



The G.E.M.

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The Grace Electronic Magazine

July 2010

REMEMBER TO BOAST ABOUT GOD

Can you believe it, the 2010 FIFA World Cup is almost over. The last six years of planning the world's biggest sporting event, has been a success. As a nation, we can be proud of the fact that we have pulled it off, that the world has seen that we are capable of putting together such a huge event. The focus now is moving forward post 2010, and the only way we can do that is with God. People will start to hit a bit of a slump with all the excitement over. With all the evangelism programmes that took place over this time, some may even begin to ask questions about our faith. This presents us with another great opportunity, to boast about the Lord.

Therefore in this month's edition of *The G.E.M.* we focus on boasting in the Lord. *Bible Basics* on page 2 gives a brief overview of the Song of Solomon, the next book of the Bible, which is followed by our main article on page 3, with a challenge to us all to truly boast in Him.

Tying in with the close of the World Cup, *This Day in History* on page 2 looks at another event that happened on July 11. On the back page are the next two *God's Library Cards*, Judges and Ruth, and another challenging *Bible Sudoku Challenge*.

Remember to keep on visiting our website for news of upcoming events, free wallpapers, and also to purchase over 600 titles on-line.

So make yourself a cup of hot chocolate, wrap up warm, and enjoy this edition of *The G.E.M.*

Until next time,
Glyn and Linda. †

"Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord"
(2 Peter 1:2)

SUNDAY SCHOOL &

Description/Title	Price
Activity Books	from R 15.00
Assorted Pencils	R 2.50
Assorted Stencils	R 55.00
Assorted Sticker Packs (6/pack)	R 20.00
Board Games	from R 109.00
Card Games	from R 40.00
Children's Curriculum Books	from R 80.00
Children's T-Shirts	from R 60.00
Colouring Books	from R 30.00
Drama Books	from R 150.00
Dramatised Bible Stories on CD (10 CDs/set)	R 419.00
EvangeCube Classic	R 75.00
Four Spiritual Laws for Children	R 2.50
Good News Glove	R 12.50
Happy Birthday Bookmark Card	R 4.00
Happy Birthday Stickers (10/pack)	R 3.00
Hermie DVDs	R 70.00
Music CDs	from R 60.00
Other DVDs	from R 65.00
Quizzes Invisible Ink Activity Books	R 30.00
Resurrection Eggs	R 150.00
VeggieTales DVDs	R 80.00
Welcome Stickers – Smiley Face (10/pack)	R 3.00
Welcome Stickers – Soccer Ball (10/pack)	R 3.00
Yes & No Invisible Ink Activity Books	R 30.00
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BIBLE BASICS

Song of Solomon

The Book of Love

The Song of Solomon (Songs), like Esther, does not mention God. This omission has caused the book to be viewed as controversial. Some question why it is even included in the canon of Scripture. Yet, the Jews have accepted it as inspired Scripture for thousands of years.

Date and authorship: Tradition tells us that the book was written by Solomon (circa. 970-930BC). Though the authorship and date have been challenged by both Jewish and Christian scholars, there is not enough evidence to prove otherwise.

Characters: There are two main characters in this beautiful tale:

The bridegroom - understood from the first verse to be king Solomon himself.

The Bride - a Shulamite maid. Who she was exactly is not known, but it is traditionally accepted that she was a woman from Shunem, and possibly Solomon's first wife.

There are also references to the daughters of Jerusalem. These could have been the women employed to serve Solomon himself, or simply some women residents of Jerusalem.

There is also reference made towards the end of the book of the brothers of the Shulamite bride.

Setting: The story is set in the countryside to the north of Jerusalem where Solomon grew vineyards and raised sheep (cf. Ecclesiastes 2:4-7), and also in the city of Jerusalem itself.

Story and Structure: Song of Solomon is a poetic telling of a romance story between a man, referred to as the lover or bridegroom, and his intended wife, and is filled with language that should only be expressed in such a relationship.

There is not really any formal structure to the book, however the following (adapted from the *MacArthur Study Bible*) best illustrates the story being told:

	<u>Chapters</u>
Remembrances	1:1-2:7
Expressions of Love	2:8-3:5
The Kingly Bridegroom	3:6-11
The Wedding	4:1-5:1
First Disagreement	5:2-6:3
The Restoration	6:4-8:4
Growing in Grace	8:5-14

Did you Know? Jews read aloud the Song of Solomon every year on the eve of the Passover. Some orthodox Jews also read it every week before the beginning of the Sabbath.

Interpretations: A difficult book to interpret, and many interpretations exist. See our main article on page 3 for more on the interpretations of this amazing and beautifully written book. †

MARRIAGE RESOURCES

6 SECRETS TO A LASTING LOVE

The secret to a strong marriage is more than love – it is six specific kinds of love that are all rooted in God's Word:

- Forgiving love
- Serving love
- Persevering love
- Guarding love
- Celebrating love
- Renewing love



Find out where you are in your relationship.

Experience new levels of love, commitment, and intimacy. Re-create the marriage you dreamed of and build a love that will last a lifetime (7 sessions).

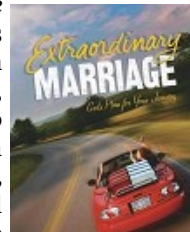
DVD Set ~~R330~~ R295

Workbook ~~R180~~ R135



EXTRAORDINARY MARRIAGE

Extraordinary Marriage casts a vision of God's out-of-this-world design for marital intimacy, challenges couples to never again settle for an ordinary relationship, and provides the practical guidance couples need to develop their own kingdom-focused marriage plan. Once they understand the extraordinary plan that God has for their marriages, husbands and wives will never again settle for less than God's best – and they will tenaciously do whatever it takes to rise above ordinary living.



This dynamic study paints a compelling vision of an achievable future – and provides a step-by-step plan for couples to evaluate their own marriage and work toward that vision (7 sessions).

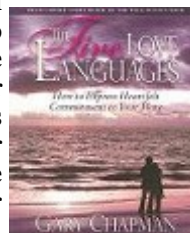
DVD Set ~~R200~~ R160

Workbook ~~R180~~ R150



THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES

Through fun-filled presentations before a live audience, Gary Chapman helps you identify your personal love language. He also helps you understand the love language of your spouse. Then he provides practical suggestions for enriching your marriage by practising the other love languages.



DVD Set ~~R350~~ R225

Workbook ~~R210~~ R175

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

11 July

The Homemade Rope

The growth of the Korean Church, among the greatest legacies of modern Christianity, came at a cost. The first Catholic missionaries were persecuted in the 1700s, and the first Protestant missionary, Carl Gutzlaff, stayed only a month in 1832. The next, Robert Thomas, arrived in 1876 to become the first Protestant martyr there. Finally, on July 11, 1886, missionary Horace Underwood secretly administered the first Protestant baptism on Korean soil to Mr. Toh Sa No.

But was Mr. No really the first convert?

In his book *What in the World Is God Doing?* Dr. Ted Engstrom relates a story told him by a veteran Korean Christian. In the early 1880s three Korean workmen, labouring in China, heard the gospel and embraced the Lord Jesus. The three soon conspired about getting the message of Christ into their own country, an action forbidden by the government. Since the Korean and Chinese alphabets were similar, they decided to smuggle in a copy of the Chinese Bible. They drew straws to see who would have the privilege of bringing the gospel into Korea.

The first man buried the Bible in his belongings and headed toward the border, a journey of many days by footpath. There he was searched, found out, and killed. Word reached the others that their friend was dead. The second man tore pages from his Bible and hid the separate pages throughout his luggage. He, too, made the long trip to the border only to be searched and beheaded.

The third man grew more determined than ever to succeed. He ingeniously tore his Bible apart page by page, folding each page into a tiny strip. He wove the strips into a rope and wrapped his baggage in his homemade rope. When he came to the border, the guards asked him to unwrap his belongings. Finding nothing amiss, they admitted him.

The man arrived home, untied the rope, and ironed out each page. He reassembled his Bible and began to preach Christ wherever he went. And when the missionaries of the 1880s fanned into the country, they found the seed already sown and the firstfruits appearing.

Quoted from: *On this Day: 365 Amazing and Inspiring Stories About Saints, Martyrs & Heroes* (electronic edition) by Robert J. Morgan. †

RECOMMENDED

Biblical Portrait of Marriage DVD Kits

There is no such thing as a problem-free marriage, but you can have a problem-solving one!

Part one covers the partnership aspects of the marriage: the roles and responsibilities of husbands, wives and couples.

In part two, six of marriage's toughest problems are tackled.

Each DVD Kit includes a Leader's Guide and 1 free Workbook on registration.



R 395 each

HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY

Song of Solomon a book of a beautiful relationship, yet quite intriguing. It contains no specific revelations about God or faith, makes no theological statements, and does not even mention the name of God. Though a variety of interpretations have been put forward over the years by both Jewish and Christian theologians alike, all interpretations fall basically into one of three categories: Allegorical, Typical, and Literal.

Allegorical: Jewish rabbis have taught that the book is an allegory of God's love for, and relationship with, the nation of Israel. This idea was later picked up by Christian scholars who then applied it to the church.

Typical: In the twelfth century, a new teaching developed, saying that the book is a love poem that has a secondary meaning, which can be applied either to Israel or the church. This view is still held by many today.

Literal: This category teaches that the book is a celebration of love as God intended it to be between a man and a woman. It tells a unified story and plays out somewhat like a drama or screenplay. A structure that best fits in with the style of the Hebrew text.

There is enough evidence within the book to both back and refute each interpretation above. After careful study of the book, I believe that it is quite simply a love story, and, like most love stories, has basic truths that can be applied to our own lives. What follows is one such application.

My Lover is Radiant and Ruddy

"My lover is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand. His head is purest gold; his hair is wavy and black as a raven. His eyes are like doves by the water streams, washed in milk, mounted like jewels. His cheeks are like beds of spice yielding perfume. His lips are like lilies dripping with myrrh. His arms are rods of gold set with chrysolite. His body is like polished ivory decorated with sapphires. His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of pure gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as its cedars. His mouth is sweetness itself; he is altogether lovely. This is my lover, this my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem" (Song of Songs 5:10-16).

Context

In the verses prior to these (vv2-9), the bridegroom goes to his bride's bedchamber, but she is sleeping and has no desire to rise to let him in. Longing for her he reaches in through an opening in the door to plead with her. Her heart is stirred by his love for her and rises to open the door for him, but he has already left. She calls him, looks for him, but cannot find him. While she searches for him in the late night, she is mistaken by the guards as a prostitute and is mistreated.

In an effort to find him, she enlists the help of some of the other young women in town. She wants them to tell him when they find him that she loves and misses him greatly.

Their response is one of sarcasm, asking her what makes him so special and better than other men?

Filled with love for her beloved she begins to tell them why he is so great.

Her Bridegroom (vv10-16)

"**Radiant**" in the Hebrew also means white, the colour of purity. "**Ruddy**" in the Hebrew refers to having rosy cheeks, and is a sign of a healthy person. The bride sees her beloved as a picture of purity and health.

The bride then refers to her beloved as "**outstanding among ten thousand**". If all the men of the whole nation of Israel had to line up, her bridegroom would stand out from among them all.

In the next six verses, the bride describes the many great attributes of her beloved. He is the king, has great hair, gorgeous eyes and lips, strong arms and body, is muscular and has a good odour. All attributes that would make any woman jealous of her.

Our Bridegroom

I do not believe that we could use the bride's descriptions of her lover to describe God. Even though there do seem to be some parallels, to use them in such a way would be reading into the text and applying something to it that is totally out of context.

That said, there is a principle here that we can apply to our faith. If you were questioned as to what makes the God of the Bible so special, what would your answer be? Would you be able and willing to boast about Him in the same way the Shulamite did about Solomon?

Let us look at just a few ways in which we can boast about God.

Pure and Holy: God is holy and cannot sin. (cf. 1 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus, while on earth was tempted, but never gave in to sin. Therefore He was able to lay down His life on the cross for the world as a sacrifice accepted by God (cf. 1 John 2:2).

Outstanding: Our bridegroom is worthy of more praise than Solomon ever was. He stepped out of heaven, died on the cross, was buried in the grave and rose again. In Revelation 5:11 we see Jesus as the Lamb of God being praised by angels "**numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand.**" There is nobody like Him!

Sovereign: God is in charge of it all. Throughout Scripture we are reminded of this fact (e.g. 2 Chronicles 20:6; Psalm 24 and others). We know that one day Jesus will come again, the crown will be placed upon His head and He will rule forever as the King of kings and Lord of lords (cf. Revelation 19:11-16).

All Seeing: God/Jesus sees everything, and knows everything. He has witnessed every event that has taken place in history, and sees everything that is still to come.

Apart from that He sees our sin, and knows our hearts and minds. Yet with those same eyes, He watches over us as His children.

All Powerful: God/Jesus has more power than we can imagine (cf. Ephesians 3:20). With simple words He spoke the universe into being (cf. Genesis 1). He used a few loaves and fish to feed thousands. He walked on water, healed the sick, cast out demons and raised the dead. After dying on the cross, He conquered the grave Himself by rising from the dead. There is none other with as much power.

Everlasting: God/Jesus is stable and will never be overthrown. The devil, his demons, nor any human on earth was able to overcome Him while He was here on earth. Nor has anyone been able to overcome Him in Heaven. In Revelation we see that in the future all His enemies will be defeated. He is Lord and He always will be.

Loving: We are not worthy of God's love. As a result of our sin, all we deserve is death, judgement and Hell. But God loved us so much that He sent His Son to die for us on the cross (cf. John 3:16). He made a way for us to be reconciled to God.

Conclusion

These are only a handful of reasons why our God, and Jesus, are far different from any other god, king, man or idol. And what great and glorious reasons they are.

In our verses in Song of Solomon, the Shulamite woman sees her beloved as being "**altogether lovely.**" She sees him as perfect! There is no blemish in Him at all! And simply because of who he is, she loves him.

Can you say that about God/Jesus? Is He "**altogether lovely**" to you? If so, why not take a few minutes to tell Him how you feel about Him?

If not, then go and speak to someone who does know God/Jesus in this way. He is waiting to show you personally who He is.

HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY! †

MUST-HAVE BIBLE

The MacArthur Study Bible

Personal Size – Hardcover
New American Standard Bible

Teeming with beneficial Bible helps, this Bible is the elite of Bible study tools.

Just a few of its features include:
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Book introductions and outlines
Word-Phrase concordance
Index to key Bible doctrines
Messianic prophecies
Timelines
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R 360

We are not worthy of God's love

Our bridegroom is worthy of more praise than Solomon ever was

THE BACK PAGE

BIBLE SUDOKU CHALLENGE

How well do you know the Good Book?

Bible-Sudoku Challenge combines the logic skills to solve a normal Sudoku with Bible trivia.

Begin by answering the Bible trivia questions. Using the answers and placing them in the relevant coordinates, solve the grid on the right. The coordinates with each question indicates where in the grid that starter number is to be placed (e.g. A1, E9).

All answers are from Song of Solomon.

- In which verse of chapter 2 does the bride compare her lover to an apple tree?
(H1, D5, I4, E8)
- Complete: "and _ _ _ hundred are for those who tend its fruit."
(C1, F4, E3)
- The number of warriors that escorted Solomon's carriage is ten times what?
(G4, E9)
- In which verse of chapter 5 does the bride tell of being beaten by the guards?
(H3, E1, I8, G5)
- Solomon refers to _ _ ty of his concubines in comparing his bride?
(A6, D7, I1, B9)
- Complete: "I liken you, my darling, to a mare harnessed to _ _ _ of the chariots of Pharaoh."
(B6, A8)
- In what verse of chapter 3 does the bride tell the Daughters of Jerusalem "Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires"?
(H8, E6, C7, G2, D1)
- In which verse of chapter 6 does Solomon call his bride "my perfect one"?
(A7, I6, H2)
- In which chapter does Solomon describe his bride's hair to be like a flock of goats?
(F3, B5, D4, A2)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									

Answers in the Next Edition

Last Month's Solution

Trivia: 7 (11:7), 8 (11:2), 4 (4:5),
5 (5:12), 1 (7:14), 3 (4:12),
6 (3:6), 2 (4:11), 9 (9:5)

Sudoku Grid

5	8	9	3	4	7	2	6	1
7	3	6	8	1	2	4	9	5
1	2	4	5	9	6	3	7	8
2	6	1	9	7	3	5	8	4
3	7	8	4	5	1	6	2	9
9	4	5	6	2	8	1	3	7
4	5	3	7	6	9	8	1	2
6	9	2	1	8	5	7	4	3
8	1	7	2	3	4	9	5	6

GOD'S LIBRARY CARDS

COLLECT THEM ALL - Every month a new Library Card will be released, with facts on many amazing themes of the Bible, e.g. Books, people, places, food and events. Just cut them out and laminate them for easy reference. For additional cards and other related products, contact us.

JUDGES

7

Key Idea: Israel's Seven Sins

Summary: The Nation of Israel sins seven times, are conquered, but then delivered by a "judge"

Key People: Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson

Key Places: Canaan, Moab, Philistia

Strange but True: A man who fed an angel soup (6:11-19).

42,000 men killed for mispronouncing one word (12:5-6).

A man who never had a haircut (16:17).

300 foxes tied together by their tails which were then set on fire (15:4-5).

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RUTH

8

Key Idea: Romance and Redemption

Summary: A classic love story of a girl taken from rags to riches by Prince Charming.

Key People: Elimelech, Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, Obed

Key Places: Moab, Bethlehem

Strange but True: A girl vowing to stay with her mother-in-law till death (1:16).

A rich farmer falling in love with a poor foreign girl (2).

A deal sealed by the removal of a shoe (4:7-9).

A daughter-in-law better than seven sons (4:15).

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Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth...

Jeremiah 9:23-24