

# Song of Solomon 5 - Afterglow of the Wedding Night; Trouble in the Bedroom; A Husband's Most Basic Needs

## III. Wedding (3:6—5:1)

### (2) Consummation of the marriage (Song 4:1—5:1)

#### (B) Marital lovemaking (Song 4:12—5:1)

(c) Consummation of the marriage (5:1a)

(d) Writer's concluding blessing upon the consummation of the marriage (5:1b)

## IV. The continuing marriage (Song 5:2—8:3)

### (1) Resolution of conflict within marriage (Song 5:2—6:13)

#### (A) Conflict (Song 5:2—6:3)

(a) Bride rejects husband's sexual advances (5:2-4)

(b) Bride's change of heart is to no avail due to her husband's departure (5:5-6a)

(c) Lovesick bride seeks her husband (5:6b-8)

(d) Bride extols her husband's handsomeness to the daughters of Jerusalem (5:9-16)

## Song of Solomon 5

### (2) Consummation of the marriage (Song 4:1—5:1)

#### (B) Marital lovemaking (Song 4:12—5:1)

(c) Consummation of the marriage (5:1a)

(d) Writer's concluding blessing upon the consummation of the marriage (5:1b)

**1** "I have come into **my garden, my** sister, **my** bride; I have gathered **my** myrrh along with **my** balsam. I have eaten **my** honeycomb with **my** honey; I have drunk **my** wine with **my** milk. **Eat, friends; Drink and drink deeply, lovers.**"

**1** "I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. Eat, friends; Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers."

**1** I've come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I've gathered my myrrh with my spices. I've eaten my honeycomb with my honey. I've drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, friends!

Drink and become drunk with love.

**1** I am come into my garden, my sisterbride: 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, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

- The marriage has been consummated...and they were not disappointed

— They had planned for this event, saved themselves for it, studied up on it, and talked about it. All of their time and effort has been rewarded.

— Their lovemaking had been good. She invited him to come into her, and he did. He no doubt hoped for many more times together just like this, so he romantically and tenderly expressed the pleasure she has given to him.

- "...my" [9x!] - in this one verse, Solomon uses the term "my" 9x!

— Notice that he uses this possessive *after*, not before, their lovemaking

- "...my garden" - his bride invited Solomon to come into "his garden" (4:16); now Solomon calls his bride "my garden"

- "...Eat, friends; Drink and drink deeply, lovers" - there are numerous interpretations of who is speaking here, encouraging both Solomon and his bride to indulge and enjoy their sex lives

— Some believe it is the friends of the couple, but the intimate details shared here rule that out. Others believe it is the "wind" from 4:16. It is definitely not the couple, since they are the ones being encouraged.

— Most likely this is an encouragement from God Himself, the unseen but present guest in their bedroom. He has observed all that had happened that night, and He gives the couple His unabated encouragement and approval.

— He endorses and gives hearty approval to all that had taken place that night. Two of His own have experienced love in all the beauty and fervor that God intended when He created sex. In fact, He urges them to do it more.

— "friends" - God called the couple his "friends." He loves them and He loves what He sees.

— Loving your husband or wife can become an act of worship. As a husband and wife lie together in the afterglow of sex, the most natural thing to do is to offer praise and thanksgiving to God for the beauty and glory of our sexual joy and satisfaction.

### **Sexual Initiation**

Studies have shown that sexual satisfaction was greater in relationships in which both partners initiated sex equally, or at least when the woman sometimes initiates sex. The reason why many couples fall into the pattern of only the husband initiating could be the idea that men pursue and woman should be pursued. Or possibly women are less

comfortable initiating sex. Or, that women use more subtle, indirect clues to initiate sexual activity, which are not noticed.

Women who initiate sex more frequently are often more sexually satisfied. A woman who initiates sex will stimulate her partner's sex drive and his desire for her, which helps drive this pattern. Most men like it when their wife initiates sex.

#### IV. The continuing marriage (Song 5:2—8:3)

##### (1) Resolution of conflict within marriage (Song 5:2—6:13)

##### (A) Conflict (Song 5:2—6:3)

##### (a) Bride rejects husband's sexual advances (5:2-4)

**2** "I was asleep but my heart was awake. A voice! My beloved was knocking: 'Open to me, **my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one!** For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the dew drops of the night.'

**2** "I was asleep but my heart was awake. A voice! My beloved was knocking: 'Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.'

**2** I was asleep, but my heart was awake. There's a sound! My beloved is knocking. "Open up for me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my perfect one. For my head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night."

**2** I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

- The Shulammitte was in bed, asleep or half asleep, tossing and turning out of anxiety and disappointment. The problem was: he was late again. It was likely around or after midnight.

— The text indicates that she may have been hoping for or expecting a romantic evening of intimacy and sex. However, because Solomon wasn't home, her desires were not met.

— Solomon probably had to work late, or he had some other outside-the-home commitment that he had to attend to

— On this particular evening, work won out over wife, and the stage was set for a confrontation in the bedroom

- Husbands and wives usually occupied separate bedrooms in the ancient near east

— Solomon came home and was tired, but not too tired. He was in need of both emotional and physical support and intimacy with his wife after a long, hard day

— The Shulammitte had not yet learned that for her husband, the key to a happy marriage is emotional support and an active sex life. But sometimes things just don't come together in the bedroom as we hope.

- Solomon's approach with his wife is gentle and sensitive. Perhaps he sensed some tension. Maybe the locked door was his first clue? He uses four names of affection toward

her:

- "...my sister" - emphasizes their friendship and the permanency of their relationship (Cf. 4:9)
- "...my darling" - speaks to the one in whom I delight and take pleasure. It is often used in the context when he is acknowledging and reaffirming her beauty (Cf. 1:9; used a total of 9x, all by Solomon)
- "...My dove" - perhaps a pet name, describing her gentleness (Cf. 2:14)
- "...my perfect one" - means "my flawless one"; the one he knew was his, and his alone

3 **"I have taken off my dress, How can I put it on *again*? I have washed my feet, How can I dirty them *again*?"**

3 "I have taken off my dress, How can I put it on *again*? I have washed my feet, How can I dirty them *again*?"

3 "I've taken off my clothes— am I supposed to put them on again? I've washed my feet— am I supposed to get them dirty again?"

3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

- His wife was perhaps upset, certainly she was hurting, because her most basic needs was not met: time, talk, tenderness, and touch

- Time: the currency of a relationship; clearing space just for her = she is valuable to you
- Talk: this is how she connects with you; it is also one way she handles stress and processes anxiety
- Tenderness: it feeds her soul when she is nourished and knows that she is cherished
- Touch: non-sexual, affectionate touch is crucial to a wife. If she only receives this as a prelude to sex, she will begin to feel like a marital prostitute.

- Whether he meant to or not (and he likely didn't), Solomon failed these four tests in the eyes of his wife

— However, the response of the Shulammitte to her husband is not justified; it is selfish and insensitive to the fragility of the male ego

— An evening that once held promise for both of them is about to go down the drain

- "I have taken off my dress, How can I put it on *again*? - suggests that she is laying under the sheets completely naked

— There could be a little dig here at Solomon...she is hinting at what he missed because he stayed out too late

— In essence she is saying, My comfort is more important than your needs or desires. I waited, it's now late, too bad so sad. If you can't get home at a decent hour, don't expect any special attention from me.

- "...I have washed my feet" - washing the feet was a custom before eating a meal or going to bed. Having to get up, put her clothes on, and get her feet dirty (and thus wash them again) was too much trouble.

— Self-centeredness is a deadly sin; it will destroy anything that get in its path. It also never has a true and accurate picture of reality.

— Selfishness is death to a relationship. It never builds up, it always tears down. It is unrealistic and harmful. Selfishness is sin, and it is almost always filled with regret.

4 **"My beloved** extended his hand through the opening, And **my feelings were stirred for him.**

4 "My beloved extended his hand through the opening, And my feelings were aroused for him.

4 My beloved reached out his hand for the latch. My feelings for him were aroused.

4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.

- "My beloved" - the Shulamite calls Solomon "my beloved" 6x in v2-8 and 4x in v9-10

- "...my feelings were stirred for him" - she is angry at him, but she still loves him. His tender words have worked their way into her heart.

- Now Solomon, a typical male, follows up with one last advance...

(b) Bride's change of heart is to no avail due to her husband's departure (5:5-6a)

5 **"I arose to open to my beloved;** And my hands dripped with myrrh, And my fingers with drops of myrrh, On the handles of the bolt.

5 "I arose to open to my beloved; And my hands dripped with myrrh, And my fingers with liquid myrrh, On the handles of the bolt.

5 I got up to open the door, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handle of the lock.

5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

- As she walks to unlock the door...

- "I" - emphatic in the Hebrew, meaning that she now wants to make things right

- "...arose to open to my beloved" - after being touched by his kindness, she moves into action

(c) Lovesick bride seeks her husband (5:6b-8)

6 "I opened to my beloved, But my beloved had turned away *and* had gone! My heart went out *to him* as he spoke. I searched for him but I did not find him; I called him but he did not answer me.

6 "I opened to my beloved, But my beloved had turned away *and* had gone! My heart went out *to him* as he spoke. I searched for him but I did not find him; I called him but he did not answer me.

6 I opened the door for my beloved, but my beloved had turned away; he was gone! My very life went out when he departed. I searched for him, but couldn't find him. I called out to him, but he didn't answer.

6 I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

- His bride arose and was now ready, but Solomon had left in frustration. Her timing to put away her selfishness and meet her husband's needs was too late.

— A husband's need run much deeper than sex. There are four things a husband longs to receive from his wife:

(1) Being his cheerleader - a man thrives on his wife's approval and praise

(2) Being his champion - a wife's respect and encouragement lifts a man's spirit and self-worth

(3) Being his companion - a man wants his wife to be his best friend

(4) Being his complement - a woman is necessary to complete a man

- An unmarried person is said to have "lonely nights by peaceful days." A married man longs for both peaceful days and intimate nights. If he does not receive them, he may walk away (withdraw), even out of the relationship. This was Solomon's response on this occasion.

— A wounded husband may walk, or he may not talk. Wounded husbands often go into a shell, they will not fight their wives physically or verbally. They walk, and they won't talk. Most husbands don't want to spend their lives fighting, so they start withdrawing.

7 "The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me, They struck me *and* wounded me; The guards of the walls took **my shawl** away from me.

7 "The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me, They struck me *and* wounded me; The guardsmen of the walls took away my shawl from me.

7 The watchmen making their rounds through the city found me. They beat me, they bruised me. Those guarding the walls took my cloak from me.

7 The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.

- The Shulammitte now regretted her decision toward selfishness; she is disappointed in herself what the pain she has inflicted on her husband

— She is communicating the pain she feels, not from her mate but from herself, and likely also the Holy Spirit

— If our spouse injures or wrongs us in some way, we should give God some time to work in their heart. He will always do a better job than our complaining, whining, fact checking, etc...

- "...my shawl" - her veil; she feels as if everything that is valuable and important to her is gone

— With Solomon away, God has worked in her heart. Distance has made the heart grow fonder. Without the distraction of a complaining, nagging, griping mate, God has done what only He can do

— The stage is now set for reconciliation and reunion...

8 "Swear to me, you **daughters of Jerusalem**, If you find my beloved, As to what you will tell him: For **I am lovesick.**"

8 "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, If you find my beloved, As to what you will tell him: For I am lovesick."

8 I charge you, young women of Jerusalem, "If you find my beloved, what are you to tell him? Tell him that I'm weak with love."

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.

- "...daughters of Jerusalem" - the chorus group that appears throughout the book

— Here, they are called by the Shulammite and charged as solemn witnesses to what she is about to say

- "...I am lovesick" - the opposite of love is not hate, it is indifference

— The Shulammite was indifferent and selfish in her anger and refusal of intimacy with her husband. However, after the Lord had worked on her heart, her love for him awakens.

— She tells the daughters of Jerusalem that she can't last another day without him. I am not too weak or disinterested in making love to him, in fact I could not want him more right now. The only remedy to my anguish is him.

— It's not how much a couple loves each other, it's how you handle conflicts when they arise that determines the success of your marriage

(d) Bride extols her husband's handsomeness to the daughters of Jerusalem (5:9-16)

9 "What kind of beloved is your beloved, O most beautiful among women? What kind of beloved is your beloved, That you make us swear in this way?"

9 "What kind of beloved is your beloved, O most beautiful among women? What kind of beloved is your beloved, That thus you adjure us?"

9 What is so special about your beloved, most beautiful of women? What is so special about your beloved, that you charge us like this?

9 What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

- The daughters of Jerusalem respond to the loving words of the Shulammite (v8). They acknowledge that, in her view, he is better than any other.

In order to experience marriage the way God intended, we must grow to know each other on the most intimate of levels. A wife must understand the unique needs of her husband, and a husband must discover the unique needs of his wife, as a woman (see notes on 6:3). A wife needs to put her husband where her heart is. A husband needs to love his wife. We do this by learning some of the most basic needs that are the essence of who our spouse is. For a man, there are five. For a woman, there are at least seven.

The Shulammite is growing in her knowledge of Solomon. Their relationship is maturing. They hit a bump in the road (5:2-8), but they refused to let that sidetrack them. Out of this conflict, they each have a better understanding of the other and a greater commitment to move forward.

### **The Husband's Most Basic Needs**

(1) Admiration and respect (5:10-15; Eph 5:33b)

(2) Sexual fulfillment (5:16; 6:2)

(3) Home support (6:3)

(4) An attractive wife (6:4-9; Cf. 7:1-9)

(5) A best friend (5:16)

**10** "My beloved is dazzling and reddish, Outstanding among ten thousand.

**10** "My beloved is dazzling and ruddy, Outstanding among ten thousand.

10 My beloved is dazzling, with a dark and healthy complexion, outstanding among ten thousand.

10 My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

11 "His head is *like* gold, pure gold; His locks are *like* clusters of dates *And* black as a raven.

11 "His head is *like* gold, pure gold; His locks are *like* clusters of dates *And* black as a raven.

11 His head is pure gold, his hair is wavy, black like a raven.

11 His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.

12 "His eyes are like doves Beside streams of water, Bathed in milk, *And* perched in *their* setting.

12 "His eyes are like doves Beside streams of water, Bathed in milk, *And* reposed in *their* setting.

12 His eyes are like doves by streams of water, bathed in milk, mounted like jewels.

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

13 "His cheeks are like a bed of balsam, Banks of herbal spices; His lips are lilies Dripping with drops of myrrh.

13 "His cheeks are like a bed of balsam, Banks of sweet-scented herbs; His lips are lilies Dripping with liquid myrrh.

13 His cheeks are like beds of spices, like towers of perfume. His lips are lilies, dripping with liquid myrrh.

13 His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

14 "His hands are rods of gold Set with topaz; His abdomen is panels of ivory Covered with sapphires.

14 "His hands are rods of gold Set with beryl; His abdomen is carved ivory Inlaid with sapphires.

14 His hands are rods of gold, set with beryl. His stomach is carved ivory, inlaid with sapphires.

14 His hands are as rods of gold set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

15 "His thighs are pillars of alabaster Set on pedestals of pure gold; His appearance is like Lebanon, Choice as the cedars.

15 "His legs are pillars of alabaster Set on pedestals of pure gold; His appearance is like Lebanon Choice as the cedars.

15 His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of pure gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice like its cedars.

15 His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

A husband longs for and needs his wife's admiration and respect more than anything else. This means that she understands and appreciates both his value and his achievements more than anyone else. She reminds him of his gifts and abilities and helps him in the area of self-confidence. She is his biggest fan and he is her hero. She is proud of her husband,

not out of duty, but as an expression of genuine and sincere admiration for the man she loves and has chosen to spend her life with. She sees her husband as a gift from God. The Shulammitte addresses her husband's need for admiration and respect in v10-15 with a catalogue of praise of both his appearance and his character. A great woman can take a mediocre man and raise him to the level of greatness. But a not-so-great woman can take a great man and pull him down to mediocrity. Women who want to be treated like queens will treat their husbands like kings.

16 **"His mouth is *full of sweetness*. And he is wholly desirable. This is my beloved and **this is my friend**, You daughters of Jerusalem."**

16 "His mouth is *full of sweetness*. And he is wholly desirable. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

16 His mouth is sweetness, and all of him is desirable. This is my beloved, this is my friend, young women of Jerusalem!

16 His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

- "His mouth is *full of sweetness*" - based on v13, it is clear that she has in mind the pleasure that his mouth brings to her physically, through his kisses (and other things) — But it surely also refers to the words that proceed from his mouth. His words were sweetness to her, they were digested easily and were enjoyable.

— A woman needs intimate, heart-to-heart conversation. She needs a man who will listen to her thoughts about the events of her day with sensitivity, interest, and concern. Daily conversations with her conveys a husband's desire to understand her and to relate with her.

- "...this is my friend" - the Shulammitte is learning that while her husband may not always act like it, he wants and needs her to be his best friend

— One way a wife goes about doing this is to develop mutual interests with her husband. Discover activities that your husband enjoys, and seek to become proficient in them. As she works at becoming his best friend, he will repeatedly associate her with the activities he enjoys the most.

Researchers differ about the number one need for a man. Many say sexual fulfillment, but many others believe it is admiration and respect. However, the two are intimately connected. Why? Because it's impossible for a man to feel that his wife admires and respects him, yet doesn't desire him sexually. His ability to attract her and satisfy her sexually is essential to his sense of self-worth and his need for admiration and respect. The Shulammitte understood this, so she worked at becoming an expert sexual partner for Solomon. She studied her own desires and responses to understand what brought out the

best in her. She also communicated this information to her husband to ensure that their sex life would be satisfying and enjoyable.