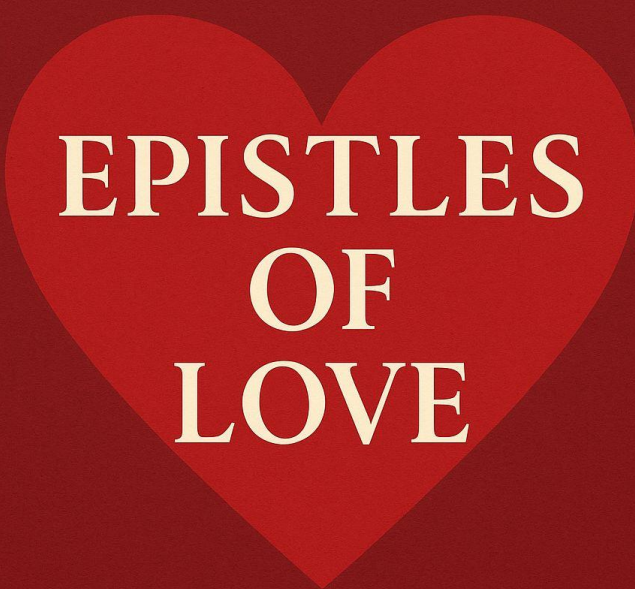




EPISTLES OF LOVE

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DEDICATION

This short epistle is dedicated to my source (God), my late Father (Ogunleye Thompson Oladele), all who have truly expressed love and those who will express love genuinely and intentionally.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge the gift of the Holy Spirit for holding my hands. Thank you to all who have been instrumental in bringing this gift to light. Thanks to me—for believing in God’s ability and in the power of His words.

Thank you to my mum, siblings, my mentor, and my friends for believing in me. I appreciate Mrs. Odubona Hannah for writing the foreword despite her busy schedule, and Deacon Bakare Samuel for the deep book review.

Thank you to everyone who will read this short piece, and to the book publisher for the cover design and publication.

FOREWORD

It is an honor to write the foreword of this powerful book. If you are preparing for marriage, this is a must-read. Within the pages of this book are timeless principles that will help you not only build love but also sustain it. Love can be preserved when the right foundation is laid, and this book provides that guide. I encourage you to read it with your partner and share it with friends you would love to see succeed in marriage. This is a true gift, and I wholeheartedly recommend it.

Mrs Odubona Hannah.

BOOK REVIEW

Epistles of Love is a short but deeply rich book filled with reflections on love and relationships, drawn from biblical insights especially from the Song of Songs. Written in the form of brief “epistles,” it tackles real life issues such as lust versus love, values in marriage, emotional control, love languages, obsession, friendship in relationships, and the importance of Godly foundations.

One of the book’s greatest strengths is its simplicity and practicality. The author doesn’t just speak about love in abstract terms; she uses down to earth examples that readers can easily connect with. For instance, she shares the story of a couple who struggled with mismatched love languages and also draws lessons from Samson’s downfall through misplaced affection. Each “epistle” feels personal, like a letter from a friend, offering heartfelt counsel in a conversational tone.

Another commendable strength is the **biblical grounding**. The repeated reference to Song of Songs 2 anchors the reflections in Scripture, while passages like Judges 16 add depth and timely

warnings. This makes the book relevant not just to singles, but also to married couples who desire to re-examine and strengthen their relationships.

What stood out to me personally was the author's emphasis on friendship as the true foundation of love, and the reminder that love must be intentional, balanced, and centered on God. The call to "watch and pray" before choosing a spouse is both timely and timeless.

In conclusion, *Epistles of Love* is a valuable, honest, and Spirit-inspired work. It is especially helpful for young adults preparing for marriage, couples seeking to strengthen their bond, and even Christian counselors guiding others in matters of love and relationships.

Highly recommended for anyone who desires to build a godly, intentional, and lasting relationship.

Deacon Bakare Samuel (PSam)

EPISTLES OF LOVE

EPISTLE ONE

How do you know if you are in love or if it is just lust?

Lust has a clause. It is often attached to a reason and limited to a season. It fades once the season of assumed love expires. Lust is mostly based on what you can see or touch.

Let's take a look at **2 Samuel 13:1, 11, 15**:

Verse 1: In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David.

Verse 11: But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister."

Verse 15: Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!"

This shows that what Amnon felt wasn't love—it was lust.

Love, on the other hand, is infinite and intentional. It's not limited to what is seen but dives deep into the internal qualities and values of a person. Love does not fade—until "**till death do us part**" is fulfilled.

Let's also look at **Matthew 1:18–19**:

Verse 18: This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

Verse 19: Because Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

This shows that Joseph's love was rooted in respect, not selfishness.

Song of Songs is a very interesting book, but Chapter 2 caught my attention. King Solomon expressed deep emotions of love, yet, for me, he seemed confused about who he truly loved. He kept getting married, yet was not satisfied.

A person (male or female) who is confused in love often keeps many options. They may not care how sincere their partner is—because, in their mind, if one fails, the other won't. But backups often pack up or leave you hurt.

So ask yourself: Are you a backup or the main deal? Do you have backups or just one choice?

Marriage won't automatically fix uncontrollable emotions. Deal with those now. If all you feel is lust toward your future spouse, that same attraction might become the reason your marriage fails.

For instance, a person who "falls in love" with someone purely for their looks or money might leave the moment those things fade or disappear.

Some people think they love their partner, but they're just obsessed. Their "love" becomes suffocating. Their partner may even lose their life in the process—because of extreme jealousy or possessiveness. This often stems from low self-esteem or a lack of love during childhood.

EPISTLE TWO

Song of Songs 2:7b speaks volumes:
“...don’t excite love, don’t stir it up until the time is ripe and you are ready.”

You may be ready, but the time may not be ripe. The time may be ripe, but you may not be ready. And sometimes, you may be both ripe and ready. Don’t rush. Check your category and make sure you are both ripe and ready.

Ecclesiastes 3:1: *“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.”*

Verse 11a: *“He has made everything beautiful in its time.”*

Beyond biological readiness, the true factors that show you are ready include **spiritual, financial, mental, and emotional** preparedness.

You don’t want to marry someone who is not spiritually sensitive enough to understand times and seasons in your relationship and marriage. Neither do you want to get married to someone with no vision, no direction, and nothing for the

Lord to bless—a practically lazy man or woman who believes the man should bear all responsibilities, or someone who uses “being called into ministry” as an excuse to be idle.

You also don’t want to marry someone who cannot handle mature conversations or, worse, an adult baby who cannot make decisions because they don’t understand the words “**leave**” and “**cleave**.”

Genesis 2:24:

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”

EPISTLE THREE

A woman is described as the **gatekeeper** of the house, but the man is the **priest**. All hands must be on deck for a relationship to work well. It is not the duty of one person alone.

Proverbs 31:27 — *“She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.”*

1 Timothy 3:4 — *“He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.”*

Some people marry their spouse because they believe that person can serve as a covering when trouble comes. But no one should slack—so the foxes do not enter your flowering garden.

Don’t marry for **position** or **titles** just because you think they offer spiritual covering—especially if God has not given you the go-ahead.

If one person is down, the other should lift them up. But if the man is the priest and the woman is nowhere to guard the gate of the home (or vice versa), there will be trouble.

If you marry someone just because they carry spiritual fire and you're not growing yourself, you're only setting yourself up to be **spiritually devoured**. This is a major reason some people chase **titles** rather than truly knowing who their spouse is at the core.

EPISTLE **FOUR**

Some people are even in **assumed relationships**. You know the person's name, but you don't know your stand or position in their life.

Judges 16:4–5

“Some time later, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, ‘See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength and how we can overpower him so we may tie him up and subdue him. Each of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver.’”

To **Delilah**, **Samson** was just an exchange for riches—while she was the love of **Samson**.

Ask your partner:

Who are you to them?

- A stand-in for the perfect person they're still waiting for?
- A friend-with-benefits situation?

– Or just a brother or sister in the Lord?

EPISTLE FIVE

A relationship that will thrive—no matter the circumstances—is one where both partners **imbibe the culture of friendship.**

Your courtship or marriage is not a military zone. Befriend your spouse every day. **Activate the spirit of friendship.** You are first friends before lovers. Never go into a relationship with a stranger.

A stranger isn't necessarily someone you've never met. A stranger can be someone you've known all your life but never truly connected with—because you were never friends.

Imagine being in a relationship and not knowing the person beyond their name and age. You don't know them beyond working in the same unit or department. You don't know their parents, genotype, health status, spiritual standing, or even the people who matter in their life. You're unaware of whether they're truly saved, what their hobbies are, their goals and vision, or anything about their family background.

EPISTLE SIX

She was ready to showcase him to everyone who cared, and she was so attentive that she knew when he was around.

Song of Solomon 2:8 — *"Listen! My lover! Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills."*

Please ask questions—or run—if your partner cannot showcase you to the world.

By “world,” I don’t mean the entire universe, but those who mean the **world to him**.

First: God. This could mean officially introducing your spouse to God after you both have been convinced—beyond just the “Yes” answer—by committing the beginning of your relationship to Him.

Secondly: Your mentors and parents.

Thirdly: Others, as you feel led.

EPISTLE SEVEN

You can't hold your pee for 24 hours, and you can't go 12 hours without swallowing your saliva, but you feel comfortable not speaking to the one you love for days, weeks, or even months—because you believe you're the busiest person alive.

There's a saying that no matter how busy you are, you'll still create time—no matter how little—at every opportunity for your partner.

The interesting thing is, some of us have a beautiful relationship with God, but can't create a healthy relationship with our partner because our emotional life needs healing.

Some people genuinely need counseling before proposing or accepting a proposal—so that a beautiful relationship doesn't turn into a source of regret.

Some relationships heading toward marriage, and even some marriages themselves, are not working out because people don't read healthy books (including the Bible), don't have good role models,

don't ask questions when needed, and don't seek wisdom through relationship or marriage clinics.

EPISTLE EIGHT

No seclusions or “I” syndrome in relationships. You can’t say you don’t like calls, messages, or any communication in a godly relationship just because you want your space.

Don’t like to talk? Sorry, you will talk, and you will ask questions. You will call, and your partner will expect calls from you.

You can’t say you’re in love and then not speak to your partner in any form of communication, no matter how busy you are. Every day and everything you do should express the love you have for your partner.

What kind of relationship is it if you only speak to your partner when you feel like it because calls feel like an intrusion into your space?

EPISTLE **NINE**

You will definitely see other people who seem better than your spouse, but it depends on how much value you place on your spouse. The value of your spouse is not measured by others but by how you see them.

The origin of the word ‘woman’ came from one man—her man—who called her so.

Genesis 2:23

“The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.’”

If you see your spouse as the most beautiful or handsome in the whole universe, then it doesn’t matter if others say otherwise.

Song of Solomon 6:3-4

“I am my lover’s and my lover is mine; he browses among the lilies. You are beautiful, my darling, as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, majestic as troops with banners.”

The greatness of your spouse is not only dependent on what others see but on what you see and think. How you view your partner fuels you to support them in becoming who they want to be.

Who is your spouse to you—and to the world?

EPISTLE TEN

Love language should never be one-sided. Take the time to understand your lover's love language and express it at the right moments. Assuming a love language without knowing can lead to misunderstandings and hurt. Love language expression is not limited by gender.

Ephesians 5:33 says, *“However, each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”*

For those courting or in a relationship, what is your partner's love language?

I met a couple married for 25 years, and I discovered the root of many of their misunderstandings: they were applying the wrong love languages.

The wife's love language was gifts and help with house chores, while the husband's was physical touch and words of affirmation.

The husband showed love the way he wanted to receive it—touching her often, whether in public or private, and speaking affirming words. But this

annoyed her because it wasn't how she felt loved. She wanted gifts and help around the house, which never happened.

EPISTLE ELEVEN

In the Kingdom, we are givers and share what we have. We are not stingy. But we don't share our spouse.

One man, one woman, just as it was in the beginning. **Genesis 2:25** says, *"The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame."* You can share many things, but please do not allow anything to make you share your spouse.

Now, don't get me wrong—I'm not *talking about those who belong to the category of "me and my husband."* I'm talking about sharing bodies, which is non-negotiable.

Some share their spouse with social media, some with their phones, some with friends, some with family, some with work, and some even with their children—and this negatively affects the relationship.

Matthew 19:6 says, *"So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate."*

You are his, and he is yours forever, till death do you part.

EPISTLE **TWELVE**

Friendship doesn't stop after saying your vows on the altar or at the marriage registry—it continues.

The day friendship ends is when you start seeing things that don't even matter as threats that could eventually destroy your relationship because they weren't handled well. Once friendship ends, marriage becomes boring, and you begin to question how and why you fell in love with that person in the first place.

It's wise to befriend your spouse every day.

EPISTLE THIRTEEN

Judges 16:15–17, 20:

“Then she said to him, ‘How can you say, “I love you,” when you won’t confide in me? This is the third time you have made a fool of me and haven’t told me the secret of your great strength.’

16 With such nagging, she prodded him day after day until he was tired to death.

17 So he told her everything. ‘No razor has ever been used on my head,’ he said, ‘because I have been a Nazarite set apart to God since birth. If my head were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man.’

20 Then she called, ‘Samson, the Philistines are upon you!’ He awoke from his sleep and thought, ‘I’ll go out as before and shake myself free.’ But he did not know that the Lord had left him.”

1 Kings 21:25-26:

25 'There was never a man like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, urged on by Jezebel his wife.

26 He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the LORD drove out before Israel.'

Whoever you marry will either make you burn more for God or extinguish your fire.

Judges 4:4: *'Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time.'*

EPISTLE **FOURTEEN**

In conclusion:

God, give us Christian homes—

Homes where the Bible is loved and taught,

Homes where the Master's will is sought,

Homes crowned with beauty Your love has wrought;

Homes where the father is true and strong,

Homes that are free from the blight of wrong,

Homes that are joyous with love and song;

Homes where the mother, in caring quest,

Strives to show others God's way is best,

Homes where the Lord is an honored guest;

Homes where the children are led to know

Christ in His beauty, who loves them so,

Homes where the altar fires burn and glow—

God, give us Christian homes.

Just as you love your spouse and show them love intentionally, please love the Lord intentionally too.

Here are ways to love Him:

- By obeying Him,
- Through words of affirmation—telling Him who He is and appreciating His wonderful works,
- Through giving: your service, your money, and your heart,
- Through touching Him by fellowshiping in spirit and in truth.

Selah.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Epistles of Love is a short book that shares principles that can serve as a guide for a successful courtship and marriage.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Racheal Oladele is a graduate of Food Technology from Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu. She is a child of God, a content writer, a drama minister, a one-time RCF LASUSTECH media host, and a chef.