

Message Two

The Law—the Engagement Covenant between God and His People

EM Hymns 546, 547

Scripture Reading: Exo. 20:1-12; 34:27-29;

Isa. 54:5; Jer. 2:2; 31:3, 32; Ezek. 16:8; Hosea 2:19-20

- Exo 20:1 And God spoke all these words, saying,
 Exo 20:2 I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the slave house;
 Exo 20:3 You shall have no other gods before Me.
 Exo 20:4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, nor the form of anything that is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water beneath the earth.
 Exo 20:5 You shall not bow down to them, and you shall not serve them; for I, Jehovah your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,
 Exo 20:6 Yet showing lovingkindness to thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments.
 Exo 20:7 You shall not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain, for Jehovah will not hold guiltless him who takes His name in vain.
 Exo 20:8 Remember the Sabbath day so as to sanctify it.
 Exo 20:9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,
 Exo 20:10 But the seventh day is a Sabbath to Jehovah your God; you shall not do any work, you nor your son nor your daughter, your male servant nor your female servant, nor your cattle nor the sojourner with you, who is within your gates.
 Exo 20:11 For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.
 Exo 20:12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be extended upon the land which Jehovah your God is giving you.
 Exo 34:27 And Jehovah said to Moses, Write these words, for according to the speaking of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.
 Exo 34:28 And he was there with Jehovah forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread, and he did not drink water. And He wrote upon the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.
 Exo 34:29 And when Moses came down from Mount Sinai-and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain-Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone by reason of His speaking with him.
 Isa 54:5 For your Maker is your Husband; / Jehovah of hosts is His name. / And the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; / He is called the God of all the earth.
 Jer 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: / I remember concerning you the kindness of your youth, / The love of your bridal days, / When you followed after Me in the wilderness, / In a land that was not sown.
 Jer 31:3 Jehovah appeared to me from afar, saying, / Indeed I have loved you with an eternal love, / Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.
 Jer 31:32 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.
 Ezek 16:8 Then I passed by you and saw you; and then was your time a time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness; indeed I swore unto you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah, and you became Mine.
 Hosea 2:19 And I will betroth you to Myself forever; / Indeed I will betroth you to Myself / In righteousness and justice / And in lovingkindness and compassions;
 Hosea 2:20 Indeed I will betroth you to Myself in faithfulness, / And you will know Jehovah.

I. The subject of the entire Bible, the content of God's economy, and the secret of the entire universe are the divine romance between God and His chosen and redeemed people:

- A. The entire Bible is a divine romance, a record of how God courts His chosen people and eventually marries them—Gen. 2:21-24; S. S. 1:2-4; Isa. 54:5; 62:5-7; Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 14; 31:3, 32; Ezek. 16:8; 23:5; Hosea 2:7, 19-20; Matt. 9:15; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2, 9-10; 22:17.
- Gen 2:21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.
- Gen 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- Gen 2:23 And the man said, This time this is bone of my bones / And flesh of my flesh; / This one shall be called Woman / Because out of Man this one was taken.
- Gen 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
- S.S. 1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! / For your love is better than wine.
- S.S. 1:3 Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; / Your name is like ointment poured forth; / Therefore the virgins love you.
- S.S. 1:4 Draw me; we will run after you - The king has brought me into his chambers - / We will be glad and rejoice in you; / We will extol your love more than wine. / Rightly do they love you.
- Isa 54:5 For your Maker is your Husband; / Jehovah of hosts is His name. / And the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; / He is called the God of all the earth.
- Isa 62:5 For as a young man marries a virgin, / Your sons will marry you; / And with the joy of the bridegroom over the bride / Your God will rejoice over you.
- Isa 62:6 Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, / I have appointed watchmen; / All day and all night / They will never keep silent. / You who remind Jehovah, / Do not be dumb;
- Isa 62:7 And do not give Him quiet / Until He establishes / And until He makes Jerusalem / A praise in the earth.
- Jer 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: / I remember concerning you the kindness of your youth, / The love of your bridal days, / When you followed after Me in the wilderness, / In a land that was not sown.
- Jer 3:1 It is said, / If a man divorces his wife / And she goes from him / And becomes another man's wife, / Will he return to her again? / Will not that land be / Utterly polluted? / But you have committed fornication with many lovers. / Yet return to Me, declares Jehovah.
- Jer 3:14 Return, O apostate children, declares Jehovah, for I am a Husband to you; and I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and will bring you to Zion.
- Jer 31:3 Jehovah appeared to me from afar, saying, / Indeed I have loved you with an eternal love, / Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.
- Jer 31:32 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.
- Ezek 16:8 Then I passed by you and saw you; and then was your time a time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness; indeed I swore unto you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah, and you became Mine.
- Ezek 23:5 And Oholah committed fornication instead of remaining with Me, and she lusted after her lovers, after the Assyrians, who were close to her,
- Hosea 2:7 And she will pursue her lovers / But will not overtake them; / And she will seek them but not find them; / And she will say, I will go / And return to my first husband, / For it was better for me then than now.
- Hosea 2:19 And I will betroth you to Myself forever; / Indeed I will betroth you to Myself / In righteousness and justice / And in lovingkindness and compassions;
- Hosea 2:20 Indeed I will betroth you to Myself in faithfulness, / And you will know Jehovah.
- Matt 9:15 And Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.
- John 3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and

- hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full.
- 2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
- Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her
- Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
- Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.
- Eph 5:28 In the same way the husbands also ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his own wife loves himself.
- Eph 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,
- Eph 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.
- Eph 5:31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh.
- Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.
- B. God is a courting God, and the entire Bible is God's courting word; because He has courted us, we are in the church life today; if we would keep God's courting word, we need a responsive, affectionate love for Him— John 21:15-17; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; John 14:21, 23; S. S. 1:1-4; 6:13; 2 Cor. 11:2.**
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- 2 Cor 5:14 For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;
- 2 Cor 5:15 And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.
- John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, he is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.
- John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.
- S.S. 1:1 The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.
- S.S. 1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! / For your love is better than wine.
- S.S. 1:3 Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; / Your name is like ointment poured forth; /

- Therefore the virgins love you.
- S.S. 1:4 Draw me; we will run after you - The king has brought me into his chambers - / We will be glad and rejoice in you; / We will extol your love more than wine. / Rightly do they love you.
- S.S. 6:13 Return, return, O Shulammite; / Return, return, that we may gaze at you. / Why should you gaze at the Shulammite, / As upon the dance of two camps?
- 2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
- C. When we as God's people enter into a love relationship with God, we receive His life, just as Eve received the life of Adam; it is this life that enables us to become one with God and makes Him one with us—Gen. 2:21-22.
- Gen 2:21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.
- Gen 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- D. We keep the law not by exercising our mind and will (cf. Rom. 7:18-25) but by loving the Lord as our Husband and thereby partaking of His life and nature to become one with Him as His enlargement and expression.
- Rom 7:18 For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but to work out the good is not.
- Rom 7:19 For I do not do the good which I will; but the evil which I do not will, this I practice.
- Rom 7:20 But if what I do not will, this I do, it is no longer I that work it out but sin that dwells in me.
- Rom 7:21 I find then the law with me who wills to do the good, that is, the evil is present with me.
- Rom 7:22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man,
- Rom 7:23 But I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and making me a captive to the law of sin which is in my members.
- Rom 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death?
- Rom 7:25 Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin.

II. God's intention in giving His law to His chosen people was that they become His lovers—Exo. 20:6; Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:35-38; Mark 12:28-30:

- Exo 20:6 Yet showing lovingkindness to thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments.
- Deut 6:5 And you shall love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
- Matt 22:35 And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him,
- Matt 22:36 Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?
- Matt 22:37 And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."
- Matt 22:38 This is the great and first commandment.
- Mark 12:28 And one of the scribes approached and heard them disputing; and perceiving that He answered them well, he questioned Him, Which is the first commandment of all?
- Mark 12:29 Jesus answered, The first is: "Hear, Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord;
- Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."
- A. In bringing His people out of Egypt and giving His law to them, God was courting them, wooing them, and seeking to win their affection.
- B. Jeremiah 2:2; 31:32; and Ezekiel 16:8 indicate that the covenant enacted at the mountain of God through the giving of the law (Exo. 24:7-8; 34:27-28) was an engagement covenant, in which God betrothed the children of Israel to Himself (cf. 2 Cor. 11:2):
- Jer 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: / I remember concerning you the kindness of your youth, / The love of your bridal days, / When you followed after Me in the wilderness, / In a land that was not sown.
- Jer 31:32 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to

- bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.
- Ezek 16:8 Then I passed by you and saw you; and then was your time a time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness; indeed I swore unto you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah, and you became Mine.
- Exo 24:7 And he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, All that Jehovah has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.
- Exo 24:8 So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people and said, Here is the blood of the covenant, which Jehovah has made with you in accordance with all these words.
- Exo 34:27 And Jehovah said to Moses, Write these words, for according to the speaking of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.
- Exo 34:28 And he was there with Jehovah forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread, and he did not drink water. And He wrote upon the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.
- 2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
1. “Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: / I remember concerning you the kindness of your youth, / The love of your bridal days, / When you followed after Me in the wilderness, / In a land that was not sown”— Jer. 2:2.
 2. “The covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah”—31:32.
 3. “Then I passed by you and saw you; and then was your time a time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness; indeed I swore unto you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah, and you became Mine”—Ezek. 16:8.
- C. Both Ezekiel 16:8 and Jeremiah 31:32 use the word covenant, a word that refers to the law given in Exodus 20; when God gave the law, He betrothed Israel unto Himself, and Israel became engaged to Him; this is what Jeremiah 2:2 refers to in saying, “The love of your bridal days.”
- Ezek 16:8 Then I passed by you and saw you; and then was your time a time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness; indeed I swore unto you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah, and you became Mine.
- Jer 31:32 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.
- Exo 20 be omitted.
- D. God’s goal in giving the law was to make His chosen people one with Him as a wife is one with her husband; the law would then impart God’s substance into them, usher them into God, and unite them with God in life and nature.

III. In giving His law to His people, God was seeking lovers, and the giving of the law was a transaction in which God’s people became engaged to Him:

- A. The law was an engagement covenant between God and His people:
1. God loves His people with an eternal love—31:3; Gal. 6:16; 1 Thes. 1:4; Eph. 1:4.

Jer 31:3 Jehovah appeared to me from afar, saying, / Indeed I have loved you with an eternal love, / Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.

Gal 6:16 And as many as walk by this rule, peace be upon them and mercy, even upon the Israel of God.

1 Thes 1:4 Knowing, brothers, beloved of God, your selection;

Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,

2. In the first nineteen chapters of Exodus, God was courting, even “dating,” His people, as indicated by Jeremiah 2:2.
Jer 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: / I remember concerning you the kindness of your youth, / The love of your bridal days, / When you followed after Me in the wilderness, / In a land that was not sown.
 3. By means of the law as an engagement paper, God officially betrothed the children of Israel to Himself in Exodus 20 at the mountain of God—Ezek. 16:8; Jer. 31:32.
Ezek 16:8 Then I passed by you and saw you; and then was your time a time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness; indeed I swore unto you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah, and you became Mine.
Jer 31:32 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.
- B. The betrothal of Israel took place at the mountain of God in Exodus 20, and the law was the official paper stating the conditions for this engagement; the Ten Commandments, especially the first five, gave the terms of the engagement between God and His people.
Exo 20 be omitted.
- C. The first five commandments were given in an atmosphere of intimacy, with the expression *Jehovah your God* uttered intimately again and again as God lovingly courted His people:
1. In the first commandment the Lord told His people that they should not have any other beloved in addition to Him; He must be their unique Beloved—vv. 1-3.
Exo 20:1 And God spoke all these words, saying,
Exo 20:2 I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the slave house;
Exo 20:3 You shall have no other gods before Me.
 2. In the second commandment the Lord did not want His people to make for themselves an image, an idol, of anything, and as a jealous Husband, He wanted His people to serve Him and Him alone, telling them that if they would love Him, He would show lovingkindness to their descendants for thousands of generations, a time span that will lead into eternity—vv. 4-6.
Exo 20:4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, nor the form of anything that is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water beneath the earth.
Exo 20:5 You shall not bow down to them, and you shall not serve them; for I, Jehovah your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,
Exo 20:6 Yet showing lovingkindness to thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments.
 3. In the third commandment the Lord, as their Beloved, did not want His people to use His name in an improper way, but He wanted them to honor His name and use it lovingly—v. 7.
Exo 20:7 You shall not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain, for Jehovah will not hold guiltless him who takes His name in vain.
 4. In the fourth commandment the Lord required His people to keep the Sabbath as a sign that they belonged to Him alone and that they were absolutely for Him—vv. 8-11:
Exo 20:8 Remember the Sabbath day so as to sanctify it.
Exo 20:9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,
Exo 20:10 But the seventh day is a Sabbath to Jehovah your God; you shall not do any work, you nor your son nor your daughter, your male servant nor your female servant, nor your cattle nor the sojourner with you, who is within your gates.
Exo 20:11 For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

- a. Just as a woman wears a ring as a sign of her engagement, the keeping of the Sabbath day was to be a sign that God's people were engaged to Him.
 - b. The Sabbath is mentioned in relation to the work of building God's dwelling place, signifying that as God's people work with Him and for Him, they must learn to rest with Him by enjoying Him and being filled with Him—31:12-17:
 - Exo 31:12 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
 - Exo 31:13 Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, You shall surely keep My Sabbaths; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am Jehovah who sanctifies you.
 - Exo 31:14 Therefore you shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.
 - Exo 31:15 Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to Jehovah; whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death.
 - Exo 31:16 Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.
 - Exo 31:17 It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.
 - 1) Keeping the Sabbath is a sign (v. 17) that God's people work for God not by their own strength but by enjoying Him and being one with Him.
 - Exo 31:17 It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.
 - 2) It is also an eternal covenant (v. 16) assuring God that we will be one with Him by first enjoying Him and then working with Him, for Him, and in oneness with Him.
 - Exo 31:16 Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.
 - 3) God first worked and then rested; man first rests and then works—Gen. 2:2.
 - Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.
 - 4) The mentioning of the Sabbath in Exodus 31 indicates also that everything related to the tabernacle and its furniture leads us to God's Sabbath, with its rest and refreshment in the enjoyment of what God has purposed and done.
 5. In the fifth commandment the Lord wanted His people to remember Him as their source—20:12.
 - Exo 20:12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be extended upon the land which Jehovah your God is giving you.
- D. The highest function of the law as an engagement paper, an engagement covenant, is to bring God's chosen people into oneness with Him, as a wife is brought into oneness with her husband (cf. Gen. 2:24; Rev. 22:17), making them His enlarged and expanded expression, His testimony (Exo. 25:21-22; 38:21).
- Gen 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
 - Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.
 - Exo 25:21 And you shall put the expiation cover upon the Ark above it, and into the Ark you shall put the Testimony that I shall give you.
 - Exo 25:22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the expiation cover, from

- between the two cherubim which are upon the Ark of the Testimony, of everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.
- Exo 38:21 This is the sum of the things for the tabernacle, the Tabernacle of the Testimony, as they were counted according to the commandment of Moses for the service of the Levites by the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.
- E. In order for God and His people to be one, there must be a mutual love between them— John 14:21, 23:
- John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, he is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.
- John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.
1. The love between God and His people that is unfolded in the Bible is primarily like the affectionate love between a man and a woman— Jer. 2:2; 31:3.

Jer 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: / I remember concerning you the kindness of your youth, / The love of your bridal days, / When you followed after Me in the wilderness, / In a land that was not sown.

Jer 31:3 Jehovah appeared to me from afar, saying, / Indeed I have loved you with an eternal love, / Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.
 2. As God's people love God and spend time to fellowship with Him in His word, God infuses them with His divine element, making them one with Him as His spouse, the same as He is in life, nature, and expression.

IV. Since the law was given as an engagement contract and the entire Bible is God's courting word, we should not try to keep the law apart from loving the Lord and His word and becoming one with Him— John 21:15-17; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; John 14:21, 23:

- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- 2 Cor 5:14 For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;
- 2 Cor 5:15 And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.
- John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, he is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.
- John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.
- A. The truth of God coming into us to do everything for us and in us is the central concept in the Bible concerning the giving of the commandments—Rom. 3:19-20; Gal. 3:23-24; Exo. 19:4, 6; Isa. 40:31; Matt. 5:48; Phil. 2:12-13; Rom. 8:4.
- Rom 3:19 Now we know that whatever things the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may fall under the judgment of God;
- Rom 3:20 Because out of the works of the law no flesh shall be justified before Him; for through the law is the clear knowledge of sin.
- Gal 3:23 But before faith came we were guarded under law, being shut up unto the faith which was to be revealed.
- Gal 3:24 So then the law has become our child-conductor unto Christ that we might be justified out of

faith.

Exo 19:4 You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.

Exo 19:6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the children of Israel.

Isa 40:31 Yet those who wait on Jehovah will renew their strength; / They will mount up with wings like eagles; / They will run and will not faint; / They will walk and will not become weary.

Matt 5:48 You therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

B. As long as we love the Lord and His word and as long as we stay with Him to be infused with Him, He will do in us what we cannot do ourselves:

1. In order to practice the vision of the eternal economy of God, the highest peak of the divine revelation, we need to spend time to be infused with the Lord as our Husband, becoming more and more like Him to be His expression— S. S. 1:1-4.

S.S. 1:1 The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

S.S. 1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! / For your love is better than wine.

S.S. 1:3 Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; / Your name is like ointment poured forth; / Therefore the virgins love you.

S.S. 1:4 Draw me; we will run after you - The king has brought me into his chambers - / We will be glad and rejoice in you; / We will extol your love more than wine. / Rightly do they love you.

2. Our love for the Lord should be that which is expressed in Song of Songs, where we have a beautiful and touching description of the deep, tender, and affectionate love between the beloved (the Lord) and the one he loves (His loving seeker)—1:1 and footnote 1; 3:11 and footnotes 1 through 3; 6:13 and footnote 1.

S.S. 1:1 The ¹Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

note 1

Song of Songs is a history of love in an excellent marriage, a story of the love between the wise King Solomon, the writer of this book, and the Shulammitte (6:13), a girl of the countryside. As such, this book is a marvelous and vivid portrait, in poetic form, of the bridal love between Christ as the Bridegroom and His lovers as His bride (John 3:29-30; Rev. 19:7) in their mutual enjoyment in the mingling of His divine attributes with the human virtues of His lovers. Song of Songs stresses not the Body of Christ corporately but the believer in Christ individually, unveiling the progressive experience of an individual believer's loving fellowship with Christ in four stages, as shown in points I through IV of the outline of this book. The correspondence between the progression in the poem and the progression in the experience of Christ's lovers is the intrinsic revelation of the holy Word of the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God. The stages of such a progression should be landmarks to us in the course of our pursuing of Christ for His and our mutual satisfaction.

In the romance between the great King Solomon and the girl from the countryside (cf. vv. 5-8), because the two did not match each other, the king became a "country man" in order to go to her village to court her, to gain her love. On the one hand, he made himself the same as the country girl; on the other hand, he made the country girl a queen. This is a type of the story of God's romance with man. God as the Husband is divine, and the wife He desires to marry is human; the two do not match each other. To fulfill His heart's desire God became a lowly man with humanity in incarnation, and He contacted man by the way of a romance. Then in His resurrection He uplifted His humanity into His divinity in the divine power according to the Spirit of holiness, and He was designated the Son of God in His humanity (Rom. 1:3-4 and notes). Today He as

the universal Bridegroom is the God-man, having both divinity and humanity. In order to make His bride, His wife, the same as He is, He regenerates His human elect, putting His divinity into their humanity and uplifting their humanity to the standard of divinity (1 Pet. 1:3, 23; John 3:6). After regenerating them, He then transforms His loving seekers gradually in their soul, and ultimately He transfigures them in their body, until in their entire being they are the same as He is in life, in nature, in image, and in function, but not in His Godhead (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2). The romance in Song of Songs portrays the process through which the seeker of Christ passes in order to become the Shulammite, a duplication of Solomon and a figure of the New Jerusalem. See note 131 in ch. 6.

S.S. 3:11 Go forth, O daughters of Zion, / And ¹look at King Solomon with the ²crown / With which his mother crowned him / On the day of his ³espousals, / Yes, on the day of the gladness of his heart.

note 1 The Spirit, signified here by a third party speaking, bids the overcoming believers (daughters of Zion — see note 21 in Psa. 48) to look away from themselves unto Christ in His humanity, which is a crown with which His mother (incarnation) crowned Him on the day of the believers' betrothal to Him, a day of the gladness of His heart. Here the lover of Christ and Christ are united to be one in the bridal love and marriage life. This portrays the church and Christ being united to be completely and fully one organically in the mingled spirit (1 Cor. 6:17).

note 2 The entire Bible is a romance between God and His elect (see note 62, par. 2, in Exo. 20). Through incarnation God became a man so that He could court man (John 3:29-30). Incarnation was a "mother" who gave Christ His humanity as a crown, a treasure. The humanity that Christ put on in His incarnation and uplifted in His resurrection (Rom. 1:3-4) is His crown. In our response to Christ's courting, we court Him by being transformed to become divine for His expression (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18). As Christ's human wife transformed with His divinity, we become a crown to Him (cf. Prov. 12:4a).

note 3 Christ's espousal and marriage life cover the church age, the kingdom age, and the eternal age. Christ's espousals began from the time of incarnation, when incarnation as His mother crowned Him with His humanity, and continue through the church age, an age of warfare (vv. 7-8), in which all His believers are espoused to Him as virgins (2 Cor. 11:2). After the church age, in the kingdom age Christ's regenerated and transformed wife, composed of the overcoming believers, becomes a palanquin to Him for His triumphant celebration (vv. 9-10). The celebration of Christ's victory is His thousand-year wedding day (Rev. 19:7-8). His marriage life after His wedding will be the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth for eternity (Rev. 21:9-10).

The union of the bed with its sleeper (vv. 7-8), the union of the palanquin with its rider (vv. 9-10), and the union of the bride with her bridegroom (v. 11) all signify the complete union of the lover with Christ, which has made her God's new creation in Christ's resurrection (2 Cor. 5:17). The bed in the night, the palanquin in the day, and the marriage life in the ages to come all refer to the one lover of Christ — the Shulammite (6:13 and note 1). Eventually, the New Jerusalem will be a corporate Shulammite, which will include all God's chosen and redeemed people (Rev. 21:9-10, 12, 14).

S.S. 6:13 Return, return, O ¹Shulammite; / Return, return, that we may gaze at you. / Why should you gaze at the Shulammite, / As upon the dance of two camps?

note 1 The feminine form of Solomon, derived from the root meaning peace. The use of this name here indicates that at this point she has become Solomon's duplication, counterpart, the same as Solomon in life, nature, expression, and function, as Eve was to Adam (Gen. 2:20-23 and notes). This signifies that in the maturity of Christ's life the lover of Christ becomes the reproduction of Christ, the same as He is in life, nature, expression, and function (but not in the Godhead) to match Him for their marriage (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29).

This couple's becoming one indicates the New Jerusalem. In the New Jerusalem the redeeming God (signified by Solomon) and all His redeemed (signified by the Shulammite) become one — a universal couple (Rev. 21:9-10; 22:17). The New Jerusalem is a mingling of divinity and humanity to express the processed and consummated Triune God in human virtues.

3. **We keep the law of God by loving Him as our Husband— Matt. 22:37-40; 1 Cor. 2:9; 16:22; cf. Deut. 11:29; 27:12-13:**

Matt 22:37 And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

Matt 22:38 This is the great and first commandment.

Matt 22:39 And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matt 22:40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

1 Cor 2:9 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

1 Cor 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed! The Lord comes!

Deut 11:29 And when Jehovah your God brings you into the land which you are entering to possess, you shall put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the curse upon Mount Ebal.

Deut 27:12 These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people when you cross over the Jordan: Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Joseph and Benjamin;

Deut 27:13 And these shall stand upon Mount Ebal for cursing: Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

a. Part of the secret of living Christ is telling the Lord again and again that we love Him; whenever we tell the Lord that we love Him, He supplies us with His life, and this life enables us to become one with God and makes Him one with us.

b. Then what we live out will be according to the law as His description, definition, and expression.

4. **Because we love God, we also love His living word, which infuses His substance into us to cause us to glow with Him— Jer. 15:16:**

Jer 15:16 Your words were found and I ate them, / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart, / For I am called by Your name, / O Jehovah, God of hosts.

a. When Moses was on the top of Mount Horeb (Mount Sinai), he was not striving or working to fulfill the requirements of the law; rather, he was being infused with God by God's speaking with him, and his glowing face was simply a reflection of what God is—Exo. 34:28-29; cf. 2 Cor. 3:18-4:6.

Exo 34:28 And he was there with Jehovah forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread, and he did not drink water. And He wrote upon the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

Exo 34:29 And when Moses came down from Mount Sinai-and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain-Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone by reason of His speaking with him.

2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

2 Cor 4:1 Therefore having this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart;

2 Cor 4:2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every conscience of men before God.

2 Cor 4:3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in those who are perishing,

2 Cor 4:4 In whom the god of this age has blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers that the

illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine on them.

2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

2 Cor 4:6 Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- b. God does not want a people who strive to keep the law; He wants a glowing people to express Him for His glory— Judg. 5:31; Matt. 13:43.

Judg 5:31 May all Your enemies so perish, O Jehovah. / But may those who love Him be like the sun / When it rises in its might. And the land had rest forty years.

Matt 13:43 Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

- c. As we are infused with the Lord, we will shine spontaneously to become His living portrait, His testimony; we will not work or strive but simply glow.

- d. Whenever we contact the Lord in a direct, intimate way, becoming one with Him, His word supplies us with life to cause us to grow, become His expression, and spontaneously live in a way that corresponds to what He is— John 5:39-40; 6:57.

John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me.

John 5:40 Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

- C. Those who keep the law by loving God and His word to become one with Him have the living of a God-man to bear the image of God, being a portrait of God and a duplication of God.