

## **Table of Contents (tap to go to study)**

<b>The Wedding Day - Song 1:1-2:7 .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Memories of Courtship - Song 2:8-3:5 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Memories of Engagement - Song 3:6-5:1 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A Troubling Dream - Song 5:2-6:3 .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Praising the Bride's Beauty - Song 6:4-7:9 .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>The Bride's Tender Appeal - Song 7:10-8:4 .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>The Power of Love - Song 8:5-14 .....</b>	<b>8</b>

## The Wedding Day - Song 1:1-2:7

**Topics:** Affections, Affirmation, Appearance, Approval, Beauty, Body, Character, Desires, Encouragement, Friendship, Love, Partnerships, Pleasure, Praise, Purity, Relationships, Sex

### Open It

- \* 1. Why do you agree or disagree with the saying that “beauty is in the eye of the beholder”?
- 2. What is your favorite part of the wedding ceremony? Why?
- 3. How is love generally depicted in television programs, movies, and romance novels?
- 4. Why do you think people read romance novels or watch romantic movies?

### Explore It

- 5. Who are the three speakers in these verses? (1:1-2:7)
- \* 6. What is the relationship between the Lover and the Beloved? (1:1-2:7)
- \* 7. How did the Beloved describe her Lover? (1:1-4, 16)
- 8. Where did the Beloved want her Lover to take her? (1:4)
- 9. How did the Beloved describe herself? (1:5-7)
- \* 10. How did the Lover describe his Beloved? (1:9-11, 15)
- 11. To what did the Lover compare his Beloved? (2:2)
- 12. To what did the Beloved compare her Lover? (2:3)
- 13. Where did the Lover take his Beloved? (2:4)
- 14. What did the Beloved ask her Lover to do? (2:5)
- 15. What did the Beloved tell the Daughters of Jerusalem they should do? (2:7)

### Get It

- 16. What stage in the Lover and Beloved’s relationship is described in these verses?
- 17. How is romantic love depicted in these verses?
- 18. What types of words did the Lover and the Beloved use in speaking to each other?
- 19. How might the Beloved’s description of herself be an indication that others may not have found her as attractive as did her Lover?
- \* 20. Why did the Lover and the Beloved praise each other’s physical attractiveness?
- 21. Why is it important to compliment a person’s physical appearance?
- \* 22. How do you think the compliments given by the Lover and the Beloved made the other person feel about himself or herself and about their relationship?
- 23. How important is mutual physical attraction in a relationship?
- 24. Besides physical attractiveness, what other characteristics did the Lover and the Beloved praise?
- 25. What qualities besides physical attractiveness should a potential marriage partner possess?

### Apply It

- \* 26. How can you make the person you are in a relationship with feel loved and accepted today?
- 27. What one thing can you do this week to add a bit of romance to your relationship?

## Memories of Courtship - Song 2:8-3:5

*Topics:* Affections, Desires, Devotion, Feelings, Friendship, Love, Patience, Pleasure, Problems, Purity, Relationships

### Open It

1. What is the strangest dream you have ever had?
2. What were (or are, as the case may be) the essential elements of courtship when you were dating?
- \* 3. What is the funniest thing that ever happened to you on a date?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What sort of relationship did the Lover and the Beloved have? (2:8-3:5)
5. How did the Beloved describe her Lover? (2:8-9)
- \* 6. What did the Lover say to his Beloved? (2:10-13)
7. What time of year was it? (2:11-13)
8. How did the Lover describe his Beloved's voice and face? (2:14)
- \* 9. What did the Lover ask his Beloved to catch? Why? (2:15)
10. How did the Beloved describe her relationship with her Lover? (2:16)
11. When did the Beloved say she looked for but could not find her Lover? (3:1)
12. What did the Beloved dream? (3:1-4)
13. Where did the Beloved say she would go to look for her Lover? (3:2)
14. What did the Beloved ask the watchmen? (3:3)
15. What did the Beloved do when she found her Lover? (3:4)
16. What charge did the Beloved give to the Daughters of Jerusalem? (3:5)

### Get It

17. How would you describe the Lover and the Beloved's relationship?
18. Why do you think the Beloved described her Lover as a gazelle?
19. What might the coming of spring symbolize?
- \* 20. What do you think the little foxes represented in the Beloved and the Lover's relationship?
- \* 21. What kind of problems crop up in a relationship sooner or later?
22. When does romantic love tend to fade from a relationship? Why?
23. Why do you think the Beloved took her Lover to her mother's house?
24. Why do you think the Beloved told the Daughters of Jerusalem not to arouse love "until it so desires"?
25. In what way do people arouse love before it desires?

### Apply It

26. With what relationship will you ask God to help you be patient this week?
- \* 27. What can you do this week to resolve a conflict in your relationship with your spouse or a friend?

## Memories of Engagement - Song 3:6-5:1

*Topics:* Appearance, Beauty, Body, Celebration, Commitment, Desires, Friendship, Husbands, Love, Marriage, Partnerships, Pleasure, Praise, Purity, Relationships, Self-esteem, Sex, Wives

### Open It

1. What do you consider to be the essential elements of a wedding ceremony?
2. In what situations would you normally expect someone to feel jealous?
- \* 3. Who was your first crush, and what did you think of him or her?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What events take place in these verses? (3:6-5:1)
5. What question did the Beloved ask? (3:6)
6. Who came up from the desert with Solomon? (3:7-8)
7. How did the Beloved describe Solomon's carriage? (3:9-10)
8. What did the Beloved tell the Daughters of Zion to do? (3:11)
9. When did Solomon's mother crown him? (3:11)
- \* 10. How did Solomon describe his Beloved? (4:1-7)
11. How did Solomon and his bride treat each other? (4:1-5:1)
12. Where did Solomon ask his bride to go? (4:8)
13. What did Solomon say his bride had stolen? (4:9)
14. How did Solomon describe his bride's love and lips? (4:10-11)
15. To what did Solomon compare his bride? (4:12-15)
- \* 16. What did the Beloved invite her Lover to do? (4:16)
17. What did the Lover say he had done? (5:1)

### Get It

18. How does this ancient near eastern wedding compare to weddings that you have attended?
- \* 19. What type of terms did Solomon use to tell his bride that she was beautiful?
20. If Solomon had been describing his bride today, what metaphors do you think he would have chosen?
21. What is significant about the bridegroom's focus on his bride's beauty?
22. How can a person build up his or her spouse's self-esteem?
23. What does it mean to have one's heart stolen by another person?
24. For what is Solomon praising his bride in 4:12-15, and why is this important?
25. What is the significance of the bride's invitation to Solomon to come into his garden?
26. Why should sex be enjoyed only in the context of marriage?
27. What do these verses suggest about the need for premarital sexual purity?
- \* 28. What do these verses suggest about the purpose and place of sexual love?

### Apply It

- \* 29. What is one thing you can do to honor God's design for sexual union in marriage?
30. What can you do to build up your spouse's self-esteem this week?

## A Troubling Dream - Song 5:2-6:3

**Topics:** Appearance, Arguments, Emotions, Friendship, Husbands, Love, Marriage, Praise, Quarrels, Relationships, Separation, Wives

### Open It

1. How have your relationships with best friends or your spouse changed as time has passed?
2. What do you think causes feelings of love to fade in a relationship?
- \* 3. What couple do you know with a successful marriage, and what do you most admire about their relationship?

### Explore It

- \* 4. What stage in the couple's relationship is described in these verses? (5:2-6:3)
5. What did the Beloved say she was doing? (5:2)
6. With what terms did the Lover address his Beloved? (5:2)
7. What events took place in the Beloved's dream? (5:2-8)
8. How did the Beloved respond to her husband's request to open the door? (5:3)
9. What happened once the Beloved opened the door? (5:6)
10. What did the Beloved say the watchmen did? (5:7)
- \* 11. How did the Beloved describe her attitude toward her husband? (5:8)
- \* 12. How did the Beloved describe her Lover? (5:10-16)
13. What question did the Friends ask the Beloved? (6:1)
14. Where did the Beloved say her Lover had gone? (6:2-3)

### Get It

15. What clues are there in these verses that time has lapsed since the wedding?
- \* 16. In what ways had this marriage relationship changed or stayed the same since the wedding?
17. Why might the initial excitement that accompanies marriage begin to fade?
- \* 18. What is significant about the Beloved's description of her Lover?
19. What makes a successful relationship last?
20. How can a couple keep the flame of love alive in their marriage?

### Apply It

- \* 21. If you are married, what is one thing you can do today to show your spouse that you love him or her?
22. What lesson from these verses do you especially want to remember?
23. What fractured relationship do you want to work on mending?
24. What friends with a fractured relationship will you pray for today?

## Praising the Bride's Beauty - Song 6:4-7:9

*Topics:* Acceptance, Affections, Beauty, Body, Friendship, Husbands, Love, Marriage, Pleasure, Praise, Quarrels, Reconciliation, Relationships, Wives

### Open It

- \* 1. Why is it hard to say you're sorry?
- 2. What is your favorite love story?

### Explore It

- \* 3. How would you describe the events of these verses? (6:4-7:9)
- \* 4. How did the Lover describe his wife? (6:4-9)
  - 5. Why did the Lover tell his Beloved to turn her eyes from him? (6:5)
  - 6. Where did the Lover go? (6:11)
- \* 7. How did the Lover describe his reconciliation with his Beloved? (6:11-13)
  - 8. What did the Lover say about his Beloved's feet and legs? (7:1)
  - 9. What did the Lover say about his Beloved's navel and waist? (7:2)
  - 10. How did the Lover describe his Beloved's breasts? (7:3, 7)
  - 11. What did the Lover say about his Beloved's neck, eyes, and nose? (7:4)
  - 12. How did the Lover describe his Beloved's head and hair? (7:5)
  - 13. What did the Lover find pleasing? (7:6)
  - 14. What did the Lover say he would climb? (7:8-9)

### Get It

- \* 15. Judging from the events of these verses (and the events that led up to them, 6:1-3), what are some essential elements in the process of reconciliation?
- 16. What does this story say about reconciliation?
- \* 17. Why is it sometimes hard to reconcile your differences with someone you love?
  - 18. In what way do you find the somewhat sensual nature of these verses surprising, refreshing, or offensive?
  - 19. How is the Lover's praise of his wife's beauty important to the reconciliation process?
  - 20. How might the Beloved's breasts be like clusters, her breath like apples, and her mouth like wine?
  - 21. How have these verses impacted your view of marriage?
  - 22. How have these verses impacted your view of human sexuality?

### Apply It

- \* 23. What conflict in your relationship with your spouse will you work to resolve this week?
- 24. What broken relationship will you mend this week?

## The Bride's Tender Appeal - Song 7:10-8:4

*Topics:* Acceptance, Affections, Affirmation, Caring, Desires, Emotions, Feelings, Friendship, Husbands, Love, Marriage, Relationships, Security, Sex, Wives

### Open It

- \* 1. What makes a person feel secure in a relationship?
- 2. What makes a person feel insecure in a relationship?
- 3. When do you think it is OK for a woman to take the initiative in a relationship?

### Explore It

- \* 4. To whom did the Beloved say she belonged? (7:10)
- 5. Where did the Beloved want to go to spend the night? (7:11)
- 6. Why did the Beloved want to go to the vineyards? (7:12)
- 7. What did the Beloved say that the mandrakes sent out? (7:13)
- 8. What had the Beloved stored up for her Lover? (7:13)
- 9. Whom did the Beloved wish her Lover was like? Why? (8:1)
- \* 10. Where did the Beloved say she would take her Lover? (8:2)
- \* 11. What did the Beloved say about her Lover's arms? (8:3)
- 12. What charge did the Beloved give to the Daughters of Jerusalem? (8:4)

### Get It

- 13. How would you describe this relationship between husband and wife?
- \* 14. In what way do married people belong to one another?
- 15. What does the fact that the Beloved felt comfortable with taking the initiative suggest about the couple's relationship?
- 16. During what season did these events take place?
- 17. Why might the Beloved wish her Lover were like a brother to her so that she could kiss him outside without being despised by others?
- \* 18. What feeling about their relationship might the Beloved's description of her Lover's arms suggest?

### Apply It

- 19. What can you do this week to deepen your relationship with your spouse?
- \* 20. How can you make your spouse feel loved, accepted, and secure this week?

## The Power of Love - Song 8:5-14

**Topics:** Acceptance, Affections, Desires, Emotions, Feelings, Friendship, Husbands, Love, Marriage, Relationships, Security, Sex, Wives

### Open It

- \* 1. What do you consider to be the most powerful emotion? Why?
- 2. Why does sex sell?
- 3. Who has most helped or inspired you to stay true to God's plan for marriage?

### Explore It

- 4. What question did the Friends ask? (8:5)
- 5. What events happened under the apple tree? (8:5)
- \* 6. What did the Beloved ask the Lover to do? (8:6)
- \* 7. How did the Beloved describe love? (8:6-7)
- 8. What question did the Friends ask about their sister? (8:8-9)
- 9. Who helped the Beloved prepare for the day of her marriage? (8:8-9)
- 10. What had the Beloved become like to Solomon? (8:10)
- 11. What did the Beloved say that Solomon had? (8:11)
- 12. What did the Beloved say she had? (8:12)
- 13. What did the Lover say he wanted to hear? (8:13)
- \* 14. What did the Beloved invite her Lover to do? (8:14)

### Get It

- \* 15. In what way is love strong and unyielding?
- 16. How is love like a blazing fire?
- 17. In what way is love unquenchable?
- 18. How does the Beloved reflect upon her childhood and her courtship?
- 19. What do the words of the Lover and Beloved in 8:13-14 recall about their relationship?
- \* 20. What do the verses and this book say about physical love between a husband and his wife?
- 21. In what ways do we take love for granted?
- 22. How can we keep the passion and commitment in our marriage?

### Apply It

- 23. What can you do this week to rekindle the flame of romantic love in your marriage?
- \* 24. What commitment will you make to honor love and sex within marriage and not to abuse it?