

The Honeymoon is Over: The Anatomy of Marital Conflict
Song of Solomon 5:2-6:3

I. A conflict in marriage. (v.2-3)

- A. The conflict occurs in a dream (v.2)
 - “This dream...is caused by a problem in the marriage relationship resulting from a lack of sexual adjustment. Shulamite dreams of refusing Solomon’s sexual advances and of losing and finding him again. This is only a dream and all the particulars need not have actually occurred, but a very real problem makes itself evident in the dream.”¹
- B. The conflict is sparked by her rejecting Solomon’s sexual advances (v.3)

II. A change of mind. (v.4-6a)

- A. His persistence changes her mind (v.4)
- B. Her procrastination causes Solomon to leave (v.5-6a)
 - “When he got no response, Solomon walked away. He no doubt felt rejected.”²
 - a. Conflict:
 - 1. Conflict results when two people do not think alike.
 - 2. How one deals with conflict reflects the motivation of the heart. [Prov. 15:26, 23:9, 23:7a]
 - 3. One will either respond maturely [biblically] or in anger. Anger is a volitional response [thoughts, words, or deeds] caused by blocked goals, motivated by selfishness. [Lk. 15:25-32]

III. A correcting of misconduct. (v.6b-6:3)

- A. Shulamite searches for Solomon to make amends (v.6b)
- B. Shulamite runs into the first of two encounters (v.7-8)
 - o Watchmen (v.7)
 - “When she set out to look for him she was found and beaten by the city watchmen. In her first dream the watchmen helped her look for her lover (3:3), but this time they mistook her for a criminal. In her dream this action by the watchmen may indicate that she was to blame for her separation from her lover. More importantly the dream symbolized the pain of separation brought about through her selfishness and the dream dramatized her need of the lover for her well-being and protection.”³
 - o Daughters of Jerusalem (v.8-9)
- C. Shulamite describes Solomon’s characteristics. (v.10-16)
 - “This is an admiration song, the longest in the book sung by the woman in praise of the man. In responding to the Jerusalem girls, she rediscovers her love for him.”⁴
 - a. She did not complain to anyone about Solomon [Phil. 2:14; Eph 4:29]

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- “Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offences, and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten. But where love is lacking, every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding, and conflicts abound – to Satan’s perverse delight.”⁵
- D. Shulamite receives help (6:1)
- “Shulamite’s description of Solomon has aroused their interest, and they are now eager to help her in her search for him. Indeed this is no ordinary husband! They now see why Solomon is so special to her above all the others.”⁶
- E. Shulamite recovers her lover (6:2-3)
- Love does not consider personal rights. “Telling our wives or husbands that we love them is not convincing if we continually get upset and angry at what they say and do. Telling our children that we love them is not convincing if we often yell at them for doing things that irritate us and interfere with our own plans. It does no good to protest, “I lose my temper a lot, but it’s all over in a few minutes.” So is a nuclear bomb. A great deal of damage can be done in a very short time. Temper is always destructive, and even small temper “bombs” can leave much hurt and damage, especially when they explode on a regular basis. Lovelessness is the cause of temper, and love is the only cure.”⁷

Points to Ponder:

1. Conflict is inevitable in marriage. Be quick to seek reconciliation.
2. Have an attitude of contrition if you sinned against your spouse. If not conflict will likely continue.
3. Seek to embrace, encourage, and elevate those traits in your spouse that first drew you to them.

¹ Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1983), 42-43.

² Tommy Nelson, *The Book of Romance: What Solomon Says About Love, Sex, and Intimacy* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 67.

³ Jack S. Deere, “Song of Songs,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1021.

⁴ Duane A. Garrett, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, vol. 14, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 413.

⁵ Wayne Grudem, Song of Solomon 5. accessed April 21, 2018.
http://www.preceptaustin.org/song_of_solomon_commentary_5

⁶ Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking*, 47.

⁷ John MacArthur, 1 Corinthians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 346.

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