**Song of Songs – The Song of Solomon**

 **Lesson Three: The Restoration of Honor**

**Lesson Reference: Chapter 1:5-11**

**Objective:** To show the power of marriage relationship to restore the honor of one who has felt the sting of life in a fallen world. To see vulnerability on the part of the woman and affirmation on the part of her beloved.

1. In verses 5-6 we learn the woman is dark from working in the sun, her brothers are angry with her making her care for their vineyards instead of her own. Verse 8 implies that she is currently working as shepherdess. We see marital love is not reserved for the elite but is open to regular people, even those who have had challenging backgrounds or who work in difficult situations. What similar situations of vulnerability or social challenge can you imagine for a woman considering marriage today?

2. In verse 8, we see that the man is also a shepherd. How does he respond to the shepherdess’s comments about her appearance? How does his response reveal his location?

3. Many modern women may not appreciate being compared to a “mare among Pharaoh’s chariots” (v.9), but the man is making the point that she is highly esteemed in his eyes. He encourages her by observing, with adoration, that her “cheeks are lovely with ornaments” and her “neck with strings of jewels” (v.10). If the Song of Solomon is an ideal expression of human love in marriage, what does the man’s answer to the woman’s expression of vulnerability suggest about God’s intention for dialogue in the marriage relationship?

4. Dearing upon the text, compare and contrast the woman’s brothers with her beloved and her chorus of friends as you see them presented in verses 6-11.

**Lesson Applications:**

* The woman’s beloved speaks words to her that build her up in areas of vulnerability. This is an important aspect of husbands loving their wives as Christ loved the church.
* Paul makes the connection in Ephesians 5:28-29 that men must be secure in themselves so they are not tempted to be critical of their wives or others in order to build themselves up.
* The man who has experienced the love and grace of God in Christ is the one who will be most free to nourish and cherish his spouse.