

Devotion 25:

Our Father Loves Passionately

Song of Songs 1—8

I believe Song of Songs might be the scariest book in the entire Bible to most Christians today. Ironically, in our oversexed and lust-filled world, most churches and most Christians essentially ignore this book of intimacy. All of this thinking reveals much more about the flesh and the world at present than anything impure about our Father.

Which brings me back to my purpose for these devotions: I want to get to know our Father better. So what does Song of Songs reveal to us about our heavenly Father? I believe it clearly shows us that He loves passionately.

As I reflect on my childhood home, one of the things that I sorely missed was the sense of security. As I shared in the Preface, my parents divorced when I was 11 years old. For several years leading up to that point, there was tension and conflict in the home. Needless to say, love was not aroused or awakened much between my parents! As I grew, I held anger toward both my parents for the failure of their marriage and for smashing any security in our home. As an adult, I read somewhere that the best thing a mother and father can do for their children is to love each other. That thought is very much in mind as I finish reading Song of Songs. Now follow me carefully here.

I am struck that the Jews would read Song of Songs aloud on the 8th and final day of celebrating the Passover. They didn't seem to avoid the book out of any embarrassment. In fact, I believe the book gave them a strong sense of security with our Father!

Proverbs 19:22 tells us: *“What a man desires is unfailing love.”* The book of Psalms was filled with the repeated expression *“unfailing love.”* I have highlighted just a few for our consideration here:

“O, Lord...how priceless is your unfailing love!” Ps. 36:7a

“But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.”
Ps. 13:5

“May your unfailing love come to me, O Lord, your salvation according to your promise.” Ps. 119:41

“May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to the promise to your servant.” Ps. 119:76

What do passionate lovers do? They make promises. Wild, fantastic promises that no one else on earth makes to each other. (Like “for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health; for better, for worse; until death parts us!”) So Solomon tells us in Song of Songs that this love is *“more delightful than wine,”* (1:2) *“a banner over us”* (like a military

banner for all to see) (2:4), and “*as strong as death, its jealousy as unyielding as the grave.*” (8:6b) Our Father has made such a passionate promise to His lover. Who is His lover, you ask?

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.” Eph. 5:31-32

Song of Songs tells us this about our Father and His bride, the Church: “*I am my lover’s and my lover is mine.*” (6:3) And how passionate is His love? “*Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life....*” (Jn. 15:13) Whereas a human husband and wife pledge such love until death, our Father goes beyond death: “*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” (Rom. 8:37-39)

And like a loving Father, our Father is steadfastly with His bride, the Church, “*in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed*” in all of us children. (Gal. 4:19) And all of us children often mistakenly see our Father as a stern Father, to be obeyed but not enjoyed. Song of Songs gives us permission to enjoy Him.

Yes, our Father loves most passionately. And this love is delightful (1:2), it is unfailing, and it is secure.