’s heart and purpose in sending the storms to her?
3. In chapter two the cry from His heart to her was, “rise up and come away”... but this time His cry is “open to me”. What is the difference in her heart situation from chapter two’s “come away” to chapter five’s “open to me”?
4. Do you believe that it is possible to experience a measure of Christ’s life formed within, but it not yet be tempered to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ that can only be found in His corporate body (Eph. 4:13)? If so, explain your answer.
5. What is the difference in motivation between rising up to “come away”, and rising up “to open”?
6. Are there times in our walk where we want to “take a break” from active union into Christ and through His Cross? What could be the difference between our feelings about “taking a break” and the Lord’s feelings and response to that?
7. Explain / Discuss this statement; *“At this point in her maturity it is time for His appearing to come forth through her as she pours Him out for others”.*

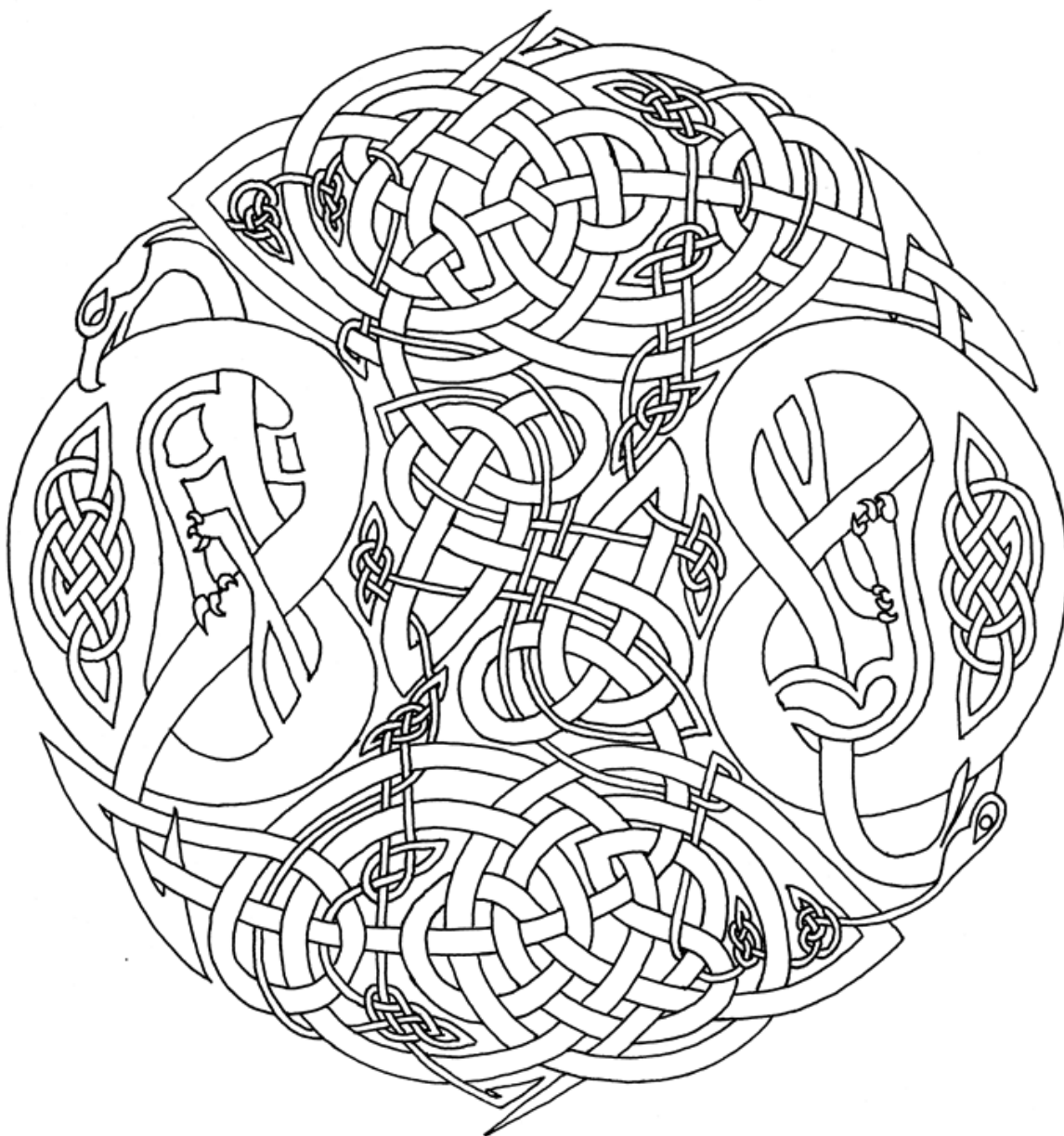
The Cross in the Song of Songs

8. There is a point in chapter five where He is dripping with myrrh as He travails for others to mature while she is inside feeling content because she has come into some maturity. How does that affect your heart?
9. Is it possible for what once was a relationship of life to become in danger of stagnating and becoming dead doctrine?
10. We have the choice to get offended with the Lord when He is quiet, or to seek His heart and find what He is trying to bring us into. Have there been times in your relationship with the Lord that you have had to make this choice?
11. As we grow, we learn to trust the Lord's dealings with us. By chapter five He wants to appear as Her Life, but she may have chosen a good exhorting teaching instead of Him removing His presence from her. Discuss / explain the importance of humbling our hearts before the dealing of God in our daily experiences.
12. Comment on / Discuss this statement; *"To reject the continual advances from the Lord is to open the door to stagnation"*.
13. Yesterday's cross does not suffice for today's need to die to self. The Lamb is a Person and not yesterday's decisions or stagnate doctrines. How can we leave the realm of "living relationship" by letting go of our daily embrace of His Cross?

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Eleven

“Fellowshipping In His Sufferings”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 5:7 "The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me".

Now there is not just a searching, but a wounding. Last time the watchmen simply had no answers for her. This time they strike her and wound her. There is a scarring that is necessary for her to join with Him in His travail for others. She must be willing to lose her individual "beauty" and "righteousness" to bear others who have yet to mature. The scapegoat is a perfect example of this. An innocent little goat had to become the off-scourge of the community once it became the bearer of their sins. In Hebrews 11:37 we find that same spirit at work in New Testament saints who bear about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus for others. She will have to leave the blessed realm of resurrection and the sweet communion of finding Him in the heights for herself. In the beginning of the Song she applied the cross only for her own growth. Now she must apply the cross to her own soul for OTHERS growth. When she does this SHE will be scarred, marred and made to look bad in the eyes of others. Her "spiritual status" will suffer loss as she continues to choose Him above herself. He will lead her ever deeper into the way of His Cross, which will go lower and lower that others might be raised up higher and higher in His life. Although this will cost her more than ever... she is open to Him in this way. She will follow the Lamb whithersoever He should lead her (Rev. 14:4). She needs to open to her Spouse, the Lamb that He might manifest continually His nature that will pour out His Life for others through her. As she embraces Him in His sufferings, it is an act of love and not the result of torment and pressures to do something that is not in her heart to do.

Her whole view of Him is beginning to expand from simply "her Beloved" to the Life of a corporate bride and body. At a certain point she is willing to yield to this greater view. She opens to Him... all of Him, as she accepts Him in His body. She is willing to fellowship in His sufferings that He might be formed in the whole body. Her oneness with Him now includes the oneness that the corporate bride and body share. All are now seen to be of One, for all are of Him... and she will not shut down to Him in His Body again. She will dedicate her heart to know Him in His fullness and receive Him in His body. This will require a greater death in her, but she is willing to follow on.

Song of Songs 5:9 "What is thy Beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy Beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?"

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Rather than having another personal encounter or revelation of Him, she is thrust in the midst of hungry babes (the daughters of Jerusalem) where she must pour out the One Who is already in her. The way He wants her to find Him at this stage in her maturity is as she pours Him out to others by faith in His indwelling Life.

She wanted a watchman to deepen her knowledge of Him through teaching. Her Beloved was not interested in her gaining more revelation about Him, but desired her to mature as a vessel of His Life poured out for others. As she pours Him out from her innermost depths, only then does He appear. The Life she has joined into is Lamb, and He will not allow her to “find Him” in selfish ways that are not their true union, kind, and nature.

Song of Songs 5:10-16 “My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem”.

What is coming forth from her as she speaks to the daughters of Jerusalem is more than a verbal description and teaching about a person. This intimate defining of His Person is the releasing of His Life from deep within her. As she is drawing Him forth from deep within His presence is manifest in their midst. His appearing is ushered forth from His true habitation... in her. He is no longer far away in the heavens or gated behind barred doors of kingly chambers. He is in her, and the daughters must learn of His true habitation, for He longs to dwell in them also. Hence their next question:

Song of Songs 6:1 “Whither is thy Beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy Beloved turned aside? that we may seek Him with thee”.

Although they have just experienced His presence in their midst as He appeared from within her; they do not comprehend what has just happened. And so they ask how they too can know Him in a way that brings such savor, such life. She could never lead them into the fields of Ecclesiastes where one labors to gain favor and

The Cross in the Song of Songs

knowledge of the king. Rather she declares His true abode, hoping that they might hear the Song of His heart to dwell within them also.

Song of Songs 6:2-3 "My Beloved is gone down into His garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine: He feedeth among the lilies".

She speaks of His garden, the place where He feeds. She then alludes to the young women that she is a garden unto Him. In saying this she is defining her inward communion with the indwelling Christ. She is declaring the relationship of being in Christ and Christ being in her. To her "in Christ" is a place of gardens and fountains filled with endless fruit and fullness. And "Christ in you" to HIM is a place of fragrant spices, gardens and lilies. This is His home, where He finds rest, fellowship and love. All is of Life, and none is a stagnant doctrine.

She is declaring that they possess the same relationship with Him that she does, for He is in them also. To them, He is yet an unattainable ideal. She is sent unto them to nurture and guide them into knowing Him as their Life.

As she guides these young ones, she is turning her focus from her own individual growth unto the growth of the corporate Body. She is discovering that His heart is that we all be built together as One in Him. Maturity is now becoming an issue of corporate growth and not just individual stature. She is awakening to the reality that His fullness must dwell within the whole, and not just one member. Therefore she begins to identify in the corporate bride, made up of many members. The New Jerusalem, defined as the Lamb's wife in the book of Revelation chapter twenty one is a city and not just one stone. She is ready to give herself to be a member of His corporate habitation and build up that city until He can find rest, fellowship and expression there. As she discovered earlier in Song of Songs 5:2, He will not stop until He makes Jerusalem a praise, and now is her time to join with Him in the pursuit and purpose of His heart.

Her Beloved sees this new openness in her heart towards the Body. Where once her heart was closed and locked unto His advances to fellowship with Him such ways, now it has opened. He sees her willingness to be spent for others, and enter into whatever sufferings necessary that the Body might be built up as His habitation and bride. She has embraced her identity as one with the Body, the corporate Bride. He is deeply touched by this new step and begins to acknowledge how beautiful this is to Him in the following verses:

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 6:4-10 “Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners. Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead. Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them. As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks. There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?”

Each line of these verses declares the beauty of her embrace and identification in His corporate Body and Bride.

- Verse Four: *“Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.”*
He describes her beauty like Jerusalem... the corporate city that represents the Bride of Christ in Revelation chapter twenty one. She is no longer just one precious gemstone, but built into the whole as His corporate habitation (Rev. 21:19-20).
- Verse Five: *“Thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.”*
She is likened unto a FLOCK of goats instead of just one goat.
- Verse Six: *“Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.”*
Here again she identified in the FLOCK of sheep instead of separate.
- Verse Seven: *“As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.”*
A pomegranate is a fruit full of SEEDS rather than one seed alone. She is becoming mindful of others as His mind forms in her. She thinks in terms of Christ found in many and not just her alone.
- Verses Eight and Nine: *“There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her”.*

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Many identify in positions of great individual honor, such as queens and concubines, but she has embraced the ONENESS of the Body such as Jesus declared and prayed for in John chapter seventeen. This is the highest to His heart. Nothing will reach Him deeper or touch Him greater than His corporate Body bearing His Life together as One.

Song of Songs 6:10 “Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?”

Such a corporate expression of the Son radiates great brilliance. He is able to be expressed and seen so much clearer and more fully when the Body is manifesting His Life together as One. Hence we hear such wonderful words as verse ten declares, “the morning, the moon, and the sun” all be things of incredible light; and such is His radiance when He shines through His corporate Bride.

Song of Songs 6:11 “I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded”.

Her response to such enormous praise is to simply go down into the vineyard and care for / check on others. Unlike Lucifer... she will not glory in her own progress but will remain governed by the way of the Lamb, her Husband. In Isaiah 14:12-14 we find the very reason Lucifer fell was because he exalted himself and in his heart took the place that belongs to God alone. How amazing to consider that before his rebellion, Satan was called, “son of the morning” (Is. 14:12). She will not fall into this snare, but continues to abide in His self-giving nature. The next words written immediately following these verses of profound praise are simply... “I WENT DOWN”. Instead of exalting herself, she humbles herself. It is the mind of Christ forming in her as defined in Philippians chapter two. Some women would immediately go and look in the mirror to admire themselves, but she knows to her depths that all beauty she has is the result of His Life in her. She entered this song embracing her blackness that He might be her brilliance. And now she is experiencing the love and satisfaction that He finds in His corporate Bride. All these praises are not for her alone, but for the Body that she is found in and identified with now. She will keep her focus on them and not allow His praises to make her self-centered again.

Chapter Eleven Study / Discussion Questions

“Fellowshipping In His Sufferings”

1. How could it be considered a form of fellowshipping in His suffering to lose our individual “beauty” and “righteousness” to bear others who are yet unformed?
2. In the beginning of the Song she applied the cross only for her own growth. Now she must apply the cross to her own soul for OTHERS growth. How can embracing the cross for other’s maturity require a greater conformity to Christ within a believer?
3. Although being open to His Life in this way will cost her more than ever, she is open to Him in this way. She will follow the Lamb whithersoever He should lead her (Rev. 14:4). How can we see the true Spirit of the Bride at work in such a one as this Shulamite?
4. How can it be a sign of maturity when our view of the Lord expands from simply “our own personal Beloved” to the Life of a corporate Bride and Body?
5. Explain / Discuss the cost involved when we choose to open to the Lord in His fullness by embracing Him in His corporate Body?
6. Her relationship with Him has now grown to include the Body. Do you believe that as we grow to know the Lord’s heart we will also grow in tenderness and love for the Body of Christ?
7. The way He wants her to find Him at this stage in her maturity is as she pours Him out to others by faith in His indwelling Life. Have you ever experienced this in your relationship with the Lord? If so, explain your experience and if it brought forth an increase of the Lord in you as you poured Him out for others.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

8. Comment on /Discuss this statement; *“She wanted a watchman to deepen her knowledge of Him through teaching. Her Beloved was not interested in her gaining more revelation about Him, but desired her to mature as a vessel of His Life poured out for others. As she pours Him out from her innermost depths, only then does He appear”.*
9. Explain / Discuss how verses four through nine in chapter six describe how she is conforming to Him in His corporate Body. Choose one of these verses and write a one page essay on how it defines Christ in her in a corporate way.
10. How does chapter six and verse ten show us that a corporate expression of the Son radiates greater expression of His glory?
11. In what ways can chapter six show us how beautiful the corporate Bride and Body is to the heart of Jesus?
12. In verse eleven the Shulamite could have been tempted to respond to His compliments with self-exaltation. How did she respond and why did she respond in that manner?

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Chapter Twelve

“A Greater Beauty”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 6:11-12 “I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished and the pomegranates budded. Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib”.

The Shulamite's focus is now His growth in others. She is deeply opening herself to Him in His corporate Body as she lays down her own comfort, schedule, and needs to take care of others. In the midst of doing so, she experiences a new measure of His Life in her once wayward soul that quickens her to carry Him forth in a greater measure than ever before. “Amminadib” means “My people of a willing heart”. She is finding herself part of the corporate Bride/Body that willingly yields to the heart and motions of Christ, their life. Like a chariot, they are able to carry forth His will with swiftness greater than ever.

Song of Songs 6:13 “Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.”

The daughters of Jerusalem want once again to behold this vessel of His Life, and learn of Him in living ways. But as they behold her this time they find one who has lost her identity in the whole. She has continued to be conformed to Christ in His corporate Body through laying down her own individual stature for the growth of others. What the daughters find in her now is “the company of two armies”. She is part of something greater than herself, even armies made up of many members. To the daughters of Jerusalem she probably appears less beautiful now for she has become dirty, scarred, and poured out that Christ might be formed in the whole. The daughters may have been surprised to see her looking so different from the last time they saw her in earlier verses of the Song. Some may even have thought she had back-slid because she was not as “glowing” as before. But a greater beauty is emanating from her now. It is the beauty of the Lamb as described in Revelation 1:23; “*And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*”. She as His vessel is no longer what is attracting attention and praise from others, but the pure beauty of Christ’s selfless nature is shining brighter than ever through her to others.

Songs of Songs 7:1-3 “How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman. Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins”.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

In chapter seven verses one through three we find the Beloved adoring the beauty of this new growth in her. She has lost her individual righteousness to be conformed to His corporate body, but she has gained a beauty that ravishes His heart. She has lost her old form that may have outwardly looked “prettier” to become a vessel of Lamb-life that pours out for others. In these verses He mentions areas of her physical body that have now taken on a new form to build up the body. These changes are much like what happens to a woman's body when she has children. Certain parts of her body change due to giving life and nutrition to her baby. After having children, that woman's body may not look as “beautiful” to her as it did before she had children. But to Jesus, His Church never looks more beautiful than when she is sharing His Life with others, bearing one another in love, and laying her life down for others to grow. That is the kind of beauty that ravishes His heart. Those “scars” that we call so very uncomely are points of great beauty in the Lamb's eyes!

Song of Songs 7:1 “How beautiful are thy feet with shoes.”

Her feet are “*shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*” (Ephesians 6:15). “*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings, that publisheth peace*” (Isaiah 52:7). Her feet are now used to bring Christ to others and not just clean and pretty in her room. Rather than “painting her toe-nails” she prepares her feet to journey out and carry Christ to others.

Song of Songs 7:2a “Thy naval is like a round goblet that wanteth not liquor.”

Her naval is like a round goblet full of life/wine to nourish the babes. This is the description of one who is mothering the Seed of Christ in the young ones. A mother gives nourishment to her forming child through the umbilical cord that connects at the naval. There is a plentiful supply of life to flow to that child from this mother. There is neither lack of life to give to those she cares for, for He is in her as a fountain of life, even rivers of life-giving waters.

Song of Songs 7:2b “The belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies.”

Here we find her described like a pregnant women, carrying those in the Body who will be the place of His rest (lilies) as His life forms in them. The wheat represents many seeds made one through the process of threshing. This again shows that she has lost her “individual seed” identity to be found as one with the whole, like bread/wheat represents.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 7:3 "The two breasts are like two young roes that are twins".

Her breasts are also a place for the young ones to find milk before they can partake of the meat of the Word. Isaiah spoke of her in Isaiah 66:11; *"That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory"*.

Song of Songs 7:4-9 "Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus. Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries. How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights! This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples; And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak".

Chapter seven verses one through three described her as a vessel of nourishment for the Body, but verses four through nine describes her also as a vessel of pleasure for the Beloved.

Song of Songs 7:10 "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is towards me".

At the end of such high-praise she again takes a lowly position and simply declares that all that she is manifesting is HIM in her, *"I am my Beloved" (verse ten)*.

Song of Songs 7:11-13 "Come, my Beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves. The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my Beloved."

For the first time in the Song we find the Shulamite say "COME" to Him!!! She is initiating now! His nature is governing her so deeply that she is finding delight in the growth and fruitfulness of others. She wants Him to receive a bountiful harvest in the Body, and is totally given to care for that corporate vineyard and delight in its increase. How many times have you gone to a church service simply to delight in others growth and give yourself to nurture their fruitfulness, taking only the lower seat to care from them?

The Cross in the Song of Songs

At this point she is willing to leave her place to dwell among the brethren to bring greater care to them. She makes suggestion to move to the villages where she can more fully give herself to the care of others. In doing this she is going against one of her greatest fears as she says, *“Let us lodge in the villages”*.

Song of Songs 8:5a “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?”

She is the wilderness that she is coming up from. She is greatly depleted of the strength of her own life and is losing all her resources. She has commended ALL, her good and her bad, to the Cross that HE might possess every part of her land. She enters into the land weak, leaning into Him alone, that He might be the fullness that sustains her every step of the way.

Song of Songs 8:6-7 “Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.”

In chapter eight of the Song, she is passionately given to be completely His, unto a union so sealed in her that neither death, the grave, fire or water could separate her from His love and their life as one. She has no other life, identity or purpose than to be His completely.

Song of Songs 8:8-9 “We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will enclose her cedar boards.”

Again we find her continued focus is building up others that her Beloved might have a corporate habitation. Even the youngest and most unformed among them are considered dear members of His Body (I Cor. 12:23). They are dedicating themselves to build her up as part of the Body, Christ's habitation. She is looking at the unformed young ones as “part of the palace” that needs to be built up through their love. They are her personal concern now in a daily care that has captivated her heart as she has allowed His mind to be in her.

Their resources now go towards the growth of others. She has entered into the heart of her groom who ever lives to give Himself for others, that thy might have Life.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Song of Songs 8:12 “My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.”

Her all consuming passion now is His increase. Not only does she seek to wholly be a vessel for His Life, but she wants to sow her life that He can be increased in others. At the end of the Song we find her passionately tending her vineyard from the heart with new tools, such as “His Life in her”, “the way and nature of the Lamb”, “the applied Cross”, “denying her soul life”, “warring from above”, etc... From chapter one until now she has been learning how to exist through union into Christ as her all. She is walking embracing a Cross she once rejected. She has come a long way since the vineyards of Ecclesiastes. Before, in Ecclesiastes, it was all about labor and emptiness under the Son. The vineyard was a place of toil and frustration as she labored in her own strength. Now the vineyard is a place of union and life and increase through Christ. May we join with her as our hearts continually open to the voice of our Beloved and the embrace of His Cross. Amen.

*“To Jesus, His Church never looks more beautiful
than when she is sharing His Life with others,
bearing one another in love,
and laying her life down for others to grow.
That is the kind of beauty that ravishes His heart.
Those “scars” that we call ugly are points of
great beauty in the Lamb's eyes!”*

Chapter Twelve Study / Discussion Questions

“A Greater Beauty”

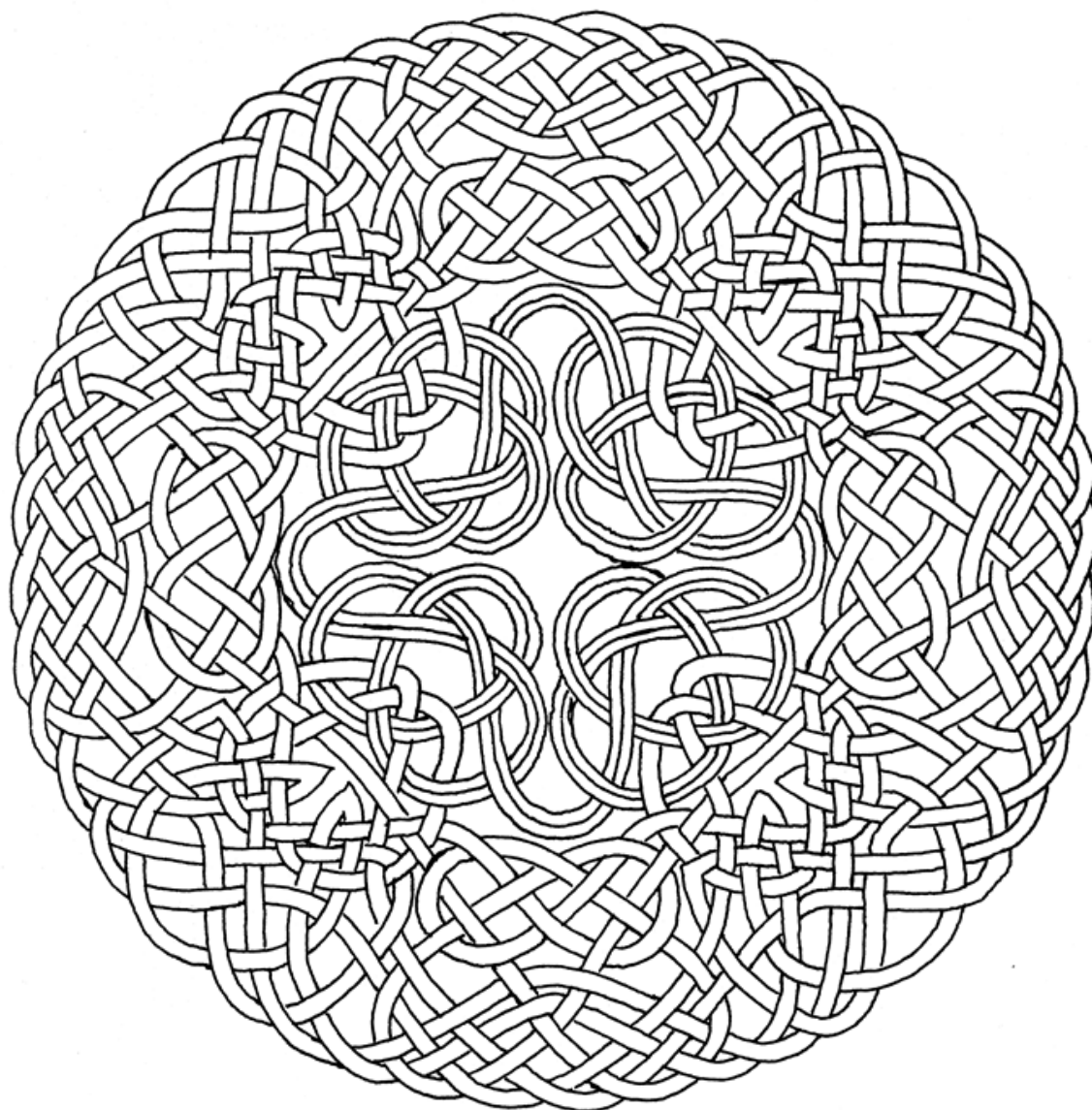
1. How does the word, “Amminadib” describe how she is finding herself to be functioning as part of the corporate Bride/Body?
2. Why might she appear “less beautiful” now to the daughters of Jerusalem than she appeared in earlier verses of the Song?
3. In chapter seven verses one through three we find the Beloved adoring the beauty of this new growth in her. What specifically is it that He is finding beautiful?
4. As she is maturing through His Life being formed within, her outward appearance is changing. These changes are much like what happens to a woman's body when she has children. How can this be seen as a form of Christ's Life manifesting in a believer?
5. Explain / Discuss how it can be that the “scars” that we call ugly are points of great beauty in the Lamb's eyes when they come from His Life in us.
6. Explain / Discuss how each of the following scriptures define an area in her where the Life of Christ is being formed:
 - *Song of Songs 7:1 “How beautiful are thy feet with shoes.”*
 - *Song of Songs 7:2a “Thy naval is like a round goblet that wanteth not liquor.”*
 - *Song of Songs 7:2b “The belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies.”*
 - *Song of Songs 7:3 “The two breasts are like two young roes that are twins.”*

The Cross in the Song of Songs

7. Describe / Discuss how the Song of Songs chapter seven verses four through nine define her as a vessel of pleasure for the Beloved, and not just nourishment for the Body.
8. When is the first time the Shulamite says “Come” to her Beloved, and why is this so significant?
9. Explain / Discuss the following statement: *“She is the wilderness that she is coming up from. She is greatly depleted of the strength of her own life and is losing all her resources. She has commended ALL, her good and her bad, to the Cross that HE might possess every part of her land. She enters into the land weak, leaning into Him alone, that He might be the fullness that sustains her every step of the way”.*
10. Throughout our study of the Song of Songs, we have been discussing new “tools” the Bride has been given to bring forth His increase in herself and others. Describe at least three of the tools we have mentioned throughout this book and explain how they function.
11. Before, in Ecclesiastes, it was all about labor and emptiness under the Son. The vineyard was a place of toil and frustration as she labored in her own strength. Now the vineyard is a place of union and life and increase through Christ. Explain in your own words what has brought about this huge change in her way and existence.
12. Write down / Share the one area that is striking most deeply in your heart at this time. This may be a good opportunity to pray one for another over these areas.

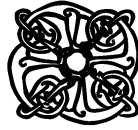
Chapter Thirteen

“The Virtuous Woman”



The Cross in the Song of Songs

Proverbs Thirty-One



"The Virtuous Woman is the Bride of Christ Applying the Cross"

Proverbs 31:1 "The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?"

I am concluding our study on the "Song of Songs" with this commentary on the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs because I believe we will find in it a culmination of all the principles we discussed throughout our search in the Song of Songs. Throughout our study of the Song of Songs we found that the increase the Shulamite brought forth and the maturity she experienced came from her personally laying hold of eternal life as she applied the Cross. She had learned to apply/ sow the cross daily into her life so that by the end of the book she had "control" over the fruit that came forth (*Song of Songs 8:12; "My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred"*).

There is a tendency in all of us to want someone else to sow the Cross into us, such as a preacher, friend, book, or circumstance. But only we, with open heart and willing hand, can take the sword/plow and apply it to our land. Once fruit is produced a greater harvest will eventually come as we learn to plant all into His death. By the end of the Song of Songs, the Cross has become her way, and she was found skillfully applying Christ and Him crucified to all that was within her realm of influence. Because of this she became a vessel of Life, not just to her Husband but to many. There was incredible provision for all in her care because she had sown all into His death and brought forth incredible increase.

The Song of Songs was also a book about King Solomon choosing a bride. Here, in Proverbs 31 we find Bathsheba (Solomon's mother) teaching her son just how to choose the right woman to be his wife. In each verse of this chapter we hear Solomon's mother describing a woman who proves her passion by embracing and applying the Cross, bringing her husband great honor and increase. We have seen the proof in the Song of Songs that Solomon took his mother's advice and found a maiden who would order her life by the way of the Cross.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

It is important to realize that none of us look like the “virtuous woman” of Proverbs thirty-one at first. Most certainly the Shulamite Solomon chose was in need of much growth in chapter one of the Song of Songs. But Solomon saw a heart in her that was willing to be with Him, even when it cost her and required her to pick up her cross daily and follow Him. She failed many times, and in herself was black, weak and unable to do anything apart from Him. It is our heart that must turn towards the Lord, and when it does all the virtue of Christ Himself will be at our disposal as He begins to fill us with New Life. This portion of scripture in Proverbs 31 can become an overwhelming burden to us until we comprehend Christ as our Source, fulfilling every aspect by filling us full of His Life.

Let us look closely at the verses found in Proverbs chapter thirty-one, as they will give us an in-depth look into the life of a woman who has chosen to embrace the way of the Lamb, her true husband, in the affairs of daily life:

Proverbs 31:10- 31 “Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Far Above Rubies

Proverbs 31:10 "Who can find a virtuous woman, her price is far above rubies."

Throughout this chapter we continue to hear from Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, as she instructs Solomon on how to find the right wife. Solomon, who is the King of Israel, must be burdened to find the right woman. He may have wondered, "Will she be the prettiest one?" His mother said that beauty is vain. "Will she be the one who works harder than the others?" Not if she is working in her own strength by her own virtues. Great wisdom, even the hidden wisdom that declares the way of the Lamb, comes forth from Solomon's mother as she begins to instruct him in how to find her.

Solomon's mother starts out saying that this woman has something that is far above rubies. Her price is above rubies because she has bought the truth through her own death. Rubies are a gemstone that have been purified through the process of pressure. There has been a cost to her beauty. She has conformed to the image of Christ like a ruby or a gem because she bought the truth in the furnace of affliction and sold it not. She was willing not only to hear the truth, but buy it at the cost of her own life. She has gone through the fire and the pressure and has come forth refined. There has been a death in her. She has brought forth Christ through much cost and pressure.

Proverbs 31:11 "The heart of her husband does safely trust in her, so that she shall have no need of spoil."

The only way Jesus can safely entrust His heart to the Church, His wife, is if she's crucified. This is the paramount principle that overshadows everything that follows. If she is crucified, then all other things will happen through Christ in her. Instead of focusing on the next twenty-one verses and trying to attain to all those virtues in our own strength, we can focus on applying the Cross so that Christ can fulfill it all in us. These following verses can become like another Ecclesiastes, something that is under the Son where we toil and labor until we cry out; "vanity of vanities" or they can be a description of what it looks like when Christ is living in someone. We can set our sail to try and gain virtue to be a "good" wife, Christian, or minister; or we can realize that there is no good thing in our flesh and cry out for Christ to come forth instead (Romans chapter seven). Instead of these virtues being the fruit of Christ's life within, they can become points of condemnation and failure. Some women probably avoid reading this chapter of Proverbs because of the pressure and condemnation it brings to them. **But if they saw this chapter of Proverbs as a description of what they**

The Cross in the Song of Songs

will look like if they allow Christ to live through them, these scriptures would be a great source of encouragement.

We must not forget the key ingredient that makes this virtuous woman who she is came from her decision to lay hold of the truth and apply the cross. She has loved His life more than her own, and as a result she glories in the cross of her own crucifixion that He might live instead.

Proverbs 31:17 “She girdeth her loins with strength, and she strengthen her arms.”

I Peter 1:13 “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

She will either gird herself with her own strength, or prepare herself to be empowered by Christ's Life within her. The woman who is constantly trying to improve herself is not the bride this king is looking for. Rather than working on her own strength, she is going to gird the loins of her mind to open up to Christ being revealed in her as her Life. *“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1:13).* She is going to get serious about separating herself unto one thing, and that is for Christ to be revealed in her. That means she is to gird up the loins of her mind unto the revelation of Jesus Christ, which Peter speaks of in his epistle. She is going to begin to say, *“I do not have time to consider my own flesh. I do not have time to do this in my own strength. I need to prepare myself through the renewing of my mind for the revelation of Jesus Christ. I need to mortify my members when they stretch forth in their own strength to do the work of the Lord. I need to apply the cross to that which yet the old fleshly nature in me. I must draw my life out from the Son.”* She is determined for the Lord to be her strength.

Buy the Field

Proverbs 31:15 “She considers a field and then buys it. With the fruit of her own hands she plants a vineyard.”

Proverbs 23:23 “Buy the truth, and sell it not;”

Matthew 13:23 “But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

The Cross in the Song of Songs

Solomon's mom continues offering some interesting advice concerning how to locate the right woman to marry. Next she tells him to find a woman who considers a field, buys it and then with the fruit of her own hands plants a vineyard. Jesus told us in Matthew thirteen that we are the field where He plants His Words (seeds) of Life. Those who truly hear the Gospel will consider this reality that we are the field into which God plants His Son. As someone hears the preaching of Christ in you, they may rejoice immediately thinking, "Christ wants to live in me. I am the field and He wants to bring forth fruit in this field". At first consideration this is a joyful thought. But Bathsheba knew that Solomon's bride must do more than simply ponder some idealistic thought. In order to become fruitful, this lady was going to have to buy that field at cost to herself. The wisdom of his mother was counseling Solomon to realize that not everyone who considers the field buys it. There are a lot of people who consider that Jesus wants to live in them, but refuse to buy the field when trials come. Bathsheba knew that her son was king and needed a woman who would help bring increase to his kingdom, and not just lofty ideals. She is warning him against one who appears to be available for his increase, but will not purchase the field and therefore cannot bring forth fruit. Proverbs 23:23 says, "Buy the truth and sell it not." What is the price for buying the field? These scriptures say it well; *"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. 6:19-20).* She realizes that her field is bought by the blood of the Lamb and that she belongs to Him now. Her body/field is a place for His life to live. This woman is not just going to consider a field; she is going to buy it. And that is going to cost her every single day. She is going to have to deny herself, pick up her cross and follow Jesus to buy that field for Him and become a place for His fruitfulness and habitation.

She Plants Everything into His Death

Proverbs 31:31 "Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

Romans 6:5a "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection"

Once she has bought the field, she will then lay hold of her Lord in such a manner as to bring forth fruit from that field. The scriptures tell us to "lay hold of eternal Life" (I Tim. 6:12). She will not only consider and buy the field, but with her own hands she is going to plant a vineyard. Planting requires sowing seeds, rather than simply admiring them. This woman is going to take everything and sow it into the

The Cross in the Song of Songs

death of the Lord Jesus Christ. As she does, a fruitful field will emerge out from her emotions, attitudes, inward thoughts, and responses. With her own hands she will plant all into the death of Christ and soon she will come forth a fruitful garden for her Lord.

In modern-day terms Solomon's mom may have said, "When you pick your wife make sure she does not just nod her head and consider the truth, saying... 'Oh I love this message, it is wonderful' but then drops her cross when it comes time to sow the field for harvest. Find the one who determines to take everything that comes into her life and plant it into our Lord's death so that Christ will be the fruit that comes forth instead of the old nature". The glorious end of the Song of Songs is that his wife has planted a vineyard and brought forth an incredible harvest for Solomon; *"My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand"*. The verse before that says the Solomon had many hired laborers who were paid to take care of his vineyard, but his bride brought forth fruit with her own hands, not for money, but to bless Solomon with her increase (Song of Songs 8:11). Her fruit was not the reward of her labors but the result of His life. For eight chapters this Shulamite that was Solomon's bride applied the cross by her own free will. Her response to Him, with every step of the journey was her choosing to embrace the way of the cross. And as she applied the cross, she grew in favor because His life was forming in her. And that is the fulfillment of what Jesus our risen Lord needs in His body; an extension and increase of the very Life and Spirit of God.

She Stands By Her Purchase!

Proverbs 31:18 "She perceiveth that her merchandise is good:

her candle goeth not out by night."

Things will come to test her faith; storms come, the enemy comes, the elements of this world come in crisis and circumstances. They want to rob her of the merchandise she has bought, the costly field that she has purchased for the Lord's increase. These dark forces seek to extinguish her fire, that she would not continue to enter into the way of the Cross that is being cultivated and formed in her. Such enemies seek to persuade her to leave this path of fruitfulness as they whisper, "This is not good, and there is too much loss. Just go back to the old way of only hearing the word, but not planting things into His Cross. Do not lay hold of and press into eternal Life, bringing forth the fruit of your own hands. Your merchandise is not good. You should never have bought such a lie as the preaching of the Cross." But she says, "No my merchandise is good. The way of the cross is true. If I suffer or

The Cross in the Song of Songs

things do not line up in the sense realm, if the enemy attacks me, and if it looks like I made a wrong choice following Jesus by denying my soul life and applying the cross; I still believe that my merchandise is good. This was the right purchase to lay down my own life to gain His. I am not a fool to plant all things into His death; every thought, every motive, every decision so that Christ could be the life of it. No, my merchandise is good no matter what it looks like in the earth. No matter what happens, even if great persecution comes for the Lord's sake, I know this was the best purchase of my life.”

Her Candle Stays Lit!

“Her candle goes not out by night.” She is determined to “rage against the dying of the light”. Her candle will not easily be blown out. Her declaration may sound something like, “I am not going to let the life of Jesus that I have with my own hands fought for and applied the cross to gain, go out because of the dark night surrounding me. His life is kindled in me because I have pressed into the Lord with all my heart. I will not allow my candle to go out when these crises come, when moments of doubt come, persecutions come, and circumstances make it look stupid that I went the way of the cross, and the way of the Lamb.” She knows her Lord and trusts in Him and in His ways. She is not going to back off when times get tough, when things look wrong, and when her choices are challenged by the sense realm. She is going to stay with Him. Her heart has come to a deep and lasting conviction and declares within her “This is the way of the Lamb. However that affects my circumstances I will remain with Him. If I gain, lose, feel nothing, or things go into total disaster because demons are assailing me for going with the Cross,... whatever happens, this is who He is, Whom is my life. What other way can I go? My candle will not go out because I am confused in my mind or things are unclear in the sense realm.” She has a holy determination to truly know nothings save the crucified Christ to whom she is married.

The Way of the Inheritance

Do you see the virtue of this woman? It has nothing to do with her being the best cook or seamstress. It has everything to do with her learning how to sow, S-O-W. She is learning to go the way of the Lamb, who sows His life for others. Her sowing is not with needle and thread but a cross. That is a virtuous woman, and that is the kind of woman Solomon’s mother wants for her son who is king. She might say, “Solomon, there has been a lot of death for generation upon generation in our family. There has been a Ruth and a David in your background. There have been many who were “sown” for others. You are part of the lineage of the Lamb. You are part of the

The Cross in the Song of Songs

path of the cross being applied to bring forth the Kingdom in the earth as it is in heaven. You need someone who will join in the way of the eternal life that is part of this Kingdom.” She understands that her son is going to grow up in the heritage of the Lord as king. And we, as the Body of Christ, are partakers of the Way of the Lamb. We have been joined to Jesus Who is the true Heir and King of the Kingdom. As his bride we must join with Him in the “way of the inheritance”. Many are so excited to get their inheritance, but if we saw that our inheritance was the way of the cross, how many would really want their inheritance? If our true inheritance involved planting everything into death so that out from death will come an increase of divine Life; how many would join with that Heir? But that is what Jesus is, He is a Lamb. What does that mean? That means that all gets planted into death, including the woman He is supposed to join with. She needs to be part of that eternal way.

Proverbs 31:19 “She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.”
I Timothy 6:12 “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”

Verse nineteen speaks of her laying her hands upon something and holding it. Paul exhorts us in his first epistle to Timothy to “lay hold of eternal life”. Laying hold of something is a spiritual, practical embrace. We do it with the hands of our hearts, with our minds, our decisions, our reactions and in our dealings. We handle things every day. Things come to us at work, in our families, on a phone call, through relatives, financial needs, the economy; there are endless scenarios. As these situations come, we have to handle them. The question is in what way we will handle these things? All of a sudden Proverbs thirty-one is not just an inspirational quote that can be idealized as a picture of how Christian women are to live. The issues become real and pressing, as they deeply touch the manner in which we choose to relate to Christ our Life. Choices are presented to us, such as; “Will I lay my hand to the spindle? Will I take what has been given to me and weave out from it something for the Lord by yielding to His Spirit within? Will I take what has been put into my hands and sow the fabric of this crisis into His death, or will I try to manipulate things to minister to my earth comfort?” The person who is being conformed to the way of the Lamb will take hold of their circumstance and plant it into death through the Spirit of the Lamb. Through the nature of God within they will bring the Life of Christ into the situation. Like a spiritual seamstress... they will sow Christ, S-O-W Christ by laying their hand to the eternal spindle and saying, “I am going to sow Christ into this situation. I am going to weave Christ's life into this

The Cross in the Song of Songs

very bad situation that was just dropped in my lap.” That is a virtuous woman. That is a woman in whom His heart can safely trust. He does not have to teach her what to do for she abides as one with Him in His nature and way. He has revealed to her that in all things she is crucified. She knows that in all things she goes the way of the Lamb, her Husband. And in all things she will bring forth an increase of His Life. He can trust her. We need to lay our hands to the spindle and sow every thought, motive and reaction into Christ Who is our Life.

The Ways of Her Household

Proverbs 31:27 “She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.”

This virtuous woman is very active. She considers a field and then she sows it with the fruit of her hands. She girds her loins against all the things of this world that would press against her, and she focuses on Christ and Him crucified. She perceives that her merchandise is good when challenged in the sense realm and she does not let her candle go out at night. She lays her hand to the spindle and holds the distaff. This virtuous woman is not idly waiting for God to do it all for her. She is not eating the bread of idleness by not preparing herself as a habitation for His Life to dwell in. She is saying, “I am the habitation of the Lord. I cannot afford to be idle, complacent and passive, but I have to rise up and look well to the ways of the inward flow of this household. What is going on in my thought life? What is going on in my reactions? How am I handling the situations that are brought to me? Am I sowing things into the death of Christ, or am I just trying to get by, slipping past the way of the cross into another way? Am I acting like a thief trying to get through this crisis apart from Christ? Am I building a bridge through human strength and human cleverness to pass over this tough situation? Am I calling to Assyria, Egypt, or Edom, to find a chariot, horse, or bridge-building team to get through this? Am I sowing and planting all things into the death of Christ and letting resurrection be the way to the other side?”

She's looking well to the W-A-Y-S of her household. The ways of her household are not doing dishes and making beds, but the things of her heart that will make sure she is prepared to be His house. She must take care of her thought-life and inward motives. She must guard against the enemy and his little foxes! These are the *things* of her household. The *way* of her household speaks of the way of the cross. What is her household principled by? The principles of the Cross which is Life out from

The Cross in the Song of Songs

death. Is our household ordered by human methods, or by the Lord's way as known in His sanctuary / His house (Ps. 77:13)? The way of the Lamb is the way of a virtuous woman because she is married to the Lamb (Rev. 21:9).

No matter what tragedy or failure comes to us, we are not willing to compromise the way of our household to bring inward contentment to a soul that is not crucified. Once again, it does not matter what the circumstance is. It could be our own failure that causes us to panic and try to do something. But even in our own failure we can say, "The way of my household is not to find some clever way to deal with this so I do not feel upset anymore. The way of my household is to die to self and go the way of the Lamb. I am not going to eat the bread of idleness because I am overwhelmed by the circumstance, but I will lay my hand to the spindle and begin applying Christ. Right now I am going to take my soul, mind, and body to Calvary and look this thing straight in the face and embrace the way of the Cross. And if I die at the foot of the Cross with no resurrection or resolution in this situation I will have died trying to get to Jesus by the way of the Lamb." Something deep within her has determined to make the way of her household the way of the Lamb to Whom she is joined, and nothing is going to divert her from going the way of the Cross.

It is when somebody reacts by the government of the way of the Lamb that the kingdom of darkness gets concerned! Some agents of the enemy's camp may wonder, "Where is the person I could always rely on to leave the Lord when things got bad? Why is she over there at the foot of the cross dying to self. I do not like that." So the enemy tries to make our candle go out at night and the flame just keeps burning. She is denying her soul in an area where she always fed her soul, and that is spreading terror throughout the enemies camp (Phil. 1:28-29)!

Her Hands Are Full For Others

Proverbs 31:20 "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy."

Spiritually we lay hold of things with our hands. We lay hold of the Lord in practical ways by going the way of His Nature, symbolized by the Cross. When we do so there is an increase of His Life, and our hands are able to reach forth to others with Life. Many verses in this chapter speak of her hands. They are not idle, because they are laying hold of Him and then they are stretching out to others. The hand is either idle and has nothing to give to others, or it is actively laying hold of eternal Life and then sharing that Life with others.

The Cross in the Song of Songs

To be able to distill life to the poor and needy we have to be applying the truth regularly. We need to sow things into death so there will be a harvest of food for others, Christ within us. Because this woman lives by this principle of His nature, her household is clothed, fed, and has much to give away to others. Life comes out of death. In order to show Christ, we must first sow Christ in all things. It is the law of seedtime and harvest fulfilled in the Lamb's wife and her ways. The reality of sowing is most fully seen at Calvary, where God sowed His Son into the soil of the earth to bring forth a great harvest in us. She will continue to sow His Life, and in this sowing, harvest greatly increases. She is fruitfully His.

Song of Songs 3:11 "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart."

In this verse of the Song of Songs we beholding this bride likened unto a crown that Solomon's mother placed upon him in the day of his espousals. As we behold her, may we see the Lamb's ways that are deeply forming in her, and take our place in her as those who relate to the Lamb in oneness of nature through applying the Cross.

The End

*"He is being expressed through His Bride in ways
that are extremely dear to His heart (the cross for others).
Not only has she come away from her view
of being something separate from Him,
but she has allowed Him to rise up in her
in His eternal Lamb nature
and be given for others."*

Chapter Thirteen Study / Discussion Questions

“The Virtuous Woman”

1. In what ways is the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs a culmination of the principles we saw being formed in the Shulamite in the Song of Songs?
2. What proof can you find in the Song of Songs that Solomon took his mother's advice and chose a maiden who would order her life by the way of the Cross?
3. Explain / Discuss this statement: “Her price is above rubies because it is the price of someone who has bought the truth through her own death”.
4. Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement: “The only way the heart of Jesus can safely trust in the Church, His wife, is if she's crucified”.
5. Which method do you believe is what God desires for us to follow in?
 - a. Focusing on trying to attain to the virtues spoken of in Proverb 31 in our own strength.
 - b. Focus on applying the Cross so that Christ can fulfill it all in us.
6. How is it possible for these virtues to become points of condemnation instead of the fruit of Christ's Life within?
7. We can choose to gird ourselves with our own strength, or prepare our hearts and minds for Christ to be revealed in us as our Life. Which verse in Proverb thirty-one refers to this point?
8. In what verse was Solomon's mother counseling him to realize that not everyone who considers the field buys it? In what ways does this principle pertain to the manner in which we respond to the preaching of the Cross?
9. Is it possible to love hearing the message of the Cross, yet hate the method of the Cross when it comes time to apply in our lives?

The Cross in the Song of Songs

10. How does Song of Songs chapter eight and verse eleven show us that the Shulamite responded to her Beloved by applying the Cross in her daily and personal circumstances?
11. Have you ever had thoughts similar to these: *“There is too much loss going the way of the Cross. I should go back to the old way of only hearing the word, but not planting things into His Cross. I should not lay hold of and press into eternal Life. This merchandise is not good. I should never have bought such a lie as the preaching of the Cross.”*? If you can relate to these thoughts, what is your ultimate conclusion?
12. Explain / Discuss your thoughts concerning this statement: “Many are excited to get their inheritance, but if they saw that our inheritance was the way of the cross, how many would really want their inheritance?”
13. Give a practical example of being a “spiritual seamstress”. Share from your own experience or that of someone else that demonstrates a time of taking a difficulty in hand and “sowing the fabric” of that crisis into His death by applying the Cross in that situation.
14. We discussed how the virtuous woman was not idly waiting for God to do it all for her. She was not eating the bread of idleness by not preparing herself as a habitation for Christ’s Life to dwell in. In what ways have you been “eating the bread of idleness” in preparing yourself as Christ’s home? There may be an opportunity at the end of class or in the meeting to pray one for another over these specific areas.
15. No matter what tragedy or failure comes to us, may we not be willing to compromise the way of our household to bring inward contentment to a soul that is not crucified. Journal or share your heart concerning this determination to embrace the Cross in practical ways.
16. Explain / Discuss how the idle hand has nothing to give others, while the hand actively applying the Cross can stretch forth to feed the needy?
17. How is the law of seedtime and harvest fulfilled in the Lamb's wife?

The Cross in the Song of Songs



*This book by Kelly Koshatka
is meant to help draw your heart into a
greater hunger to pursue Jesus Christ
as the One Who truly lives in you.*

*P.O. Box 1961
Denton, Texas 76202 USA*

*kellyreallylovesjesus@yahoo.com
www.christaslife.com*

Copyright 2011 by Dying Seed Press