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"THE LOVE OF GOD IS GREATER FAR...

...than tongue or pen can ever tell. It goes beyond the highest star, and reaches to the lowest hell..." The entire song is filled with words carefully chosen to eloquently convey and make known God's love to the world. Such words stir our hearts and our remembrance of times, when our soul in distress suddenly felt the calming touch of God's great love. Indeed, the words so poetically and tenderly express the deep response of a soul who experiences the power of God's mighty love, breathing new life and energy into her darkest thoughts. It is said that the lyrics of that song were once found written as a poem on the walls of a prison cell. Later, Frederick Lehman, a California businessman who had suffered the loss of everything, and was now laboring hard packing lemons and oranges, remembered the words he had once found, and was nudged of the Spirit to write the beautiful hymn we all love. When Jesus spoke, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son..." He was declaring to one and all, that their salvation is secure. For the power that held Jesus on the cross was none other than His love for a Father whose greatest desire was to save His beloved world. The Rock we stand upon is God's love, and if we have not yet planted our feet upon that Rock, we will when we find nothing else to stand on.

From the foundation of the world, God has planted the need for His love within our hearts. We have tasted of many loves in our lives, and some of us have been blessed to find true love among man, but none of these were fully secure, for "until death doth part," was still the biggest threat. And so, our hearts still yearned for that greater, purer and surer love. The Song of Songs, expresses our situation best of all.

Solomon narrates the poignant story of the Shulamite maiden yearning for her true love. As a man, he had sought love among hundreds of women, yet the burning desire and relentless search for true love remained unfulfilled and was what led him to write this unveiling story. The first time I read Song of Songs, it was from the Amplified version. It was then that the Spirit moved within me and I could relate with this little Shulamite who did not fit within the glamour of the palace. She was attended by those who were intent on changing her appearance, but the love burning down deep within could never be satisfied by the glamour and the prestige of being chosen by this king. As the little Shulamite maiden, we were brought into the world of this gorgeous "palace" called Mystery Babylon, but we knew from the beginning that we did not fit. Neither did our hearts or countenance find joy there.

From the time we answered the call to accept Jesus in our lives, to the time we became someone valuable in the works of the church systems, we have been "brain-washed," and trained to fit their beliefs and their programs. This is the role that the King and his many maidens play in the Song of Songs. It has been taught many times that the King represents the Lord Jesus, who brings us into His palaces to groom us for His glory. But this teaching grossly misses the mark, for the beauty of the story is that the Shulamite's heart is fixed on none other than the lover that she has left behind in the vineyards of Engedi. And he is the One who is still waiting and who desires her with every fiber of his

being. You see, our hearts have been fixed long ago, before the foundation of the world, when life was in the Spirit only, and we rejoiced together in Christ. Indeed, our soul has been cast out of the garden of His Spirit and into the systems of this world. But as strong as their influences and attractions might have been, nothing could sway or capture our hearts for long. We might have been interested in some of their teachings, but our passion was still back in the vineyards of His love, where life flowed freely and our hearts were only set toward Him. Can we not relate to the heart of the Shulamite, and see that no matter how much the systems have worked on us to change us, they could never replace the love that calls us from deep down in our inner vineyard of Engedi. Nevertheless it was expedient or absolutely necessary that we know the powerful influences of this king upon us, **by experience.** For you see, this king and his cohorts is no other than the spirit of the serpent that spoke to Eve in the garden of long ago. And it is the same language that he uses to draw us to himself. Come with me and I will make you great in God's world. I will give you the jewels of the kingdom and will give you the riches of this world, and make the world to admire your works and honor you for your knowledge and ability.

This is the kind of language that the serpent spirit uses to snare the unaware into the systems of this world. It exploits the competitive nature of carnal man who will use any means, even at the cost of hurting others, to make it big in this world. Above all things, the world teaches man to excel above all others, and to be independent of God. This was the trap that the serpent set for Eve, and it is the same trap that all the Babylonish systems of this world use to ensnare and mislead each and every child born into this world. The possibility that we could be recognized for our brilliance and our accomplishments above others, and that we could make it big in any of the world's systems, swells the pride of our hearts. Throughout history, it is the pride of nations that have led to their destruction. This spirit is prevalent in the churches and among brethren who take the words of the apostle Paul literally, and are striving to get into sonship by their own efforts. Nevertheless, at the heart of the true "sons of God," there is an humble Shulamite who thrills only at the voice of her Beloved Shepherd, and who follows Him and none other. She holds neither interest nor love for the glory or the pleasures that this world offers, but yearns only for the words coming from the heart of her true love.

Yes, it is God who sent us into the palaces of Babylon, and it is He who continually tests us and encourages us, until we are totally free from the bondage we were cast into. Our struggle will end when we have been fully humbled, and we know without the shadow of a doubt, that "... man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live." (Deu.8:3) It is God who led us into the king's palaces where our souls could be tempted with the dainties of this world, and where we were offered a high place among man; and it is God, by His Spirit whose voice we hear within our hearts, softly calling, "Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away." (S of S.2:10)

Today, while the serpent/dragon, spews out his propaganda of fear through the voices of so-called prophetic voices, stirring the people to arm themselves for war against the governments and powers that be, the true church, (woman), has set her face toward the Lord of lords while fleeing this wilderness, supported by the wings of the great eagle. And above all the chaos of anger, violence and war, those who are tuned to the voices of the Spirit, can hear the beautiful words, sung by the angelic choir, "The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell, it goes beyond the highest star, and reaches to the lowest hell...Oh love of God, so rich and pure, how measureless and strong, it shall forever more endure...

Because He is love, Jackie Caporaso