

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

Based on the poem by
Lord Alfred Tennyson
(1809-1892)

*There she weaves by night and day
A sacred¹ web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.*

*And moving across a window² clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.*

*Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.*

1. Magic was the word used in the original work of Tennyson

2. Mirror was used in the original.

Chapter One



THE THREE FAMILIES

“Their houses stood side by side and their lives were so similar that whatever good happened under one roof always happened under the roofs of the others.”

Once upon a time, during the same time that the Lady of Shalott³ wove her web, there lived three weavers. Their houses stood side by side and their lives were so similar that whatever good thing happened under one roof always happened under the roof of the others. They wove the same patterns of cloth on their looms, and they each received the same amount of money for their webs.⁴ They sang the same songs, told the same tales, ate the same kind of soup from the same kind of bowls, and dressed in the same coarse goods of an undyed wool called hoden gray.

However, the three weavers were unlike as three weavers could possibly be. The first, named Dexter, insisted upon weaving all his webs to one exact length, regardless of the size of the man who would wear his mantle.⁵ Each of the webs the weaver wove was to be just long enough to make exactly one mantle.

3. **Lady of Shalott**, an Arthurian woman depicted in a poem by the same name from Lord Alfred Tennyson.

4. **Web**, the length of cloth woven in a loom.

5. **Mantle**, a loose sleeveless garment worn over other clothing, a cloak.

The second weaver, Elton, carelessly wove his web in any length that he happened to think was easiest. He would stretch or cut it afterward to make it fit whomever would purchase it. The webs he wove were of many different sizes and shapes, so much so that no two were ever the same.

The third weaver, Griffin, took painstaking care with each of the webs he wove. First he measured the man by the inches and the ells.⁶ Then he carefully compared his measurements to the notched silver yardstick that was his constant companion.

6. Ell, an old English measure for cloth of about 45 inches.

Chapter One

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Three Families

*“...they sang the same songs, told the same tales...
and dressed in the same coarse goods of hoddan gray.”*



1. As you have read through the story you have discovered many ways that the three families were alike. Comment on the similarities of their:

Houses: _____

Occupations: _____

Songs: _____

Food: _____

Tales: _____

Clothing: _____

2. *“But they were unlike as three weavers could possibly be.”* The differences between the three weavers’ lives are evident in their work and also in the lives of their

daughters. Did each of them do their work differently? Write anything that you have observed about the work they performed or their attitudes toward their work.

Weaver #1: Dexter

Weaver #2: Elton

Weaver #3: Griffin

Chapter One

FATHER'S BIBLE STUDY

The Three Families

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”

Genesis 1:31a



Even though these three fathers' families had similar occupations, lived in similar locations, and had similar family size and activities, we can see already that the fathers were very different in their approach to their weaving. They responded very differently to guarding their daughters' purity.

Since you have chosen to go through this book with your daughter, you obviously have a desire to train her in this area. As a father, you have the privilege and responsibility of not just telling your daughter what God's law forbids, but of teaching what His heart *was* in giving these commands. When your daughter understands her Heavenly Father's intention, she can obey with understanding, not because she should or must, but because she understands that it is for her own good that these standards were set in place.

BIBLE STUDY:

As you and your daughter progress through this book and cover the concepts on sexual purity, remember that:

1. God made everything, including sex, and called it good.
2. God designed sex to be enjoyed within certain well-prescribed boundaries.
3. God expects us to talk about these issues in a manner which is pleasing to Him and almost always contrary to the world's view.

Look up the following verses to discover God's view on these three points.

God made sex and called it good. While sexual purity may be an uncomfortable subject for fathers to talk about with their daughters, realize that we shouldn't be embarrassed to talk about what God was not embarrassed to create.

1. **Genesis 1:31; Genesis 2:24**

God designed sex to be enjoyed within the boundaries of marriage.

2. Hebrews 13:4; Proverbs 6:25-33; Titus 2:12-13

God expects us to discuss the subject in a *manner* in keeping with His view, not the world's.

3. Ephesians 5:3-4; Romans 13:13-14

ACTIVITY:

Take a few minutes to travel back in time to the day your daughter was born. What were your first thoughts? What responsibilities did you feel? What were your first moments like together? Write your daughter a letter about how you felt and what you thought of the day she was born.

Read the letter you wrote to your daughter after your Father and Daughter Bible study. Give the letter to her to put in her hope chest. If she doesn't have a hope chest, present her with a beautiful box or even a hope chest in which she can keep the three letters you will be writing her.