

The Consummation and Experiences of the Marriage

Song of Solomon 5 - 6

Song of Solomon 5:1-8 - *“I have come to my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk.*

Eat, O friends! Drink, yes, drink deeply, O beloved ones!

² *I sleep, but my heart is awake; it is the voice of my beloved!*

He knocks, saying, “Open for me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is covered with dew, my locks with the drops of the night.”

³ *I have taken off my robe; how can I put it on again? I have washed my feet; how can I defile them?*

⁴ *My beloved put his hand by the latch of the door, and my heart yearned for him.*

⁵ *I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the lock.*

⁶ *I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.*

⁷ *The watchmen who went about the city found me. They struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me.*

⁸ *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him I am lovesick!”*

Background Notes

At the end of chapter 4 the new bride invited Solomon to consummate the marriage. In chapter 5 the marriage was consummated (v1) and blessed by God Himself. These verses place God’s stamp of approval of sex within marriage, as God intended.

But when the honeymoon was over, it seems that a strain developed in the relationship. We don’t know the details, but when Solomon came to be with his wife (v2), she made an excuse, saying she had already gone to bed (v3), maybe with a headache, and she couldn’t be bothered to get up and open what appears to be a locked door (v4-5).

All, or parts, of chapters 5 and 6 may be a dream that the new bride had about the strained relationship, because in verse 2 she said, “I sleep but my heart is awake.” So either in the dream, or in actuality when the bride felt compassion for her husband and rose to open the door (v5), she found to her dismay that he had already turned away (v6). The myrrh on the door handle was a perfume or spice that was sometimes associated with lovemaking.

In verses 6-7 (in the dream or in actuality), the Shulamite went out searching for Solomon, but couldn’t find him. Thinking that she was mad or perhaps up to no good, the watchmen of the city struck her and took away her shawl.

As a result of the dream, or actually being unable to find Solomon, the Shulamite asked the daughters of Jerusalem to tell Solomon if they found him that she loves him (v8).

The daughters of Jerusalem asked the Shulamite why Solomon was so special to her. Why should they help look for him, and communicate her love for him?

Verse 9: *“What is your beloved more than another beloved, O fairest among women?*

What is your beloved more than another beloved, that you so charge us?”

Verses 10-16 contain his bride’s striking description of Solomon:

“My beloved is white and ruddy, chief among ten thousand.

11 His head is like the finest gold; his locks are wavy, and black as a raven.

12 His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.

13 His cheeks are like a bed of spices, banks of scented herbs.

His lips are lilies, dripping liquid myrrh.

14 His hands are rods of gold set with beryl.

His body is carved ivory inlaid with sapphires.

15 His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of fine gold.

His countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

16 His mouth is most sweet; yes, he is altogether lovely.

This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem!”

Doctrinal Points

1. Fellowship can be broken in a love relationship.

You’ve heard the expression: “True love never runs smoothly.” This is not a Bible verse, but it is a biblical-supported truth. Even Christian love relationships are not without problems, and if problems are not worked out, broken fellowship can be the result. This can take place in your marriage (as here in chapter 5), and also in your relationship with the Lord.

Remember, we mentioned that the Song of Solomon is about the true love relationship between King Solomon and his bride, but it illustrates the love relationship between God and His people and between Christ and His bride, the Church. This is the “traditional historical” view (not what is known as the “typical” view of the Song of Solomon). But because it describes the true love and marriage of a husband and wife, it is a “type” or illustration of the relationship between believers and the Lord. All marriages should reflect this true love relationship between Christ and the Church. How are we doing?

Just as a strained relationship and broken fellowship took place between the Shulamite and Solomon, so strained relationships and broken fellowship can take place in our love relationships, including our love relationship with the Lord. We’re not talking about salvation here, but about our fellowship with the Lord. Broken fellowship can take place in a love relationship. What do we do about strained love relationships and broken fellowship? That brings us to our second doctrinal point.

2. Fellowship can be restored in a love relationship.

Song of Solomon 6 - *“Where has your beloved gone, O fairest among women? Where has your beloved turned aside that we may seek him with you?”*

² *My beloved has gone to his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed his flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies.*

³ *I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine. He feeds his flock among the lilies.*

⁴ *O my love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners!*

⁵ *Turn your eyes away from me, for they have overcome me. Your hair is like a flock of goats going down from Gilead.*

⁶ *Your teeth are like a flock of sheep that have come up from the washing; every one bears twins, and none is barren among them.*

⁷ *Like a piece of pomegranate are your temples behind your veil.*

⁸ *There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number.*

⁹ *My dove, my perfect one, is the only one, the only one of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her. The daughters saw her and called her blessed; the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.*

¹⁰ *Who is she who looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, awesome as an army with banners?*

¹¹ *I went down to the garden of nuts to see the verdure of the valley, to see whether the vine had budded and the pomegranates had bloomed.*

¹² *Before I was even aware, my soul had made me as the chariots of my noble people.*

¹³ *Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon you!*

What would you see in the Shulamite— as it were, the dance of the two camps”

In chapter 6 the love relationship between Solomon and his wife had been restored. If chapter 6 was still part of the Shulamite’s dream, then in verses 11-13 she envisioned herself riding out of the royal gardens in Solomon’s personal chariot, leading Israel’s official and military chariots. The people were calling out to her to come back so that they could gaze on their queen, and Solomon replied that they should not look at his queen as just a beautiful woman.

Do we see anything in chapters 5-6 that are key to the restored love relationship between Solomon and the Shulamite wife? I think we do. In chapter 5 it is obvious that the Shulamite realized she had made a mistake and wanted to make things right.

Let me ask - in our love relationships, are we willing acknowledge that we make mistakes and want to get things right? What about our relationship with the Lord? Are we willing to acknowledge and confess our sins? 1 John 1:9 says, *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

Notice the positive way in which the Shulamite bride thought and spoke about Solomon at the end of chapter 5 and beginning of chapter 6, and then the positive way in which Solomon thought and spoke about his wife in the rest of chapter 6. There are no negatives. No grudges are held. All is forgiven! The husband and wife focus only on positive and attractive aspects of the other person. The love relationship was restored!

Even though we're not physically as beautiful as the Shulamite maiden or as handsome as King Solomon, the same principle for restoration and fellowship can - and should - be followed. **Concentrate on the positives!** By concentrating only on the good and attractive aspects of the other person, fellowship can be restored in a love relationship.

Practical Application

Think positive thoughts about fellow believers!

Solomon and his wife chose to not dwell on the negatives, but think and speak positively about one another. This attitude was a big key to the restored relationship! And in Philippians 4:8 the apostle Paul counseled believers to have this same outlook. This is how we should think about our fellow believers: *"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."*

Sometimes Philippians 4:8 has been used as a caution against viewing unhealthy movies or TV shows, or reading unhelpful literature. But **in the context**, the apostle Paul was **not** talking about movies or TV or literature! He was talking about **getting along with people!** He was discussing how to restore broken fellowship!

In the church at Philippi factions had developed. The believers differed and disagreed, and this had caused disunity and division and broken fellowship within the church. In Philippians 4:8 the apostle Paul urged the Philippians: Don't dwell on the negative traits of your fellow believers. Surely even those "disagreeable" believers have *some* positive traits! So - don't concentrate on how that brother or sister annoys you or disagrees with you. Instead, identify their good traits or actions, and think only about those things!

Here's a paraphrase of the verse **in its proper context**: "Whatever is **true** about one another, or **noble** about one another, or **just** about one another, or **pure** about one another, or **lovely** about one another, and whatever **good** things are reported about one another - if there's if there's **anything** worthy of praise (and surely there must be **something!**) – **think only about those good and positive things!**"

Although at times there will be problems to be worked out, and sometimes there must be confrontation and church discipline – still, as much as possible, **think only positive thoughts about your fellow believers!**