

Song of Solomon

A LOVE LIKE NO OTHER

WEEK 3

Beneath His Covering of Love



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Song of Solomon

A LOVE LIKE NO OTHER

INTRODUCTION

SOAP METHOD

SONG OF SOLOMON 1:8-15

1. EMBRACED BY THE DELIGHT OF THE DIVINE
2. CHOSEN AMIDST THE THORNS OF LIFE
3. FED AND REVITALIZED BY HIS SACRED PRESENCE
4. HIDDEN IN THE FORTRESS OF HIS STRENGTH
5. SAFE BENEATH THE TENDERNESS OF HIS COVERING
6. DO NOT AWAKEN THE FLAME OF LOVE TOO SOON
7. THE WHISPER OF MY BELOVED'S HEART

Song of Solomon

A LOVE LIKE NO OTHER

This 7-day study invites you to dive deep into the exhilarating safety, breathtaking beauty, and intimate embrace of resting under the glorious covering of Christ's love. Drawing upon the poetic imagery found in Song of Solomon 2:1-17, you will uncover the profound meaning of being passionately pursued, fiercely protected, and endlessly cherished by the One who lovingly calls you His beloved. The bride exclaims that His banner over her is love, reminding us that God's love is not only a fierce flame of passion but also a steadfast shield of protection. In a world fraught with striving and fear, this study powerfully guides you into the tranquil sanctuary of spiritual rest. You will learn to trust in Christ's unwavering presence, respond fearlessly to life's challenges, and live confidently in the embrace of divine affection. Through rich biblical insight, profound theological depth, and intimate practical reflection, each day will draw you ever deeper into a serene place of stillness, vibrant worship, and unshakeable peace—beneath His magnificent banner of love.

Song of Solomon

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How to use this Journal:

There are many study methods out there! I encourage you to search through them and find what motivates and encourages you the most. I like to use the S.O.A.P Method.

Scripture

Write out a verse or passage of scripture.

Observation

What stood out to you about this verse or scriptures?

Where there any commands or instructions?

Application

How can you apply this today to your life today?

How can you live in light of this truth?

Prayer

Write out a prayer. Ask the Lord to show you how to meditate and apply this truth to your life.

Other areas to consider:

- * Author
- * Audience
- * Major Concept
- * Theme
- * Event
- * Keywords and Definitions
- * People
- * Places
- * When
- * Where
- * Who am I in this Verse?
- * Where is God?
- * What Is God Speaking?

Give yourself room to ponder and pray. Allow yourself time to listen for God to speak to you. Get creative! Draw, paint, make diagrams, whatever ignites your awe and wonder to studying God's Word!

Visit It Starts Small for more examples and in-depth study guide ideas!

www.itstartssmall.com

Song of Solomon

A LOVE LIKE NO OTHER

Notes:

2 *I am a wildflower of Sharon,
a lily of the valleys.*
Man

*2 Like a lily among thorns,
so is my darling among the young wom-
en.*

Woman

*3 Like an apricot tree among the trees of
the forest, so is my love among the young
men. I delight to sit in his shade,
and his fruit is sweet to my taste.*

*4 He brought me to the banquet hall,
and he looked on me with love.*

*5 Sustain me with raisins; refresh me with
apricots, for I am lovesick.*

*6 May his left hand be under my head,
and his right arm embrace me.*

7 Young women of Jerusalem, I charge

Song of Solomon

A LOVE LIKE NO OTHER

Notes:

you by the gazelles and the wild does of the field, do not stir up or awaken love until the appropriate time.

*8 Listen! My love is approaching.
Look! Here he comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.*

*9 My love is like a gazelle
or a young stag. See, he is standing behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice.*

10 My love calls to me:

Man

Arise, my darling.

Come away, my beautiful one.

*11 For now the winter is past;
the rain has ended and gone away.*

*12 The blossoms appear in the countryside. The time of singing has come,
and the turtledove's cooing is heard in*

Song of Solomon

A LOVE LIKE NO OTHER

Notes:

our land.

*13 The fig tree ripens its figs;
the blossoming vines give off their fragrance. Arise, my darling.*

Come away, my beautiful one.

*14 My dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the crevices of the cliff,
let me see your face,
let me hear your voice;
for your voice is sweet,
and your face is lovely.*

Woman

*15 Catch the foxes for us—
the little foxes that ruin the vineyards—
for our vineyards are in bloom.*

Woman

*16 My love is mine and I am his;
he feeds among the lilies.*

Song of Solomon

A LOVE LIKE NO OTHER

Notes:

17 Until the day breaks and the shadows flee, turn around, my love, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the divided mountains.

Songs 2:1-17

Embraced by the Delight of the Divine

Song of Solomon 2:1

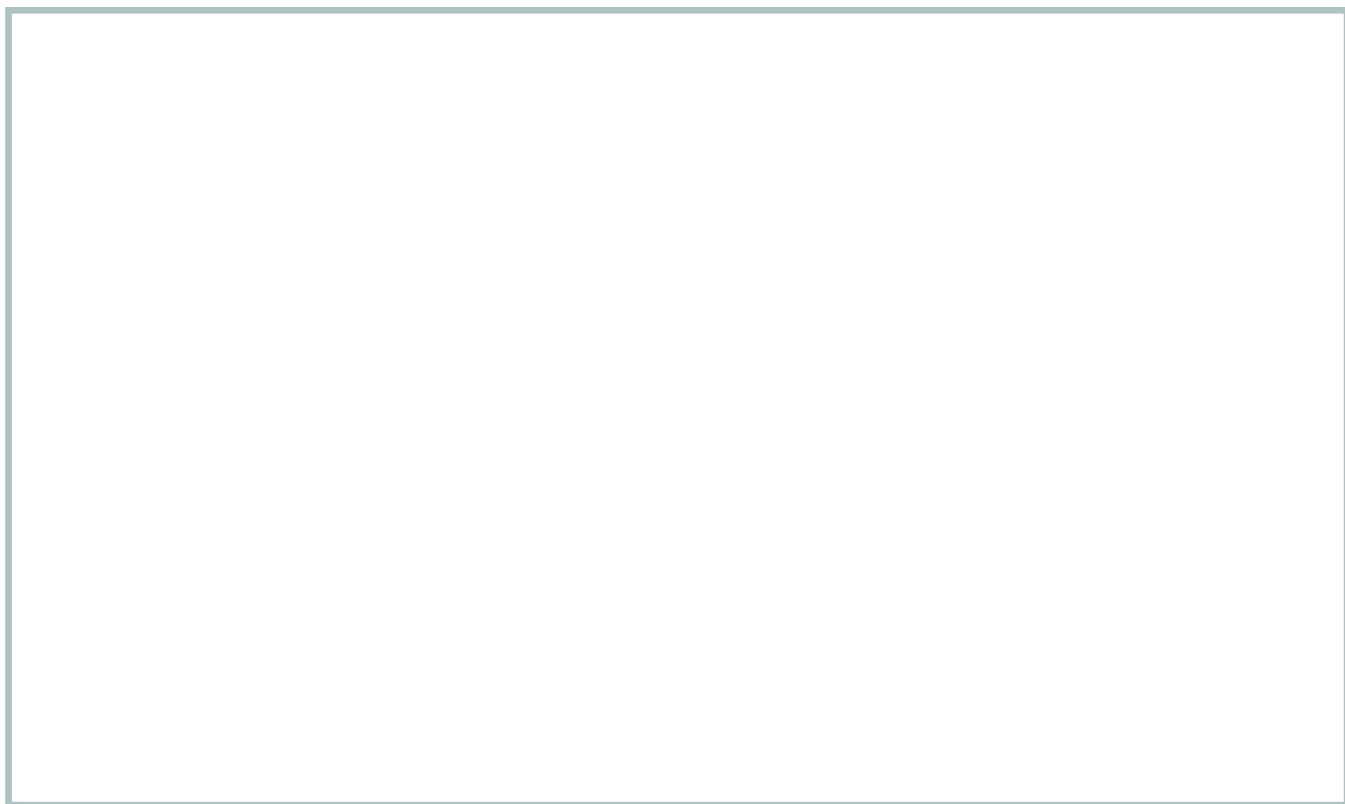
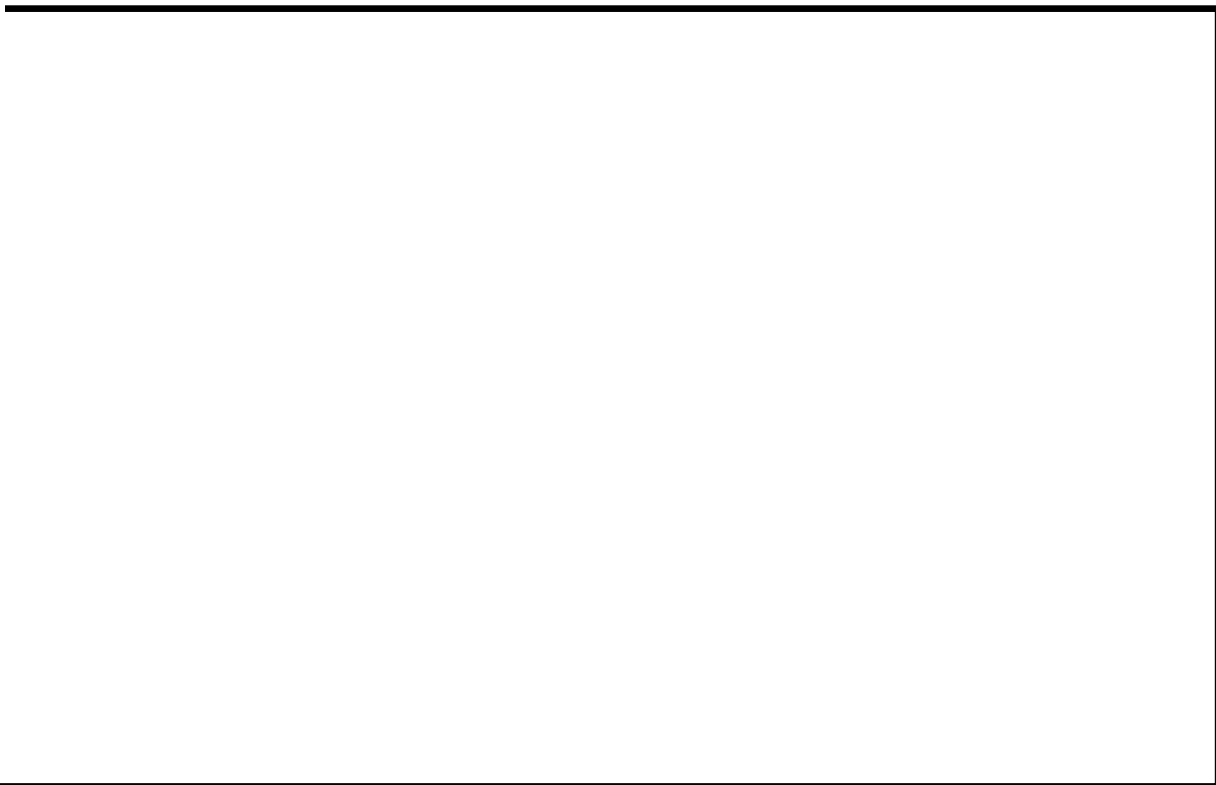
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Embraced by the Delight of the Divine

*2 I am a wildflower of Sharon,
a lily of the valleys.
Songs 2:1*

The bride's declaration here radiates with a fervent confidence: "I am a wildflower of Sharon, a lily of the valley." She understands her value not through comparison with others, but through the profound lens of love. No longer does she doubt her worth; she begins to perceive herself as the Beloved sees her. Other translations refer to her as the rose of Sharon. Roses and lilies, while common, exude undeniable beauty. This symbolizes a humble, yet striking kind of allure—accessible, natural, and truly authentic. In the eyes of the Groom, this is more than enough. Her beauty requires no rarity or extraordinary charm; she is cherished not for her perfection, but simply because she is His.

*¹⁷ The Lord your God is among you,
a warrior who saves.
He will rejoice over you with gladness.
He will be quiet in his love.
He will delight in you with singing."
Zephaniah 3:17*

Zephaniah 3:17 vibrantly captures the essence of divine joy: God is not just close to us - He passionately rejoices over us with overflowing gladness and lovingly calms our fears with His unwavering love. This image is profoundly tender, fiercely protective, and deeply passionate. To be enveloped by such exquisite delight ignites peace in the soul and nurtures healing in the heart. Theologically, this day powerfully affirms our identity in Christ. We are not merely tolerated; we are cherished beyond measure. Our very existence delights God! His cover, His magnificent banner over us is love, and under this glorious embrace, we find the freedom to rest, to be fully known, and to flourish abundantly.

Psychologically, understanding that we are cherished simply for our authentic selves - not for our achievements or flaws - establishes the bedrock of genuine self-worth. When we embrace God's joyous affection, it revolutionizes our perception of ourselves and those around us. We cease our relentless striving and begin to cultivate a deeper connection. Neuroscience backs this up: the sensations of safety and acceptance literally rewire our brains, guiding us from mere survival into true flourishing. Our nervous systems

find solace when we are genuinely recognized and profoundly loved. God's love does precisely that. His love calms our restless spirits, heals our wounds, and provides us the space to truly blossom.

You are so much more than a mere flower; you are the breathtaking rose of His garden, radiating beauty and grace. You are the exquisite lily in His valley, standing out with unmatched elegance. You are profoundly known, deeply seen, and fervently loved beyond all comprehension.

Journal Prompt:

- Do you find it easy or difficult that God delights in you?
- What would change if you lived today fully confident in His love?

Practical Steps and Application:

1. Meditate on Songs 2:1. Personalize this scripture - I am His Rose. I am His lily.
2. Write a journal entry starting with God delights in me because...

Deeper Introspection:

Read the following scriptures.

¹⁷ *The Lord your God is among you,
a warrior who saves.
He will rejoice over you with gladness.
He will be quiet in his love.
He will delight in you with singing.*

Zephaniah 3:17

⁵ *For as a young man marries a young woman,
so your sons will marry you;
and as a groom rejoices over his bride,
so your God will rejoice over you.*

Isaiah 62:5

¹⁰ *“Stop fighting, and know that I am God,
exalted among the nations, exalted on the
earth.”*

Psalms 46:10

¹ *Sing a new song to the Lord;
let the whole earth sing to the Lord.*

Psalms 96:1

Zephaniah 3:17 is a powerful declaration of God's enthusiastic and intimate love for His people. Here are several journal prompts based on its key phrases to help you reflect on and internalize this truth.

Reflecting on God's presence

- **"The Lord your God is with you":** What does it mean to you that God is "in your midst," not far away or distant? Reflect on moments in your life where you have felt His presence strongly. In what specific situations might you need to be reminded of His nearness today?
- **A "mighty one who will save":** The verse describes God not just as present, but as a "Mighty Warrior" with the power to save. Consider a current challenge, struggle, or fear in your life that seems beyond your control. How does meditating on God's saving power bring you hope and comfort?

Reflecting on God's love and delight

- **"He will rejoice over you with gladness":** The idea of God rejoicing over His people is a profound picture of His deep affection. How does this truth—that God delights in you—challenge or reshape your self-worth? Journal about any performance-based or insecurity-based thought patterns and contrast them with God's unconditional delight.
- **"He will quiet you by his love":** Write about anxieties or worries that are currently stealing your peace. Take time to quiet your heart and pray, asking God to calm you with His love. What does it feel like to receive God's peace in the midst of turmoil?
- **"He will exult over you with loud singing":** Imagine God singing a celebratory song over you. What emotions does this image stir within you? The loud singing suggests exuberant, joyous celebration, like a parent cheering for their child. How does this truth alter your perception of God and His feelings toward you?

Prompts based on supporting scriptures

- **God's unfailing love:** Zephaniah's promise is rooted in God's covenant love (*hesed*). Read Isaiah 62:5, which speaks of a bridegroom's joy over his bride. How does this marriage metaphor help you understand the depth of God's

rejoicing over His people?

- **The contrast of silence:** The context of Zephaniah reveals God's restorative nature. Just as God will make the land quiet after judging its wickedness (Zephaniah 1:7), He will quiet His people with His love. Reflect on Psalm 46:10, which says to "be still, and know that I am God." How does God's love enable you to find rest and stillness even in chaotic times?
- **Putting it into practice:** In response to God's love, the Psalmist invites us to "sing a new song to the Lord" (Psalm 96:1). Consider how God's love should inspire a song in your heart and actions in your life. Write about how you can reflect God's delight and comfort to others.

Chosen Amidst the Thorns of Life

Song of Solomon 2:2

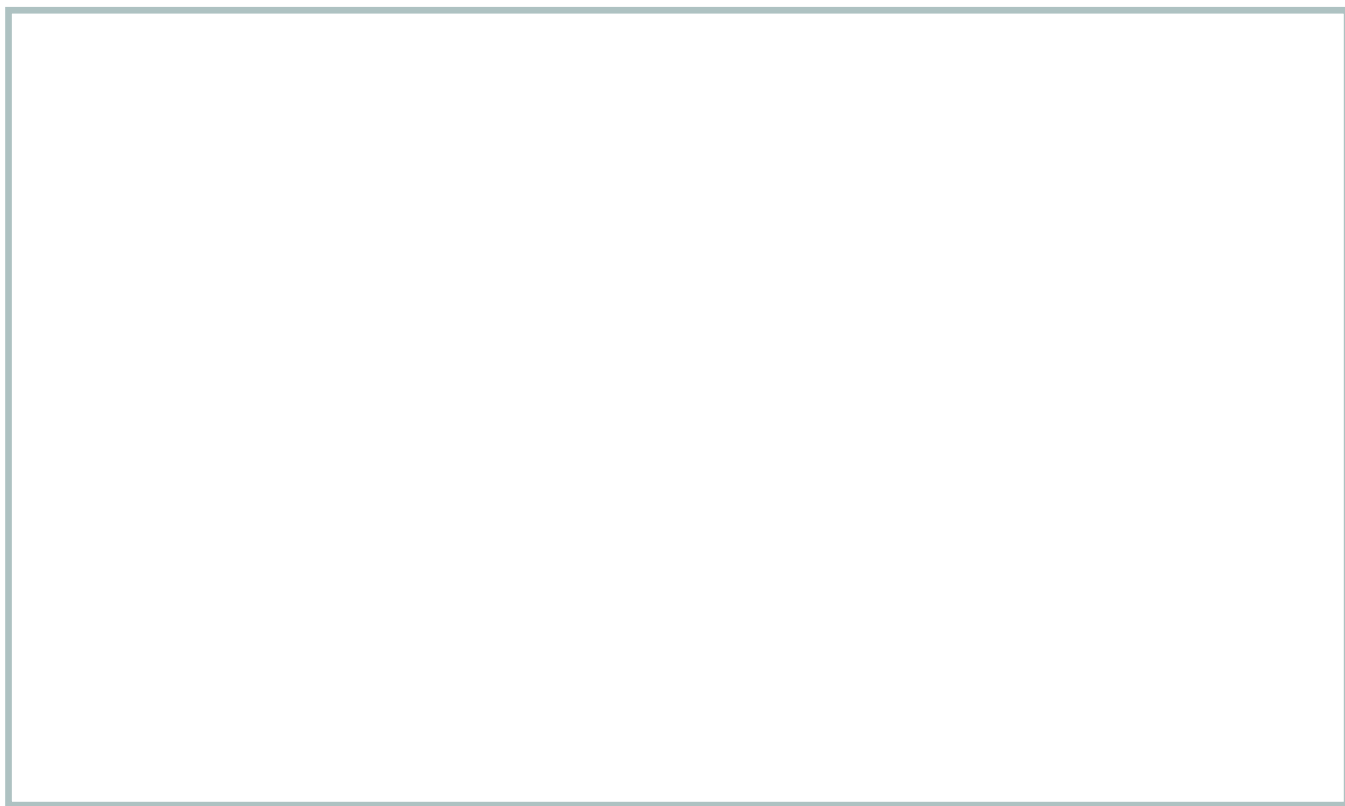
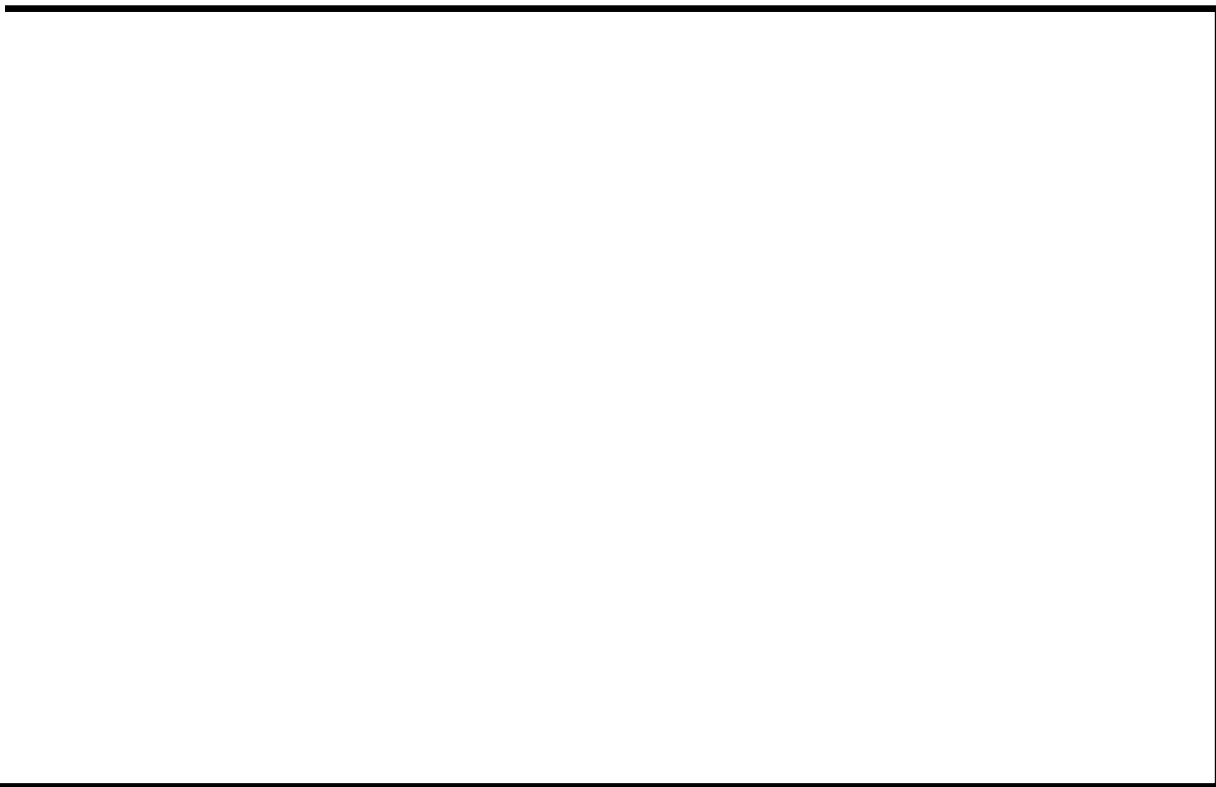
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Chosen Amidst the Thorns of Life

*Like a lily among thorns,
so is my darling among the young women.*
Songs 2

The Groom responds to the bride's declaration with fervor, proclaiming, "Like a lily among thorns, so is my darling among the young women." This imagery is strikingly vivid—a single exquisite flower rising triumphantly amid harsh and prickly surroundings. To Him, she is not just ordinary; she stands out like a radiant jewel in a sea of monotony. Among all others, she is the one who utterly captivates His heart. This is the language of divine selection. The Groom perceives not only her beauty but also the compelling contrast she embodies. She is unique not because of her actions, but because of the depth of His love for her. It is His passionate love that elevates her identity and lifts her far above the thorns that surround her.

⁸ But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:8

Romans 5:8 resonates powerfully with this truth: God's love is not just for the flawless but is generously poured out upon the undeserving. In the midst of the thorns of sin, shame, fear, and doubt, Christ's love shines brightly! He chose us with intention. He pursued us with fervor. Theologically, this illuminates the profound doctrine of grace. We are set apart, not by any perceived moral superiority, but by the depth of His divine affection. Christ's love is our identity! Like the resilient lily, we may thrive in the chaos of pain, dysfunction, or spiritual confusion, yet His gaze seeks us out, and His love elevates us above it all.

Psychologically, being chosen strikes at the very heart of our deepest human desires. So many individuals bear the scars of rejection—feeling invisible within families, friendships, or even within the sacred walls of church communities. Yet, God's voice pierces through those wounds with a profound and healing clarity: "I see you. You are My delight. You are uniquely cherished, unlike anyone else." Neuroscience reveals that when someone is truly seen and valued, the brain cultivates resilience and fosters secure emotional bonds. God's unwavering love serves as a steadfast anchor in the midst of a chaotic world.

You may feel like a delicate lily amidst a sea of thorns today—misunderstood, wounded,

or utterly out of place. But fear not: the Groom has chosen you. His words elevate you beyond the chaos surrounding you. His love profoundly shapes your identity, wrapping you in a radiant embrace that empowers your spirit.

Journal Prompt:

- What "thorns" have surrounded your life - environments, voices, or lies that have made you feel less than?
- How is Jesus separating you from them today?

Practical Steps and Application:

1. Write down the phrase: "I am HIs lily among the thorns." and place it somewhere you will see it often.
2. Make a list of lies you believed about your worth and write God's truth next to each one.
3. Reach out to someone who may feel overlooked and speak encouragement to them.

Deeper Introspection:

Read the following scriptures.

⁸ *But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Romans 5:8

¹⁰ *Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

1 John 4:10

⁴ *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace!*

Ephesians 2:4-5

¹³ *No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends.*

John 15:13

The verse, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us," reveals the depth and unconditional nature of God's love.

Prompts on God's unconditional love

- **Prompt:** Reflect on a time when you felt unworthy or ashamed. How does the truth that Christ died for you *while you were still a sinner* change your perspective on that past experience?
 - **Related Scripture:** *1 John 4:10*
- **Prompt:** What does the phrase "But God" mean to you in the context of your own life? Journal about a situation where you were at your worst, and God showed you His grace.
 - **Related Scripture:** *Ephesians 2:4–5*
- **Prompt:** The cross is the ultimate demonstration of God's love, not just a verbal declaration. In what practical ways can you live out and embody this unconditional, demonstrative love for others in your own life?
 - **Related Scripture:** *John 15:13*

Prompts on sin and righteousness

⁶ *For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly.*
Romans 5:6

²³ *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God;*
Romans 3:23

²⁹ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"*
John 1:29

⁴⁴ *But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,* ⁴⁵ *so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous*
Matthew 5:44-45

- **Prompt:** Romans 5:6 describes us as "helpless" or "powerless" before Christ died for us. Journal about what it means to acknowledge your helplessness before God. How does this awareness deepen your appreciation for Christ's sacrifice?

- **Related Scripture:** *Romans 3:23, Romans 5:6*

- **Prompt:** God's standard is perfection, but Christ died for us while we were still falling short. How does this truth impact your view of your own sin? Instead of trying to earn God's approval, what does it mean to rest in His grace?

- **Related Scripture:** *John 1:29*

- **Prompt:** Consider the contrast between human love, which is often given to the lovable, and God's love, which embraces the unlovely and unworthy. Are there people in your life you resist loving because you believe they don't deserve it? How can Romans 5:8 challenge that perspective?

- **Related Scripture:** *Matthew 5:44–45*

Prompts on the security and hope of salvation

¹⁸ *There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. So the one who fears is not complete in love.*

1 John 4:18

³⁸ *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,* ³⁹ *nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 8:38–39

¹⁹ *That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed the message of reconciliation to us.*

2 Corinthians 5:19

- **Prompt:** Because Christ died for you at your worst, you can have confidence in His love for you today and in the future. How can you use this truth to combat feelings of fear or anxiety about your relationship with God?

- **Related Scripture:** *1 John 4:18*

- **Prompt:** Romans 5 describes a progression: "we were **helpless**" (v. 6), "we were **sinners**" (v. 8), and "we were God's **enemies**" (v. 10). Despite this, God loved us. Journal about the security you have in Christ, knowing your relationship with God is not based on your performance but on His unchanging love.

- **Related Scripture:** *Romans 8:38–39*

- **Prompt:** The cross, a historical event, continues to demonstrate God's love to us today in the present tense. What is one specific, tangible blessing or moment of hope you've experienced recently that you can trace back to the transformative power of the cross?

- **Related Scripture:** *2 Corinthians 5:19*

Fed and Revitalized by His Sacred Presence

Song of Solomon 2:4

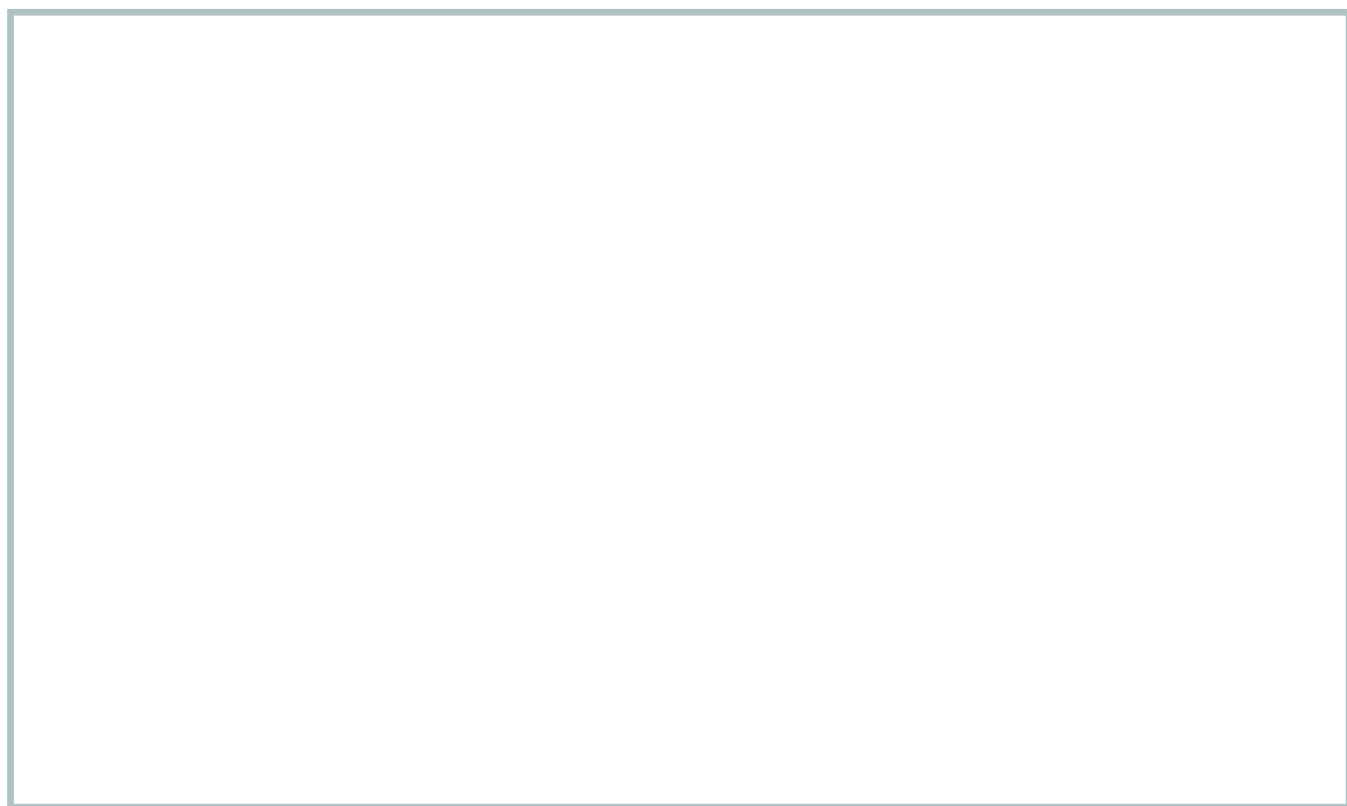
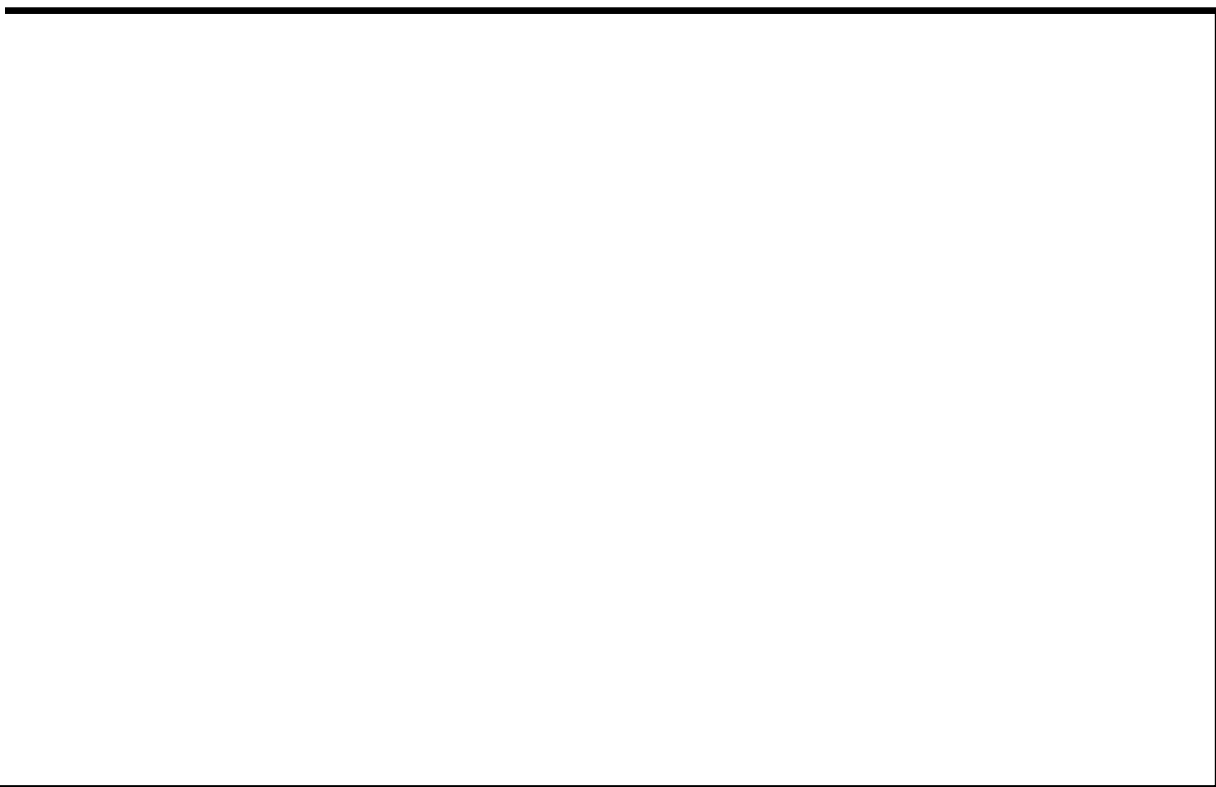
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Fed and Revitalized by His Sacred Presence

*⁴ He brought me to the banquet hall,
and he looked on me with love.*

Songs 2:4

This is one of the most cherished verses in the entire book of the Songs of Solomon. The bride bursts forth with joy, reveling in the knowledge that she has been welcomed into the banqueting house - a sacred haven of delight, feasting, and soulful connection. Yet, the true essence of her experience transcends the sumptuous food and enchanting melodies - it is the glorious covering or banner that envelops her. And what does it proclaim? Love. To be beneath someone's banner is to dwell under their tender care and unwavering protection. It embodies ownership and honor. When a king bestows a banner upon someone, it indelibly marks that individual as his own. In this verse, love reigns supreme as the covering, the identity, the poignant declaration inscribed upon the bride's life.

*⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.*

Psalms 23:5

Psalms passionately echoes this profound truth: God prepares a table not in isolation, but "in the presence of my enemies." Even when life feels hostile or overwhelming, God lays out a magnificent feast and anoints us with His favor. His glorious presence nourishes and strengthens us right where we are. Theologically, this reveals the very heart of God's covenant. His love is not a mere whisper—it's a protective, proactive reality. He invites us in, envelops us with Himself, and nourishes our souls in the very face of all that opposes us.

Psychologically, safe spaces are vital for our growth and rejuvenation. Many individuals yearn for a sanctuary—a place where they can simply exist, free from the burdens of performance, competition, or the need to prove themselves. In Christ, we discover this sacred haven. Here, we are embraced and truly known, not for our flaws but because of His boundless love. Neuroscience marvels at the truth that when one feels safe and valued, their brain liberates itself from survival instinct, paving the way for healing and learning. In the presence of God, under the banner of love, our hearts awaken with an

exhilarating vitality. Shame releases its tight grip. Fear diminishes. Our identities flourish and expand.

If you've been running, striving, or hiding, hear this call: God has laid out a magnificent table just for you! His banner soaring above you is not one of disappointment or judgment—it is a radiant declaration of love! Come and be nourished, come and be embraced in the warmth of His presence!

Journal Prompt:

- What kind of "banners" have you lived under - labels of fear, shame or performance?
- What would change if you let "LOVE" be the banner over your life?

Practical Steps and Application:

1. Find a quiet moment to sit and imagine God's banner of love over you.
2. Write down three ways God has shown you love in this season.
3. Create a visual (a sign, wallpaper or note) that says "His banner over me is love."

Deeper Introspection:

*⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.*

Psalm 23:5

Here are several journal prompts for Psalm 23:5, along with related scriptural references for deeper reflection. The verse, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows," vividly illustrates God's abundant provision and protection even amid conflict.

Prompts on the table before enemies

³¹ *What, then, are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?*
Romans 8:31

³⁵ *"I am the bread of life," Jesus told them. "No one who comes to me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again."*
John 6:35

On this mountain, the Lord of Armies will prepare for all the peoples a feast of choice meat, a feast with aged wine, prime cuts of choice meat, fine vintage wine.
Isaiah 6:35

- **Prompt:** Reflect on a specific difficult situation or relationship in your life. In what ways can you choose to "feast" on God's provision and peace, even though your "enemies" (which could be people, circumstances, or spiritual opposition) are still present?
 - **Related Scripture:** *Romans 8:31*
- **Prompt:** The "table" can symbolize spiritual nourishment from God's Word. How does focusing on God's promises and truth, rather than the conflict around you, change your perspective and emotional state?
 - **Related Scripture:** *John 6:35*
- **Prompt:** The image of a banquet in front of enemies can represent a divine act of victory and honor. Think about a time when God gave you an unexpected moment of peace or blessing in the middle of a struggle. How did that moment affirm His presence and power to both you and your onlookers?
 - **Related Scripture:** *Isaiah 25:6:*

Prompts on being anointed with oil

²¹ *Now it is God who strengthens us together with you in Christ, and who has anointed us.*
2 Corinthians 1:21

¹⁸ *The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free the oppressed,*
Luke 4:18

⁹ *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for
his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you
out of darkness into his marvelous light.*
1 Peter 2:9

- **Prompt:** In ancient times, anointing with oil symbolized honor and was also a healing agent for sheep. How can you see God's anointing in your life as both a sign of His favor and a source of healing for your spiritual and emotional wounds?
 - **Related Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 1:21
- **Prompt:** Anointing is often associated with consecration and a special purpose. Journal about how God's anointing empowers and sets you apart for His purposes, even when you feel vulnerable and exposed to opposition.
 - **Related Scripture:** Luke 4:18
- **Prompt:** How does knowing you are honored and blessed by God (symbolized by the anointing) change the way you perceive yourself and your worth, especially when you feel like others are against you?
 - **Related Scripture:** 1 Peter 2:9

Prompts on the overflowing cup

²⁰ *Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according
to the power that works in us—*
Ephesians 3:20

¹⁶ *The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?*

1 Corinthians 10:16

¹⁰ *A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance.*

John 10:10

- **Prompt:** The overflowing cup signifies God's abundant generosity that exceeds our expectations. Write about areas of your life where God's blessings—not just material but also spiritual—have been more than you ever imagined.

- **Related Scripture:** *Ephesians 3:20*

- **Prompt:** Your "cup" can represent your life's portion, and its overflowing can be a powerful witness. How can your joy and peace, even in the midst of adversity, be a testimony to others that God's blessings are real and abundant?

- **Related Scripture:** *1 Corinthians 10:16*

- **Prompt:** The overflowing cup points to the fact that God not only provides for your needs but also pours out His grace lavishly. How can you be a channel of this overflowing grace, sharing with others from the abundance God has given you?

- **Related Scripture:** *John 10:10*


Hidden in the Fortress of His Strength

Song of Solomon 2:5

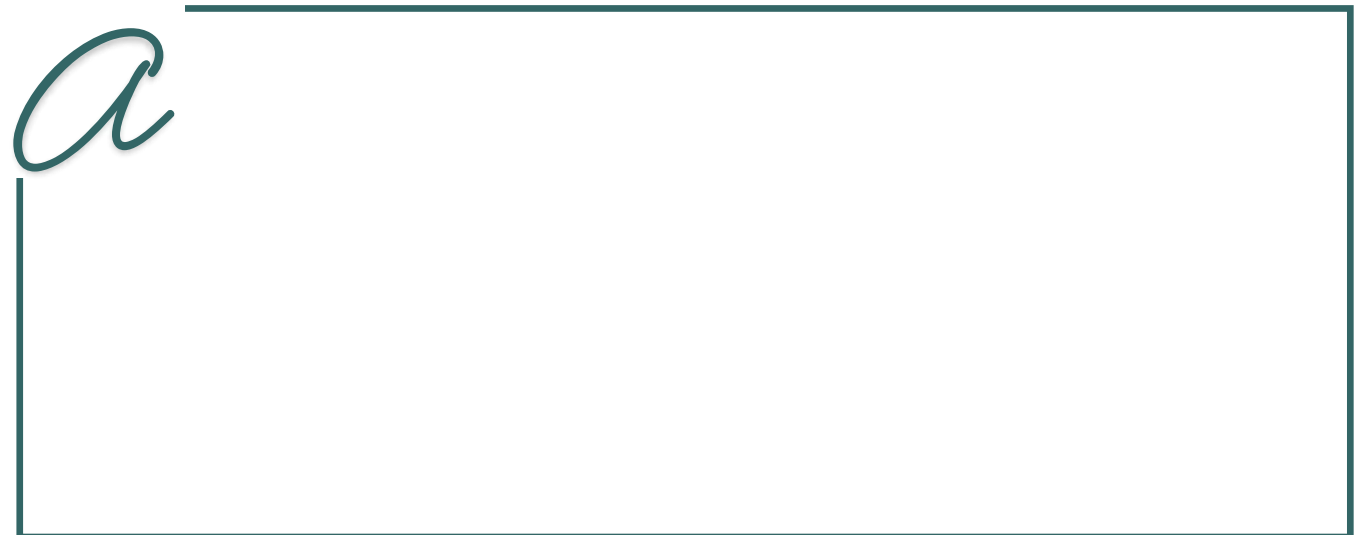
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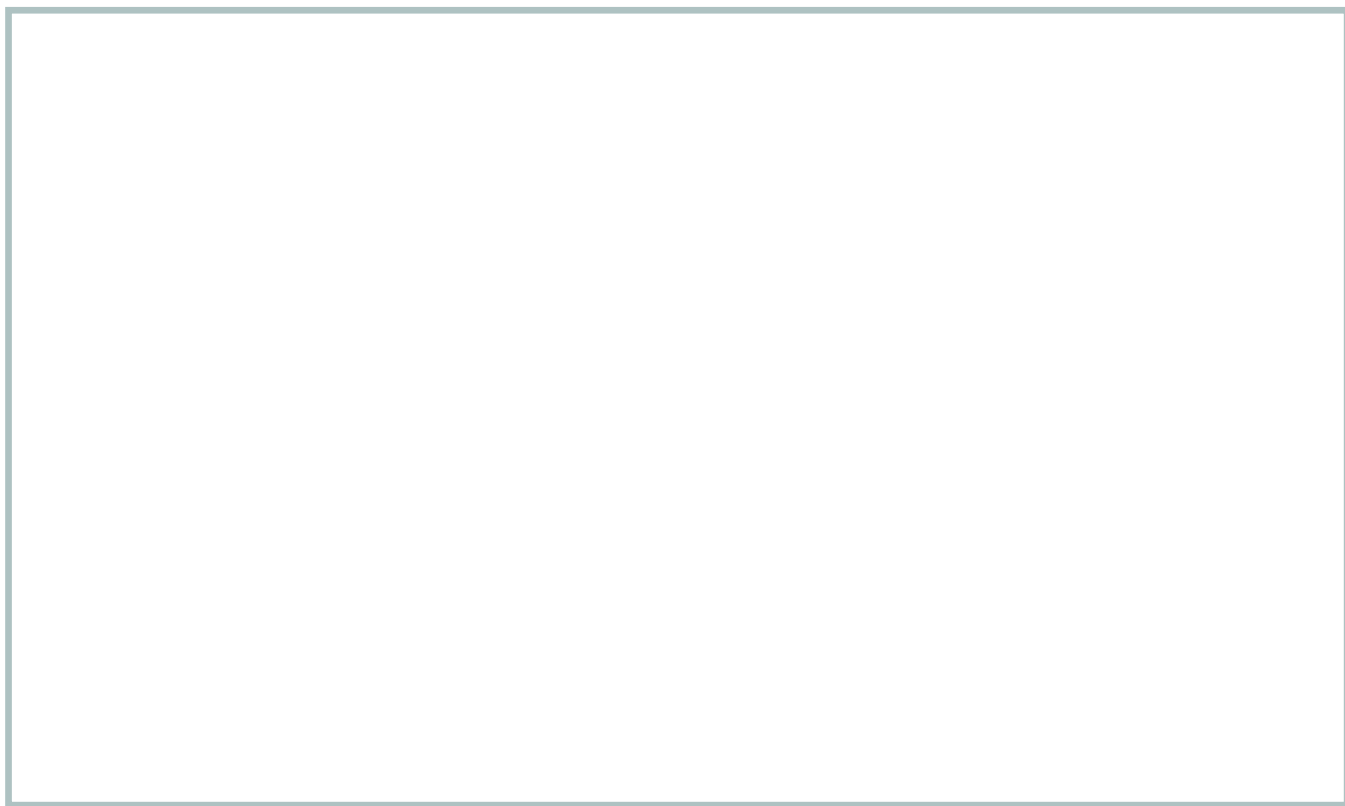
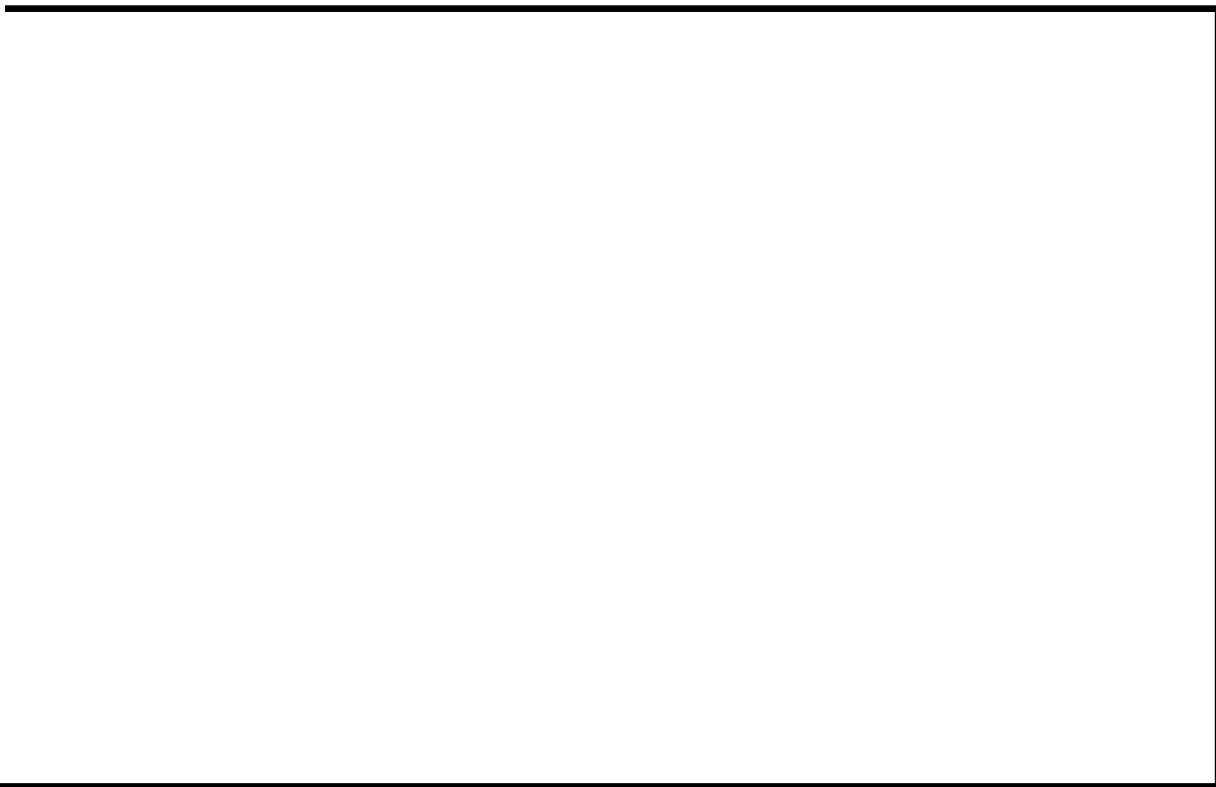


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Hidden in the Fortress of His Strength

⁵ *Sustain me with raisins;
refresh me with apricots,
for I am lovesick.*
Songs 2:5

In this passionate moment, the bride reveals a profound and fervent ache: "I am lovesick." This is not a sickness born of despair but of an insatiable desire that courses through her veins. Her heart yearns for intimacy, for the intoxicating presence of her Beloved. There is no shame in her vulnerability; she fearlessly brings forth her hunger, boldly pleading to be nourished and revitalized. The plea for "raisins and apricots" transcends mere sustenance, representing a deep craving for fulfillment, both bodily and spiritually. She knows precisely where her strength originates. Rather than fleeing from her fervent longing, she passionately beckons the Beloved to enter into her yearning. This is a vivid portrayal of genuine dependence; instead of masking her exhaustion, she lays it bare before the One who can restore her radiant spirit.

¹⁰ *The name of the Lord is a strong tower;
the righteous run to it and are protected.*
Proverbs 18:10

Proverbs unveils a striking image: God's name stands as a mighty tower! In the depths of our emotional storms, when love or life feels utterly overwhelming, the safest refuge is found in Him. His name, His character, His very presence is a sacred shelter. Not a mere tower to ascend, but a sanctuary to flee into and find rest. Theologically, this day stirs our hearts, highlighting the exquisite beauty of spiritual longing. Desire is not a sin—it can guide us deeper into God's magnificent heart. The bride's yearning is not a sign of wavering faith; rather, it boldly asserts it. She knows that nothing but Him can fill her soul's longing. Her spirit reaches out for the One who alone can quench her deepest thirst!

Psychologically, expressing our deepest needs is not just important; it is vital for our mental and emotional well-being. Far too many individuals are conditioned to silence or suppress their yearnings, burdened by shame. Yet, true emotional health flourishes when we embrace our inner hunger and boldly articulate it in a nurturing environment. Neuroscience robustly affirms this truth; vocalizing our emotions and needs—even in the sacred act of prayer—ignites our prefrontal cortex, empowering us to regulate anxiety and

navigate pain. This courageous "confession" of our needs invites a wave of comfort and clarity into our lives. In the loving embrace of Christ, our nervous system calms, and our souls anchor themselves in profound peace.

If you find yourself yearning—aching, even—for more of God, understand this: your hunger is sacred. You are not too much for Him. Your lovesickness is not a flaw; it is a divine invitation to a deeper communion. Bring your longing into His presence and let Him satisfy it with boundless joy.

Journal Prompt:

- What have you been deeply longing for lately?
- Are you bringing that ache to God - or trying to fix or fill it elsewhere?

Practical Steps and Application

1. Make a journal entry beginning with "Lord, I am lovesick for..."
2. Read Proverbs 18:10 out loud and visualize yourself running to His tower. Visualize being within the safety of His tower. How does this challenge your perception of God and yourself?
3. Ask God for one tangible way to refresh you today - then make space to receive it.

Deeper Introspection:

¹⁰ *The name of the Lord is a strong tower;
the righteous run to it and are protected.*

Proverbs 18:10

Here are several journal prompts for Proverbs 18:10, along with related scriptural references for deeper reflection.

Prompts on the nature of God's name

The LORD—the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love and truth, maintaining faithful love to a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity, rebellion, and sin.

Exodus 34:6-7

Trust in the LORD forever, because in the LORD God you have an everlasting rock!
Isaiah 26:4

- **Prompt:** The verse says, "The name of the LORD is a strong tower." What does the "name of the LORD" mean to you? How does thinking about God's character and attributes—such as His power, mercy, and faithfulness—make His name a source of security for you?

- **Related Scripture:** *Exodus 34:6–7*

- **Prompt:** How is the "strong tower" of God's name different from the false security of wealth or status? (See Proverbs 18:11 for context). What false "strong towers" do you run to, and how can you intentionally redirect your trust to God's name instead?

- **Related Scripture:** *Isaiah 26:4*

Prompts on running to God

For you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy.

Psalm 61:3

God is our refuge and strength, a helper who is always found in times of trouble.

Psalm 46:1

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Romans 10:13

- **Prompt:** The verse describes the righteous actively running to God's strong tower. What does "running" to the Lord look like in your daily life? Journal about practical ways you can make turning to God your first instinct in moments of fear, anxiety, or temptation.

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- **Related Scripture:** *Psalm 61:3*
 - **Prompt:** What specifically makes it difficult for you to "run to" God when you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed? What mental or spiritual barriers do you need to surrender in order to fully enter His safety?
 - **Related Scripture:** *Psalm 46:1*
 - **Prompt:** The promise of safety is for the "righteous." What does that mean in the context of this verse? How does your righteousness in Christ (not your own actions) give you access to this safe refuge?
 - **Related Scripture:** *Romans 10:13*

Prompts on the promise of safety

Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:6-7

He will cover you with his feathers; you will take refuge under his wings. His faithfulness will be a protective shield.
Psalms 91:4

I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble, but be courageous; I have conquered the world.
John 16:33

- **Prompt:** What worries or fears are you currently facing? Reflect on the promise in this verse that you are "safe" when you run to the Lord. Write a prayer asking for His peace to guard your heart and mind against your specific anxieties.
 - **Related Scripture:** *Philippians 4:6-7*
- **Prompt:** How does knowing you have a secure place in God's strong tower change your perspective on the storms of life? Instead of being defined by your circumstances, how can you rest in the presence of God?
 - **Related Scripture:** *Psalm 91:4*

- **Prompt:** The security is not the absence of trouble, but God's presence in the midst of it. Journal about a past challenge where you experienced God's peace despite difficult circumstances. How does that memory strengthen your confidence to run to Him now?

- **Related Scripture:** *John 16:33*

Safe Beneath the Tenderness of His Covering

Song of Solomon 2:6

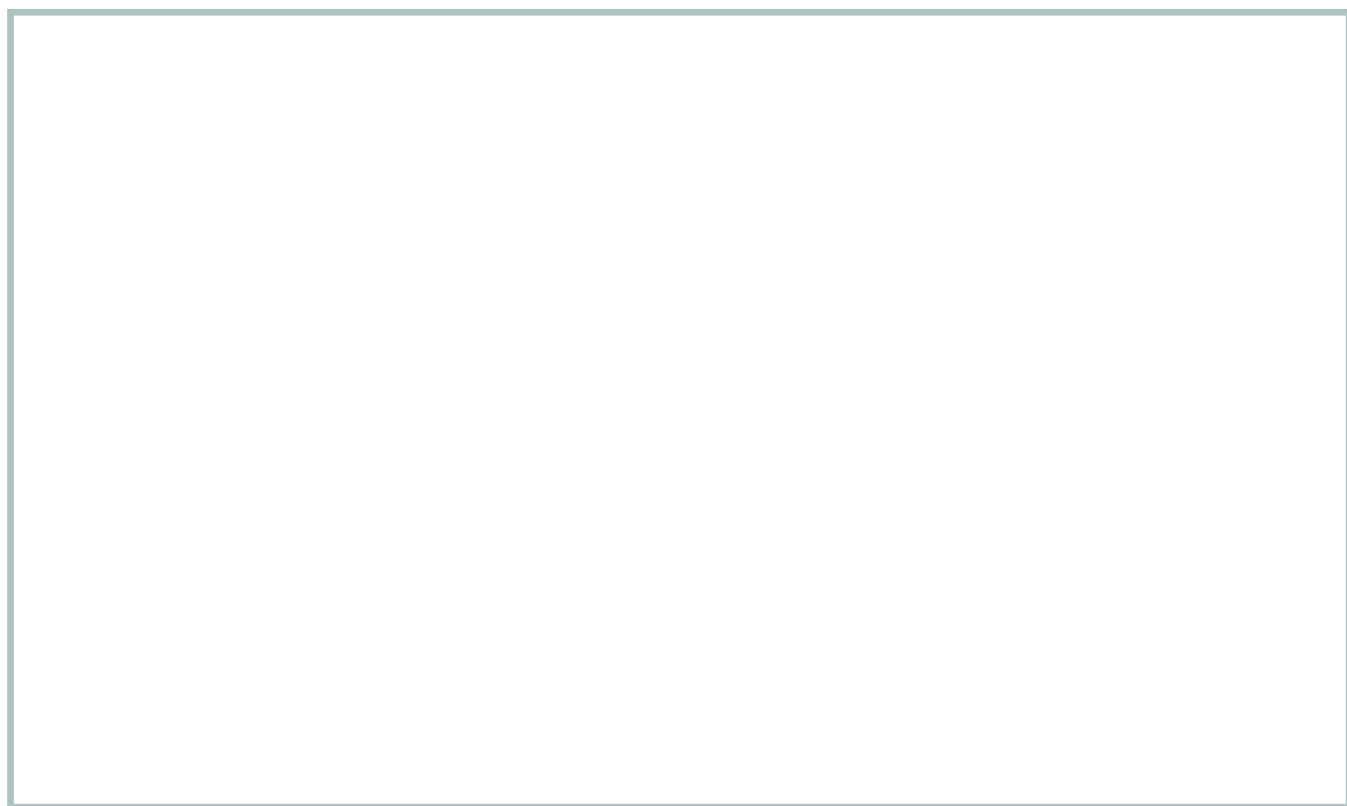
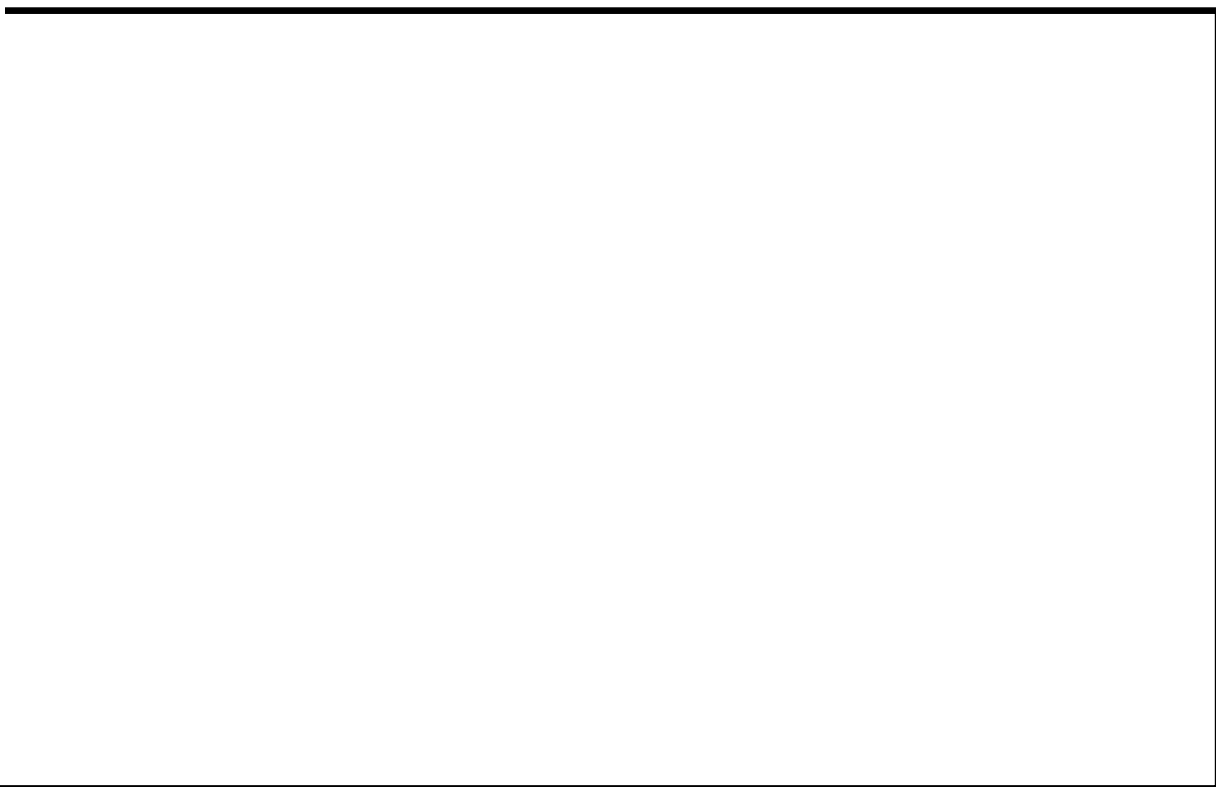
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Safe Beneath the Tenderness of His Covering

*⁶ May his left hand be under my head,
and his right arm embrace me.*

Songs 2:6

This verse vividly embodies an intimate and secure vision. The bride is not merely standing, striving, or running—she is being tenderly held. One hand cradles her vulnerability with profound care, while the other draws her in close, enveloping her in an embrace of pure devotion. It is a breathtaking image of total safety and surrender, a celebration of trust and love that resonates deeply.

¹ The one who lives under the protection of
the Most High
dwells in the shadow of the Almighty.

² I will say concerning the Lord, who is my
refuge and my fortress,
my God in whom I trust:

³ He himself will rescue you from the bird
trap,
from the destructive plague.

⁴ He will cover you with his feathers;
you will take refuge under his wings.
His faithfulness will be a protective shield.

⁵ You will not fear the terror of the night,
the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ the plague that stalks in darkness,
or the pestilence that ravages at noon.

⁷ Though a thousand fall at your side
and ten thousand at your right hand,
the pestilence will not reach you.

⁸ You will only see it with your eyes
and witness the punishment of the wicked.

⁹ Because you have made the Lord—my ref-
uge,

the Most High—your dwelling place,

¹⁰ no harm will come to you;

no plague will come near your tent.

¹¹ For he will give his angels orders concern-
ing you,

to protect you in all your ways.

¹² They will support you with their hands
so that you will not strike your foot against
a stone.

¹³ You will tread on the lion and the cobra;
you will trample the young lion and the ser-
pent.

¹⁴ Because he has his heart set on me,
I will deliver him;

I will protect him because he knows my
name.

¹⁵ When he calls out to me, I will answer
him;

I will be with him in trouble.

I will rescue him and give him honor.

¹⁶ I will satisfy him with a long life
and show him my salvation.

In Psalm 91, we encounter a powerful declaration embodied in the divine metaphor: God as our sheltering protector, fervently offering refuge beneath His wings. This is not merely a passive comfort; it is an active and dynamic covering. His love passionately guards, surrounds, and fiercely protects us. Theologically, we perceive this embrace as a profound expression of covenant love. God is not just an observer; He is fully engaged, holding us in His arms. His protection is not distant; it resonates with the warmth of His very presence. Jesus came to be Emmanuel—God with us—so that this divine embrace would become a tangible reality in our lives.

Psychologically, this profound sense of safety forms the very foundation of healing. When someone envelops us, both emotionally and physically, it sends a powerful message to our brain—that we are not alone in our fear, sadness, or pain. Attachment theory reveals that secure love breeds resilience, and neuroscience echoes this truth. As we embrace safe touch or even envision ourselves being cradled by someone we trust, our amygdala—the fear center of our brain—calms, and the parasympathetic nervous system springs to life. This symphony of relaxation allows our bodies to rest, repair, and restore balance. Just the simple, transformative act of imagining being held by God can ignite a path to inner peace. Perhaps today, you find yourself weary from the weight of holding it all together, exhausted from standing tall when all you long for is to collapse into love's embrace. Remember this truth: you can. The arms of Christ are wide open, not for the worthy, but for the weary. You need not do anything—just lean back. Just be held.

His embrace is not just a fleeting moment; it is a profound, unwavering presence that grounds us in chaos. When the weight of the world bears down on you, He cradles your head—where thoughts, fears, worries, and doubts collide. In moments of solitude or uncertainty, His mighty right hand—symbolic of strength and authority—enfolds you in a boundless love that transcends time. Remember, rest is not a sign of weakness, and surrender is not a form of defeat. Within His divine arms, we discover the true essence of safety, being truly known, and the exquisite feeling of being cherished and uplifted.

Journal Prompt:

- Where are you still trying to hold yourself up?
- What would it feel like to let yourself be held by God?

Practical Steps and Application:

1. Find a quiet place. Imagine Jesus holding you gently.
2. Read Psalm 91, slowly. Put your name in verses 4-7.
3. Take a nap or rest today not out of laziness, but as a declaration of God's trust and care.

Deeper Introspection:

Read Psalm 91.

This psalm explores the security and protection available to those who dwell in God's presence.

Prompts on dwelling in God's presence (Psalm 91:1-2)

- **Prompt:** Psalm 91 opens with the image of dwelling "in the shelter of the Most High" and abiding "in the shadow of the Almighty". In what ways are you intentionally making time to stay in God's presence? What distractions prevent you from dwelling there?
 - **Related Scripture:** *Psalm 16:11*
- **Prompt:** The psalmist says, "I will say concerning the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust'". Practice this declaration in your journal by writing out what it means to you personally. Consider a current fear or anxiety and state aloud, "The Lord is my refuge and my fortress."
 - **Related Scripture:** *Proverbs 18:10*

Prompts on divine protection (Psalm 91:3-8)

- **Prompt:** Psalm 91 describes God's protection from "the bird trap" and "the destructive plague". What does God's deliverance from hidden and obvious dangers look like in your life? Journal about a time God rescued you, even from something you didn't see coming.
 - **Related Scripture:** *2 Timothy 4:18*

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- **Prompt:** The image of being covered by God's feathers and taking refuge under His wings is very personal and tender. Describe in your own words what this imagery means for your spiritual and emotional security.

- **Related Scripture:** *Psalm 57:1*

- **Prompt:** Verses 5 and 6 describe not fearing the "terror of the night" or the "pestilence that ravages at noon". What are your "terrors of the night"—your deep, unspoken fears? What are your "pestilences at noon"—the public or apparent dangers you face? Write a prayer surrendering these fears to God.

- **Related Scripture:** *Isaiah 41:10*

Prompts on the promise of His presence (Psalm 91:9–13)

- **Prompt:** The psalm connects making God your dwelling place with a promise of no harm. This does not mean bad things won't happen in this life, but that you are ultimately safe in God's eternal plan. How can you reconcile this ultimate security with the daily troubles you may face?

- **Related Scripture:** *Romans 8:38–39*

- **Prompt:** God giving His angels charge over you is a powerful promise. What does it mean to you that God sends His messengers and agents to watch over you?

- **Related Scripture:** *Hebrews 1:14*

Prompts on the assurance of salvation and answered prayer (Psalm 91:14–16)

- **Prompt:** In the final verses, God speaks directly, saying, "Because he has his heart set on me, I will deliver him". What does it mean to have your heart "set on" God? How can you cultivate this kind of loving devotion?

- **Related Scripture:** *Matthew 22:37*

- **Prompt:** God promises, "When he calls out to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble". Journal about a prayer you have been waiting on God to answer. Use this verse to affirm your faith that He hears you and is with you in the waiting.

- **Related Scripture:** *Psalm 34:17*

- **Prompt:** The psalm ends with the promise of being "satisfied with a long life" and seeing God's salvation. While "long life" is not always measured in years, what does it mean to be satisfied with the life God has given you and to have witnessed His salvation at work?

- **Related Scripture:** *John 10:10*

Do Not Awaken the Flame of Love Too Soon

Song of Solomon 2:7

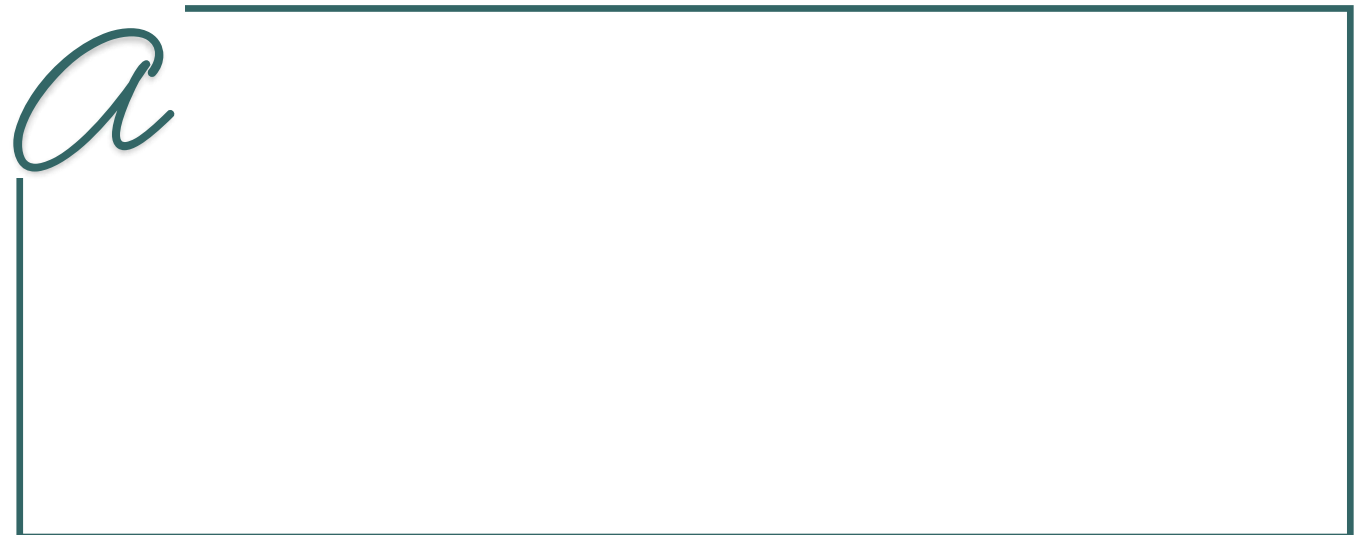
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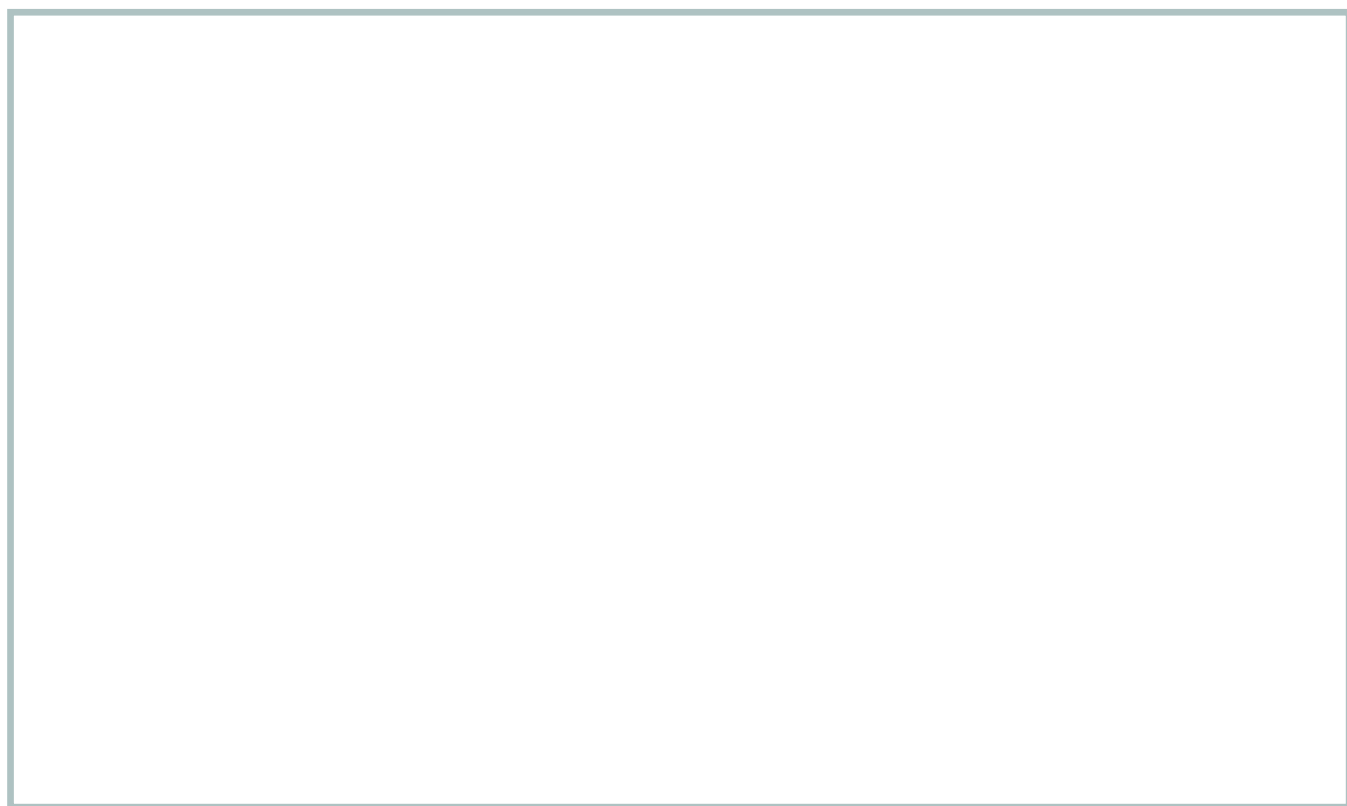
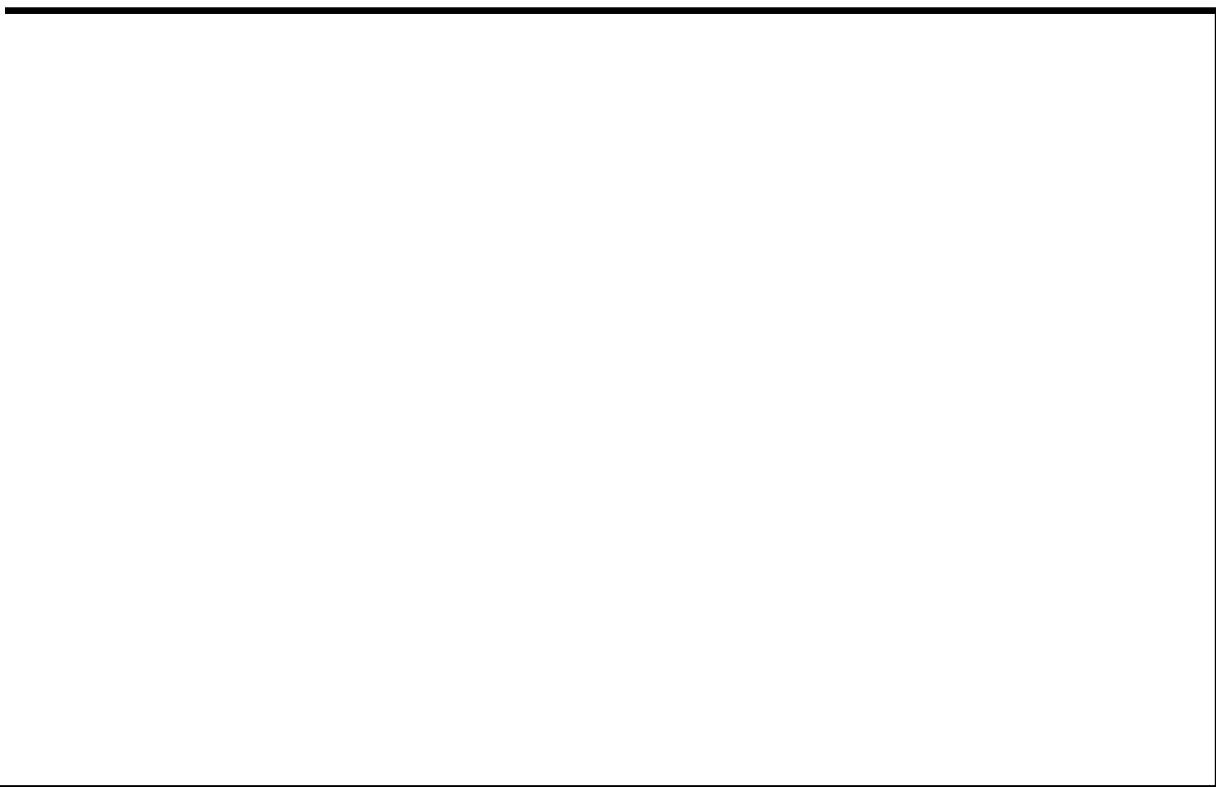


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Do Not Awaken the Flame of Love Too Soon

*⁷ Young women of Jerusalem, I charge you
by the gazelles and the wild does of the field,
do not stir up or awaken love
until the appropriate time.
Songs 2:7*

This verse transports us to a tender yet urgent tone of warning. The Groom passionately addresses not just the bride but the entire community - "DO not awake love until it pleases." Love is a sacred force, embodying its own timing, rhythm, and divine order. This is not merely a denial of love's immense power but a profound honoring of its natural journey. Rushing intimacy, forcing closeness, or desperately seeking affirmation outside of God's perfect timing can lead to devastating consequences. The message here is to trust deeply - not just in love itself, but in the very Lord of love who orchestrates it.

*3 There is an occasion for everything,
and a time for every activity under heaven:
Ecclesiastes 3:1*

This verse passionately reminds us that there is a sacred time for every purpose under heaven. Learning to discern God's divine timing is one of the most profound acts of faith we can undertake. Sometimes, to rest means to wait, and at times, protection calls for restraint. Theologically, this beautiful truth teaches us reverence. God's love is not chaotic; it is ordered and holy. Trusting His pace does not imply that He is withholding from us—it reflects a profound preparation for something truly sacred.

Psychologically, waiting can ignite a firestorm of anxiety, particularly in cultures conditioned for performance-based rewards and instant gratification. Yet, embracing the divine tempo offers us a transformative lesson in emotional resilience and patience. Neuroscience reveals that the practice of delayed gratification fortifies the brain's prefrontal cortex—our very hub of decision-making and self-control. Resting in divine timing is far from passive; it actively molds our capacity for profound peace and exquisite wisdom.

SO, if you are waiting on healing, clarity, companionship, or purpose – hear this with all your heart: Do not rush! Stay close to the One who writes your extraordinary story, for every moment of waiting is not merely a pause but a powerful opportunity for growth and profound understanding. Embrace the exquisite stillness, and let yourself be

beautifully molded by the rich tapestry of experiences you're undergoing, as patience can unveil the most dazzling revelations. Trust, with unwavering faith, that in this sacred season of waiting, you are never alone; divine guidance is always near, passionately shaping the plot of your life with boundless love and intention. Remember, every word inscribed in your story is part of a glorious narrative, one that illuminates the breathtaking beauty of timing and the vital importance of fully immersing yourself in this wondrous journey with the Lord.

Journal Prompt:

- Where in your life are you tempted to rush ahead of God?
- What would it mean to trust His timing more deeply?

Practical Steps and Application:

1. Name an area where you are waiting - and surrender it in prayer.
2. Read Ecclesiastes 3. Reflect on which "season" you are in.
3. Practice patience today by slowing down in one small way (no multitasking, mindful activities like taking a walk and deep breathing)

Deeper Introspection:

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-15.

3 There is an occasion for everything, and a time for every activity under heaven:	⁵ a time to throw stones and a time to gather stones; a time to embrace and a time to avoid embracing;
² a time to give birth and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot;	⁶ a time to search and a time to count as lost; a time to keep and a time to throw away;
³ a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to tear down and a time to build;	⁷ a time to tear and a time to sew; a time to be silent and a time to speak;
⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance;	⁸ a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace.

⁹What does the worker gain from his struggles? ¹⁰I have seen the task that God has given the children of Adam to keep them occupied. ¹¹He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also put eternity in their hearts, but no one can discover the work God has done from beginning to end. ¹²I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and enjoy the good life. ¹³It is also the gift of God whenever anyone eats, drinks,

and enjoys all his efforts. ¹⁴I know that everything God does will last forever; there is no adding to it or taking from it. God works so that people will be in awe of him. ¹⁵Whatever is, has already been, and whatever will be, already is. However, God seeks justice for the persecuted.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 reminds us that life is a series of appointed seasons, all controlled by a sovereign God. The wisdom in this passage is not about understanding every "why" but about trusting in God's ultimate plan and enjoying the good gifts he provides in the present.

Prompts for reflecting on the "time for everything" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

- **Reflect on the seasons of life.** Look through the list of opposites in verses 2–8 and identify a time in your life when you experienced one side of the pair, then the other.
 - *Example:* Think of a time when you experienced deep mourning, followed by a season of unexpected joy or laughter. How did you perceive God in each season?
- **Embrace your current season.** Based on the list in verses 2–8, describe your current season of life. Are you in a time of building or breaking down? Seeking or losing? What is one way you can embrace this specific season, trusting that it has a purpose
- **Look for balance.** The Teacher's list presents opposite actions, reminding us of life's constant ebb and flow. Journal about how you tend toward extremes (e.g., loving too much or refraining from embracing) and how you can find a

more healthy, God-honoring balance.

Prompts for wrestling with our limited understanding (Ecclesiastes 3:9-11)

- **Address the "vanity" of human toil.** Verse 9 asks, "What gain have the workers from their toil?" Reflect on a time you worked hard for a result that seemed meaningless or temporary. How does this feeling point to a deeper, eternal purpose?
- **Explore the eternity in your heart.** Verse 11 says God "has put eternity into man's heart, yet he cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end."
 - *What evidence do you see of "eternity" in your own heart? (e.g., your longing for purpose, justice, or something more).*
 - *How does the inability to understand God's complete plan lead you to trust him or, conversely, to frustration?*

Prompts for finding joy in God's gifts (Ecclesiastes 3:12-13)

- **Recognize God's gifts.** The Teacher concludes there is "nothing better than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live" and "that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man."
 - *List three everyday activities (e.g., enjoying a meal, spending time with a friend, completing a task at work) that you can intentionally receive as a gift from God.*
- **Connect daily life to God's purpose.** The simple actions of eating, drinking, and working are sacred because they are from God. How can you approach your daily work not just as a task, but as a way to honor and enjoy God?
 - *Example:* Consider helping your children with homework or working on a home project. Reframe these tasks as a way to demonstrate the love and creativity of Christ to your family.

Prompts for reflecting on God's sovereignty (Ecclesiastes 3:14-15)

- **Reflect on God's unchangeable nature.** Verse 14 states, "whatever God does endures forever." Consider how this truth offers stability and comfort amidst life's constant changes. What is one eternal truth about God that helps you navigate a difficult or uncertain season?

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- **Practice the fear of the Lord.** The purpose of God's enduring work is "that people will fear him." In your journal, reflect on what the "fear of the Lord" means to you. How does a reverent awe of God shape your perspective on your current season?
 - **Trust in God's perfect timing.** God "seeks what has been driven away" (v. 15), meaning he brings justice and restores what has been lost over time. Journal about a time you experienced a loss or injustice. How can trusting God to "seek out" what is past bring you hope for the future?

The Whisper of My Beloved's Heart Song of Solomon 1:15

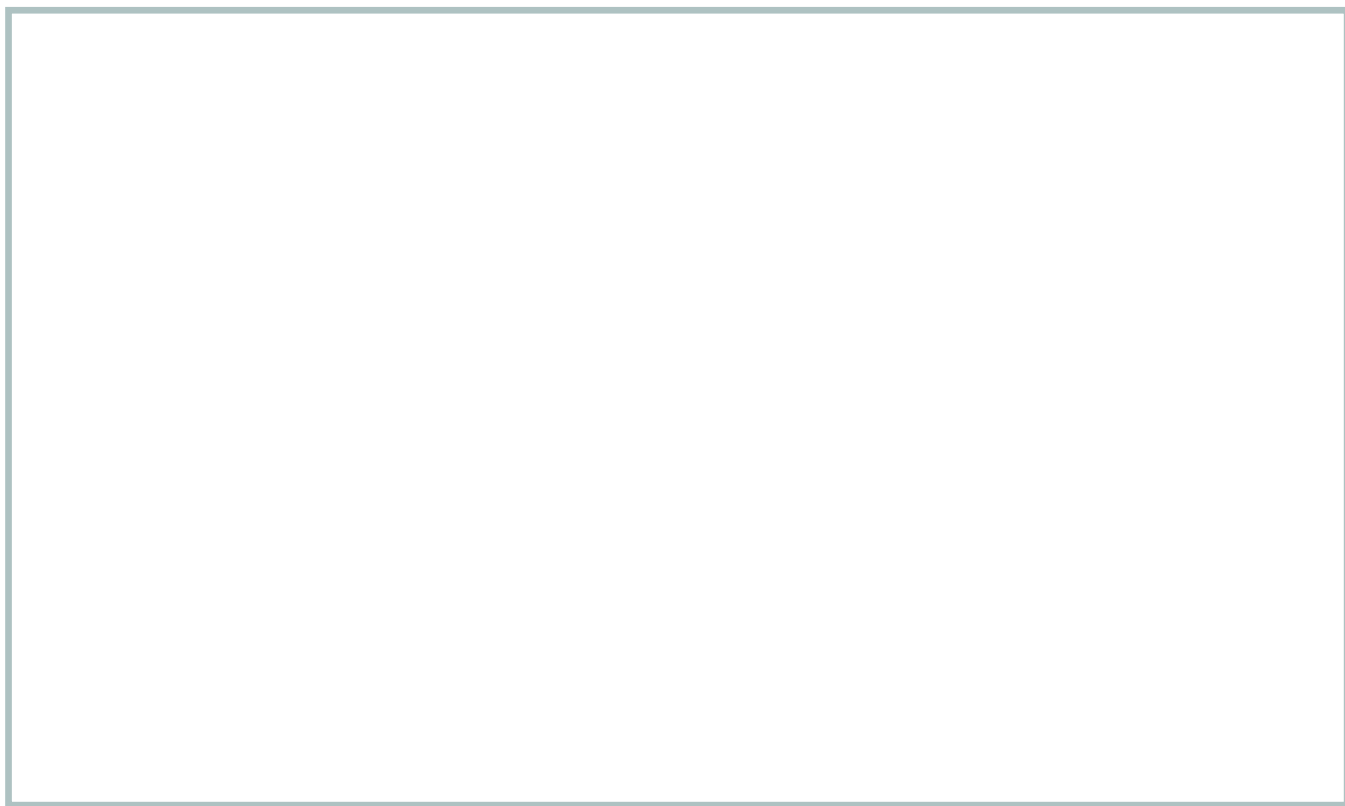
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The Whisper of My Beloved's Heart

⁸ *Listen! My love is approaching.*

*Look! Here he comes,
leaping over the mountains,
bounding over the hills.*

Songs 2:8

The final day of this study erupts with the exhilarating wonder of expectancy. The bride catches the enchanting whispers of her beloved before she even lays eyes on Him – and that voice transforms everything! His approach is vibrant, resolute, and utterly unstoppable. He leaps over every hurdle to reach her, embodying the unwavering posture of Christ toward His church. He does not linger, waiting for us to seek Him; instead, He bursts forth with an urgency and joy that ignites the heart. He speaks, and we are stirred to respond – not out of obligation, but from a profound recognition of His love. His voice breathes life into our souls, awakening a fierce love and unyielding courage within us.

²⁷ *My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me.*

John 10:27

To know Christ is to fervently recognize His presence, His guiding hand, and His tender heart. The more we attune our ears to His voice, the more distinctly we hear His whispers of love. Theologically, this illuminates the profoundly personal nature of our divine relationship. We are not merely called to adhere to a set of rules – we are passionately invited to follow a Person who loves us beyond measure. The Groom speaks intimately; the bride responds wholeheartedly. This is true worship. This is unbridled intimacy.

Psychologically, recognizing and responding to a safe voice is foundational to our deepest connections of attachment. When we hear the voice of someone we truly love, we are enveloped in a profound sense of safety, motivation, and grounding. Neuroscience reveals that our brains are intricately designed to resonate with voices that feel intimately familiar. The sound of a cherished loved one can shatter anxiety and lift our spirits to new heights. In much the same way, when Jesus speaks truth into our hearts, He imparts an unparalleled peace and joy that no other voice can ever replicate.

Jesus is calling. Not with condemnation, but with deep affection and unwavering love. He is leaping over every obstacle, crossing the chasms of our doubts and fears, to draw

near to us in our moments of struggle and joy alike. His voice, gentle yet powerful, beckons us to abandon our burdens and to embrace the comfort of His presence. Will you tune your heart to His voice, allowing it to resonate within you, guiding your steps and illuminating your path through the uncertainties of life? As you listen, you may discover a profound sense of peace and a renewed strength that empowers you to face each day with hope and purpose.

Journal Prompt:

- How do you most clearly recognize God's voice in your heart?
- What helps to discern it from all the other voices?

Practical Steps and Application:

1. Spend time today in a quiet posture of listening - ask Jesus to speak, and journal what comes to the heart.
2. Reflect on moments when you have clearly heard God's voice. What did it sound like? How did it make you feel?
3. create a space each day to pause and say "Speak, Lord, I am listening."

Deeper Introspection:

²⁷My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me.
John 10:27

The relationship of hearing, knowing, and following.

- **Reflect on the analogy of the shepherd.** What does it mean for Jesus to be your Shepherd and for you to be one of His sheep? Think about the trust, care, and guidance a shepherd provides. How do you experience that in your life?
 - *Example:* Just as a real shepherd leads his sheep to green pastures, recall a time Jesus, through his Word or circumstances, led you to a place of peace and rest. Write about that experience.
- **Examine your listening habits.** With all the noise in the world, what voices are loudest in your life right now? Write about the steps you can take to intentionally make more space to listen for God's "still small voice" and filter out

the distractions.

- **Analyze the link between knowing and hearing.** Jesus says, "I know them" and "they follow me" as a direct result of the sheep hearing his voice. Journal about your relationship with Jesus. How has spending time getting to know him (through his Word, prayer, and worship) made it easier to recognize his voice?.
 - *Example:* Consider a past decision. Did you know it was God's will because it aligned with what you know of his character from Scripture? Write about that and how it contrasts with a time you followed your own desires or the world's opinion.
- **Address the challenge of following.** Following can be difficult, especially when God's voice calls you to do something outside your comfort zone. Write about a situation where you are being called to take a step of faith. What would it look like to obediently follow your Shepherd in that area, even if the path is uncertain?.
- **Pray a prayer of intentional listening.** Write out a prayer asking for a deeper hunger and an increased sensitivity to hear God's voice in all aspects of your life. Pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit to recognize his speaking.

Extra scripture references for deeper reflection

- **John 10:3–5:** This passage adds context, explaining that Jesus' sheep will not follow a stranger, "but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers". This reinforces the importance of knowing God's voice intimately.
- **Psalms 23:1–3:** A classic shepherd psalm, these verses expand on the care and provision of the Good Shepherd: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul". Journal about the provision and restoration God has offered you.
- **John 14:26:** Jesus promises the Holy Spirit as a Helper who will "teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you". Write about how the Holy Spirit has helped you recall Scripture or prompted you in a situation, helping you to recognize God's voice.
- **Revelation 3:20:** This verse speaks to the intimate and inviting nature of Christ: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me". Reflect on what it means to open the door of your heart to the knocking of Jesus' voice.

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- **Hebrews 3:7:** "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: 'Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts'. Consider the resistance you may have to God's voice and what "hardening your heart" could look like. Write about a time you chose to listen and obey instead.



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