



# Finer Grounds Bible Study

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## Song of Solomon

### Lesson 6: Remembering the Wedding Night

#### Before You Begin:

**Think back to one of the most intimate times you have had with your husband, not just physically, but emotionally as well. What made it so intimate? Why is it so memorable for you?**

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In the last lesson, we walked with Shulamith as she awoke from a terrible dream and began consoling herself with memories of her wedding and the commitment she and Solomon made to each other. It is only natural that the memories of her wedding also triggered memories of their wedding night. In this lesson we will gain an intimate, personal look into Solomon and Shulamith's wedding night. How she looked, how she felt, and how her husband responded to her. Solomon and Shulamith are both openly raw and vulnerable as they begin to explore and enjoy each other sexually for the first time.

#### Read 4:1-16a

Notice that this entire passage is a verbal dialogue. It is doubtful that Solomon and Shulamith are simply sitting still and looking at each other during this time. Most likely, this is what we indelicately refer to as "foreplay." They are touching and kissing each other, arousing each other sexually. Note how relaxed the environment is: there is no rush, they are both perfectly content

to take their time. They are also maintaining eye contact, as much of what Solomon says is a detailed description of Shulamith's appearance.

#### Think About It:

**Do you take your time when making love with your husband, or is it always a rush so you can move on to other things on your "to-do" list?**

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**When making love to your husband, do you allow him to visually enjoy your body?**

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This can be very difficult, as we are always quick to see our own flaws. However, it is also vitally important. It is no secret that most men are highly visual in their sexual arousal. When your husband is gazing at you while making love, he is not noting your flaws, he is noting the wonder of the woman God has blessed him with.

There is tremendous intimacy in maintaining eye contact while making love. More so than many women realize. The book, "Every Man's Battle" goes into great (and very informative) detail on the connection between sexual arousal and visual stimuli for most men. The truth, however, is that this type of eye contact can also be very uncomfortable for us, particularly if we



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are struggling in our marriage or feel very insecure physically or in our sexuality. Because of the intimacy it brings, eye contact can also bring a tremendous sense of vulnerability. In fact, some studies have demonstrated a direct link between sexual arousal and where a man's eyes are focused as he climaxes (this is how fetishes are created) (Weiss 2002). This means that if his eyes are locked on you as he climaxes, it creates a direct chemical link in his brain between you and his sexual desire, what a tremendous honor!

### Take Action:

The next time you make love with your husband, make a point of taking your time and maintaining eye contact as much as possible, taking special care to maintain eye contact through climax.

If you are insecure with your physical appearance to the extent that it is impacting your love-making, this is my challenge to you to do something about it! Dr. Willard F. Harley states in his book, "His Needs, Her Needs" that an attractive spouse is one of the top 5 emotional needs for most men. Granted, what each man views as attractive is going to be different, but put out the effort to be attractive for him, he is worth it!

When looking at this text, it seems odd that this was viewed as romantic, when most of us would be very offended to be compared to goats, pomegranates and towers. Yet for Shulammith, Solomon is offering her the greatest compliments of his day, comparing her to the most beautiful things he had seen. In this next section, we will briefly breakdown Solomon's metaphors and what they would have meant to Shulammith. It's

beautiful to note that Solomon begins with her eyes, and works his way down her body, enjoying every physical aspect that made her who she was, enjoying the fact that she was now his.

- Verse 1 – Solomon compares her eyes to doves, which we have previously discussed were a symbol of innocence and purity. He then compares her hair to a flock of goats on a mountain slope. These goats were different than our modern, American goats, they had long, wavy black hair (Petrillo 216). The sight of a mountain of long, wavy black hair blowing in a gentle breeze would certainly have been lovely to behold.
- Verse 2 – Her teeth are compared to a flock of shorn ewes. This indicates that her teeth were lovely, white, and straight, and that she had no teeth missing. Shulammith might have been a country girl forced to work outside, but she had taken pains with her personal hygiene and he has noticed her efforts and appreciates them.
- Verse 3 – Her lips are like a scarlet thread and her cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate. This is likely a reference to Shulammith wearing cosmetics, which would not have been uncommon at the time (Petrillo 2016).
- Verse 4 – Her neck is compared to a tower. There are multiple interpretations of this verse. Some maintain that she truly had a long, slender neck. However, others believe that this is more metaphorical than Solomon's other compliments. He is saying that she is lovely, yet strong. Her neck, and therefore her head, is held high.



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She carries herself with strength and dignity, and is strong enough to give him the emotional support that he needs. It is consistently understood that the shields are a reference to jewelry she is wearing (Dillow 1979 and Petrillo 2016).

- Verse 5 – Her breasts are compared to two fawns. The meaning here is multifaceted. He is saying that her breasts are lovely and symmetrical, yet this verse also provides evidence that there is physical contact transpiring as Solomon admires her beauty. This particular type of gazelle was considered a delicacy at Solomon's table, something that he greatly enjoyed the taste of (Dillow 1979).
- Verse 6 – Provides evidence that this was an entire evening dedicated to sexual intimacy. He longs to be with her all night, until the new day breaks.
- Verse 7 – Solomon sums up his admiration of her physical beauty by once again saying that she is all together beautiful. There is nothing about her that displeases him.
- Verse 8 – This is likely a reference to what we could call a Honeymoon. He is asking her to go away with him, to leave their everyday stresses behind and go to where they can find peace and focus on each other.
- Verse 9 – She is gazing back at him, returning look for look. It is clear that her equal desire for him is shining through her eyes as she looks upon her husband. The use of the word "sister" here is quite misleading. When combined with the word "bride," rather than being a

reference to the family relation of "sister," he is speaking to the lifelong, enduring relationship between the two of them.

- Verse 10 – Their time together is becoming increasingly intimate, and he is expressing the pleasure she is bringing to him and his desire for her. The reference to her "oils" is referring to her arousal, and her body preparing for intercourse. As women, this is hard for us to understand. When all works as it should, as we become sexually aroused our bodies produce a natural lubricant that allows intercourse without discomfort. This is how God, in his infinite wisdom, created us. Yet for many of us we can't help but view this as gross or smelly. However for Solomon, this evidence of her arousal excited him even more, and for most husbands it is the same way. We do not need to be ashamed of how God created us, and we certainly should not be insecure when it comes to our husbands enjoying how God created us for our mutual pleasure.
- Verse 11 – Shulammith has been kissing Solomon as he has enjoyed her body, and he is enjoying the taste of her. It is also possible that there are two meanings here, and Shulammith has been verbally appreciating Solomon as well. Yet another reminder of the power of words of affirmation in sexual intimacy. The word "garments" here is unique in Scripture, and not the word typically found for clothing in Scripture (Petrillo 2016). It is implied that Shulammith is wearing some



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type of lingerie that Solomon found highly attractive.

- Verse 12 – This is a direct reference to the fact that the Shulammite woman was a virgin on their wedding night. The imagery created by description of a locked garden is quite beautiful. In this day, gardens were walled, protected, and highly valued (Dillow 1979). A place of beauty, refuge, and peace. He is saying that her body is a thing of beauty that has been protected and cared for, just for him, that he can no delight in as her husband.
- Verses 13-15 – All three of these verses center on Solomon's enjoyment of her arousal. Her body is fragrant and inviting, and ready for intercourse, which she confirms in the next verse.
- Verse 16 – The speaker shifts from Solomon to the Shulammite. We know this because he has been referring to her body as a garden, and she now begs him to come and blow upon her garden. It appears that she has a good understanding of the anatomy of sexual intercourse, much more than I am afraid many young women do today. She is comparing him to the wind, and asking that he allow his spices to flow into her garden. This is an intimate request for intercourse, and she is telling him that she wants to feel him climax inside of her.

### Think About It:

**Solomon and Shulammith are very open, vulnerable, and verbal as they make love.**

**Which of these do you find the most difficult and why?**

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**In reading this detailed, intimate description of Solomon and Shulammith's wedding night, did it bring out any sexual struggles or insecurities that you need to discuss with your husband?**

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**What can you do to create a more emotionally intimate environment when making love with your husband?**

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### Take Action:

Take time this week to focus on verbal/visual intimacy with your husband. Whether or not sexual intimacy follows is irrelevant, take the time to focus on each other and verbally affirm each other physically and emotionally.

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Dillow, J. (1979). Solomon on sex. New York: T. Nelson.

Petrillo, D. Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon. Truth for Today Commentary, Searcy, AR. 2016.

Weiss, D. (2002). Sex, men and God. Lake Mary, Fla.: Siloam Press.