



gracefellowship

Song of Solomon 4
The Honeymoon
March 15, 2020

:: Song of Solomon 4

He

1 How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are doves. Your hair is like a flock of goats descending from the hills of Gilead.

2 Your teeth are like a flock of sheep just shorn, coming up from the washing. Each has its twin; not one of them is alone.

3 Your lips are like a scarlet ribbon; your mouth is lovely. Your temples behind your veil are like the halves of a pomegranate.

4 Your neck is like the tower of David, built with courses of stone ; on it hang a thousand shields, all of them shields of warriors.

5 Your breasts are like two fawns, like twin fawns of a gazelle that browse among the lilies.

6 Until the day breaks and the shadows flee, I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense.

7 You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you.

8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, come with me from Lebanon. Descend from the crest of Amana, from the top of Senir, the summit of Hermon, from the lions' dens and the mountain haunts of leopards.

9 You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace.

10 How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much more pleasing is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your perfume more than any spice!

11 Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue. The fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

12 You are a garden locked up, my sister, my bride; you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain.

13 Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, with henna and nard,

14 nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with every kind of incense tree, with myrrh and aloes and all the finest spices.

15 You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water streaming down from Lebanon.

She

16 Awake, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow on my garden, that its fragrance may spread everywhere. Let my beloved come into his garden and taste its choice fruits.

:: Song of Solomon 5:1

He

1 I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk.

Eat, friends, and drink; drink your fill of love.

Today we are going to follow the bride and groom from their wedding day to their wedding night. We need to understand that this is written as the ideal sexual encounter. Sex isn't always ideal, and it isn't always fireworks. And that's okay. There are many purposes and occasions for sex where one or both people don't have a life-altering experience! But this section of Scripture gives us a glimpse at the ideal sexual encounter between two people who are passionately prepared to make love to one another on the day of their wedding.

Whereas the rest of the book often sees the woman take the lead and speak first, in this occasion Solomon speaks up. Just like a guy...ready to take the lead when it comes to sex! But remember, this is God's ideal setting and He is showing us that while sex can and should be mutually initiated, men are typically more of the initiating party when it comes to sexual relationship.

You've probably heard it said before that when it comes to sex men are like microwaves and women are like crock-pots. That is a general truth Solomon understands, so as he enters the honeymoon suite with his new bride he takes his time with her and is gentle with her.

Before we jump in I want to mention that today is my wife's 40th birthday! Her Mom and Sister are here as well as two of her friends from TX. And we are talking about sex! What could possibly go wrong? If anyone wants to trade places with me up here, now is the time to volunteer!

He

1 How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful!

The first thing to note is that he is talking about her- not her body! When we learn that we are making love to a soul, not a body, sex becomes everything God designed it to be. She is beautiful to him. They have experienced the flame of "Reya" love (friendship/companion/soulmate), the flame of "Ahava" love (love of

the will, deep love that is unquenchable) and they are about to partake in “Dod” love (physical/sexual love)- defined as carousing, rocking, or fondling. When we combine all three of these loves we learn to love the soul of our spouse and we understand the beauty of marital intimacy when two become one.

So, he begins by talking about her soul. Now he is going to talk about her body.

Your eyes behind your veil are doves.

He begins with her eyes because this is probably all he can see of her at this point. Traditional dress of middle eastern women in this culture covered their entire body. But the veil she is wearing from the wedding is able to be seen through, almost like a tease- this is the first hint of what we might consider lingerie she has prepared for their first night together.

Your hair is like a flock of goats descending from the hills of Gilead.

Men, don't say this to your wife! Please. Find something that fits our time period! He has removed her head covering and lets her hair down. Complimenting her all the while.

2 Your teeth are like a flock of sheep just shorn, coming up from the washing. Each has its twin; not one of them is alone.

She has all her teeth and he's pretty excited by that! It's a different time period, for sure!

3 Your lips are like a scarlet ribbon; your mouth is lovely. Your temples behind your veil are like the halves of a pomegranate.

Her lips and cheeks are full of color, flush with excitement.

She may be blushing as he speaks lovingly over her and removes her head covering.

Remember, she has had some self-image issues, so this can be a nerveracking time for a virtuous young woman. He is a compassionate husband and is speaking love to her as he slowly warms her up to the idea of physical intimacy. It's also important to remember, he is still talking about her face! He is setting a pace that is in her favor to show her love without pushing her to be physical.

4 Your neck is like the tower of David, built with courses of stone; on it hang a thousand shields, all of them shields of warriors.

The Tower of David was a fortress that provided protection for people and they would hang shields on it to make it glisten in the sun. She is probably wearing a neckless that is ornate around her neck. But this is also speaking to her character.

The neck symbolized character in their culture. You could be stiff-necked and rebellious/stubborn, or a neck bent over was a sign of humiliation (hanging your head in shame). **Solomon is saying to his wife that she is a picture of noble, strong character.** *(Put these on the same slide with a delay between them)*

I hope you're paying attention to how slow Solomon is moving as he shows value to his wife on their wedding night. He doesn't just want sex; he wants her. If you just want to have sex, that is not a good reason to get married! God has put another human being in your life with intrinsic worth and value. When you think about the person you are engaging in sexual intimacy with you need to know that person is a son or daughter of God. That'll change the way you think about sex with your spouse: Imagine God as your Father in Law! I'm eternally grateful my Father in Law wasn't around the day after our wedding night asking me how I treated his daughter! But our heavenly Father does see and know all of our comings and goings- even in the bedroom. And He loves His kids and wants what is best for us. He doesn't just want you to be sexually fulfilled; He wants two individuals to become one through the bound of intimacy on a soul level.

In covenant marriage God desires two souls, not just two bodies, to become one.

This is why it's important to remind you of something I said last week: The Bible never says sex is bad! The Bible will tell us over and over again that sexual *immorality* is bad. When we take sex outside the covenant of marriage we abuse a great gift God has given us. Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus about abusing sex. As he admonishes Christians in the church, he writes:

:: Ephesians 5:1-3

1 Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children

2 and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

God's gift of sex is abused in countless ways in our culture. Don't give in to the temptation to engage in pornography or to take sex outside of marriage. When you do you seek to only use the glory of a person's body for your satisfaction, not for unification.

At this point, Solomon has removed any head covering she may have been wearing and he begins to undress his wife.

5 Your breasts are like two fawns, like twin fawns of a gazelle that browse among the lilies.

I really like how Matt Chandler describes this in his book, *The Mingling of Souls*, so I'm going to read that to you.

(Page 124-125)

By the way, the only body part in all of Scripture that God gives a command about are breasts!

:: Proverbs 5:18-19 (Holman Christian Standard Bible)

18 Let your fountain be blessed, and take pleasure in the wife of your youth. 19 A loving doe, a graceful fawn- let her breasts always satisfy you; be lost in her love forever.

So, ladies, when it comes to men's infatuation with breasts, we are just doing what God told us to!

But men, only your wife's breasts! Otherwise, keep your eyes and hands to yourself!

6 Until the day breaks and the shadows flee, I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense.

7 You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you.

Basically, he is saying, "I want to be with you all night!" Get comfortable, we're going to be here for a while!

Before we go on, I want you to see something. He has given her seven compliments: Eyes, Hair, Teeth, Lips/Mouth, Temples/Cheeks, Neck, Breasts. Seven is the number of perfection or completion in the Hebrew culture. Before he has ever laid a hand on her he has loved her well and showed her that she is perfect in his eyes- there is no flaw in her!

8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, come with me from Lebanon. Descend from the crest of Amanah, from the top of Senir, the summit of Hermon, from the lions' dens and the mountain haunts of leopards.

Solomon gives her an invitation to enjoy their sexual intimacy. He has verbally disarmed her, removing any sense of insecurity she may have had and now he invites her to be sexually uninhibited. He wants her to be transported, like an out of body experience as they make love. The invitation is to leave the past hurts she has experienced and the difficult things in her life to be with him.

When Solomon invites his wife to enjoy herself and take in the joy of intimacy she doesn't turn him down.

He continues...

9 You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace.

10 How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much more pleasing is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your perfume more than any spice!

This is the first time in the book he addresses her as his bride/wife and he reassures her that she has his heart. She is intoxicating to him and the addition of sexual intimacy has only enhanced that.

11 Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue. The fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

The milk and honey are under her tongue...which means French kissing pre-dates France! They have moved ahead in their foreplay to making out with one another. But again, he isn't rushing, so he speaks again to his wife.

12 You are a garden locked up, my sister, my bride; you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain.

13 Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, with henna and nard,

14 nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with every kind of incense tree, with myrrh and aloes and all the finest spices.

15 You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water streaming down from Lebanon.

First he says she is a garden locked up. Her body has been referred to as a garden in previous chapters. He says she has come to this moment as a virgin- she has been able to maintain her purity coming into their honeymoon, but now he is asking her to unlock the garden.

Not everyone gets to have the same testimony as our two lovers, making it to their wedding night as virgins. Some people live with guilt and shame over sexual sin from their past. This is where the gospel is so powerful and the work of Jesus speaks to your life:

If you have sexual sin in your life remember:

- **Where forgiveness is sought forgiveness can be had!**
- **Where repentance is present grace abounds!**

This may sound weird, but in a lot of ways God sees us the same way Solomon saw his wife at this point- she is naked before, completely exposed and he reassures her, I love everything about you. God sees you. Nothing you have done or are doing to misuse His gift of sex scares Him away. He sees all your sin and says, "I love you anyway. I choose you. Come let me heal you."

What if your purity was taken from you? That isn't a reason for you seeking forgiveness or repenting, but you need to know that God's grace abounds to you as well and your Heavenly Father knows your hurt and pain and He is able to bring healing to the wounds you have experienced if you'll run into His arms. He loves you.

Getting back to our text we see in verses 13-14 Solomon continues the garden imagery. Remember from Ecclesiastes that Solomon is an incredible botanist. He planted gardens that were world famous. But the garden elements he describes here don't grow together. You wouldn't find these things in one garden. In other words he is saying she is the perfect, magical garden of his dreams.

Now that Solomon has taken the time to lovingly prepare his wife for intercourse she finally speaks up.

She

16 Awake, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow on my garden, that its fragrance may spread everywhere. Let my beloved come into his garden and taste its choice fruits.

Why does she start talking about the wind?

North wind = strength. She is essentially saying, "I hope you plan to keep going!"

South wind = gentleness. She basically tells him what she hopes for their first sexual encounter. She's saying, "I'm ready- you don't have to hold back! But I hope this takes some time and I hope it's tender."

This is an invitation to him to make love to her. Notice that she invites him, it isn't forced and he didn't push sex on her until she was mentally and physically ready. She first says, "blow on *my garden*", then follows that by saying, "*Let me beloved come into his garden...*"

She recognizes that their lives are wound together in a bond which necessitates two lovers no longer see their bodies as theirs alone, but meant to be shared with their spouse.

Paul addressed this idea in the New Testament in 1 Corinthians:

:: 1 Corinthians 7:3-4

3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.

4 The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife.

Solomon's bride says, "My body is yours!" They make love to one another and then listen to how Solomon speaks in what our Bibles list as Chapter 5 verse 1:

He

1 I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk.

Eat, friends, and drink; drink your fill of love.

Some commentators actually say this is God speaking His blessing over their love and in essence over all marital love. This is the stamp of approval! God wants you to have great sex! No one takes greater pleasure than our Father in

Heaven when we enjoy the gifts He gives to us in the way He intends them to be used. We are told to drink our fill of love- in other words, this is a gift that is meant to be experienced continually. In the same way that you are not satisfied by one meal or one drink, God doesn't expect you to only experience this gift once and then shelve it! He tells us to drink our fill and to enjoy this gift to it's fullest.

You may have noticed there were no homework assignments in the message this week. I'll let you married people figure out how to best use your free time! I love you! Let's pray.

Life Group Discussion Questions:

Ice Breaker: Where did you go on your honeymoon? Why was that place special to you? For singles: Do you have a location in mind where you would like to go on your honeymoon?

Read Song of Solomon 4 (and 5:1) as a group. Have men read the "He" parts and a woman read the "She" parts.

You may want to consider what it would look like to have this discussion with men in one room and women in another. Depending on the make up of your group, people may feel more free to discuss without the opposite sex present.

1. Having read the text and/or listened to the sermon this week, what do you think God was trying to communicate to us by including this chapter in Scripture?
2. In verses 1-5 Solomon spent a lot of time telling his new wife the things he loved about her without ever touching her. When you got married what were you looking for in the character of a spouse? If you're single, what qualities are you looking for in a spouse?
3. How might Solomon have written the compliments about his wife from verses 1-5 if he were writing today? What would those things sound like in today's language?
4. What role should the church play (and should Christians play) in talking about sex and sexuality in our culture?
5. How can Christians show God's love to someone who has not pursued sexual purity?

Share with your group that if anyone is struggling with sexual sin or healing from sexual abuse and needs help addressing it, they can talk with you/your spouse, or encourage them to set up a time to talk with Joel or Andy.