**Song of Songs 5:9-6:9**

**Daughters of Jerusalem to Bride**

**9**   What is your beloved more than another lover,

 O fairest among women?

 What is your beloved more than another lover,

 that so you adjure us?

**Bride to Daughters of Jerusalem**

**10** My beloved is dazzlingly ruddy,

 distinguished among ten thousand.

**11** His head is pure gold;

 His locks, palm leaves, black as a raven.

**12** His eyes are like doves beside streams of water,

 bathed in milk and reposed in their setting.

**13** His cheeks are a bed of balsam, a raised bed of spices.

 His lips are lilies, dripping with liquid myrrh.

**14** His hands are cylinders of gold set with jewels.

**15**   His legs are alabaster pillars set upon pedestals

 of fine gold.

 His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as the cedars.

**16** His mouth is sweetness,

 And all of him is wonderful.

 This is my beloved and this is my friend.

 O daughters of Jerusalem.

**Daughters of Jerusalem to Bride**

**6:1** Where has your beloved gone, O fairest among women?

 Where has your beloved turned, that we may

 Seek him with you?

**Bride to Daughters of Jerusalem**

 **2** My beloved has gone to his garden, to beds of balsam,

 to pasture his flock among the gardens

 and to gather lilies.

 **3** I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine-the one

 who pastures his flock among the lilies.

**King to Bride**

 **4** Fair you are, my darling, as Tirzah,

 lovely as Jerusalem,

 awe-inspiring as bannered hosts.

**5** (Turn your eyes from me for they arouse me.)

 Your hair is like a flock of goats which descend from Gilead.

**6** Your teeth are like a flock of young lambs,

 which have come up from the washing,

 all of which are paired,

 and not one among them is alone.

**7** Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate

 behind your veil.

**8** There are sixty queens and eighty concubines

 and maidens without number;

**9** (But)unique is she-my dove, my perfect one;

 unique is she to her mother;

 pure is she to the one who bore her.

 The daughters saw her and called her blessed;

 The queens and concubines praised her.

**Resolution and Reconciliation Called for**

 1. In this world, marriage without conflict is not in existence. But not every couple comes out of their marital conflict for a better marriage. When the newly wedded wife shows her indifference and selfish desire toward her husband, king Solomon, there is a strong possibility for Solomon to have his pride wounded. Then their relationship could have been deteriorated. King Solomon instead responds her with a patient love for her. But in reality they are still physically apart. However, by their attitudes they are moving towards a possible reconciliation especially on her part. In 5: 9-6:9, Song of Solomon introduces two necessary steps toward that reconciliation: Mental renewal of her appreciation of her husband; Actual search for her husband for a reconciliatory meeting.

2. Both steps toward this reconciliation are introduced by questions from women in king Solomon’s court in Jerusalem, the daughters of Jerusalem. The first question they ask is, “What is your beloved more than another lover?” Her answer reveals how much king Solomon really means to her life. Their second question to her is, “Where has your beloved gone?” Again, her answer reveals his whereabouts and sets the stage for their reconciliation and reunion. Indeed, the first question prepares her heart and mental attitude; the second one leads her to their reconciliatory meeting by her action.

**Acknowledging One’s Faults**

1. The root cause of their initial conflict is her ingratitude toward king Solomon’s dedicated love and devotion to her, his bride. Thus when the daughters of Jerusalem ask their first question, they give this young wife of king Solomon the encouragement and opportunity to recall and express her genuine appreciation of her newly wedded husband, king Solomon. Her description of king Solomon is full of her appreciation. It is her repentant confession of her sins of indifference and ingratitude. Nobody forces her to do so, but she does it all by herself. She knows king Solomon still loves her by leaving her his symbol of unchanging love on her doorknob while giving her time to reflect on his love for her as we have seen in 5:1-8. King Solomon’s such an unchanging love and devotion to her makes her encourage herself to return to him for a reunion that certainly king Solomon is ever ready for at the outset of this conflict. If she has any doubts about king Solomon’s unselfish love for her, she would not dare to venture to seek for the reunion. King Solomon’s readiness to forgive and accept her as what she is, is what God showed exactly in the Garden of Eden to the hiding first couple who were fallen from God’s grace.

2.       Now the more Shulamite woman describes about her husband, all the more she feels how ungrateful and selfish she has been toward him this night. She says, king Solomon is extremely handsome. King Solomon’s heart is pure and his love is exclusively dedicated to her. More handsome than ten thousand men in Israel is he. (v.10) His mind is full of wisdom more valuable than pure gold. And his hair is just showing his youthfulness and strength. (v.11) His eyes are soft, tender, and sober and clear. (v.12) They show his self-disciplined life thus far. They show her his character, the unchanging blessing and kindness toward her. He is so compassionate toward her when he held her cheeks to kiss her. His kisses are so sweet to her. (v.13) His hands, abdomen, and legs all show her his manly strength that shows his leadership over the nation, yet gentle toward her. His tall stature shows his strong character that couldn’t be shaken when adversity visits him. He is indeed quite an impressive young man. (vv.14-15) His words are spoken with kindness and considerate spirit. So she concludes how lovely her husband to her by saying, “All of him is WONDERFUL!” So, she proudly exclaims that no better friendship is found between her and king Solomon in his kingdom. (v.16)

**Forgive and Forget: Love in Action**

1.    In 6:1, Once again, king Solomon’s court women ask her a question as to her husband’s whereabouts. They even give their support to search for him with her. When we repent and ready to amend our wrongs, God shows us a sign of His approval by circumstances from time to time. Here king Solomon’s wife gets the support of the court women as a sign of God’s approval on her repentance. The wife answers them by a firm affirmation that her husband is always committed to their marriage relationship no matter what it costs him. She knows exactly where king Solomon is when he wants to talk with her alone, or when he wants to let her come to her own senses while he is patiently waiting for her with his unchanging love and devotion to her. (6:2-3) King Solomon’s shepherd like character shines here, as a good husband material for all young Christian men should cultivate. Any Christian husband is to be in the position of king Solomon after the type of God who is more than willing to forgive unconditionally and with self-sacrifice accept the fallen couple, Adam and his wife while they were hidden from God’s face.

 2.    The most amazing part of this process of reconciliation is found here in 6:4-9. When his wife comes to this specific place to meet him, king Solomon is wise enough how not to embarrass her nor add unnecessary quilt upon her repented heart. Thus he starts his praises of her without mentioning anything terrible she did to him a while ago. (6:4) Love not only forgives the wrongdoer but also forgets, and does not keep records of wrongdoings in the past (1 Corinthians 13:5). It is an act of love and an act of will on the part of who is harmed. On the part of the Shulamite woman, she might have any lingering apprehension due to her misbehavior to her husband that night. But once she recognizes her wrong and repents it, she acts on the basis of king Solomon’s love for her.

2.1.    King Solomon surprises her with a series of compliments. As the wisest person on earth, he does not forget what she did to him that night, but his love for her is a lot bigger than any harm she did to him. Thus he wills and acts to compliment her to make her forget her own embarrassing moment. Indeed, his compliments make her forget any lingering fear of rejection, scold, or guilt-ridden embarrassment.

2.2.    Furthermore, king Solomon is not taking advantage of her repentance by any means. Instead, he says, “Turn your eyes from me for they arouse me” (6:5). By saying so, he shows no interest in seizing this chance to his own benefit. Usually, a married couple does a love-making after a “fight” to make up for whatever they seemed to lose during their fight. Here king Solomon does not have any inclination to do so for his own satisfaction. His focus is only for her good and he tells so to her. She might wonder why he does not want to be sexually aroused by looking at her lovely look in this romantic place alone with her. She might have expected to have a love-making with him in this lovely place. But king Solomon only tells her praises and compliments about her look, then her worthiness in his eyes, by doing so he draws praises and blessings on her from other queens and concubines in his palace.

2.3. King Solomon goes on to praise her with compliments he has frequently given her before. Once he said to her at their wedding night, “Your hair is like a flock of goats which descend from Gilead.” (4:1; 6:5) He then praises her lovely smile, “Your teeth are like a flock of young lambs, which have come up from washing, all of which are paired, and not one among them is alone.” (4:2; 6:6) Then he praises her bright healthy cheeks, “Your temples are like a slice of pomegranate behind your veil.” (6:7; cf. 4:3) All of this, she has heard before at her wedding night. Thus king Solomon is telling her now he still loves her, as did he at their wedding night. Nothing has changed on his part after her misbehavior this night. King Solomon’s praises and compliments very wisely omit anything more sensual and sexual in nature unlike his at their wedding night. So he does not refer to her lips, breasts, or curvy hips. Instead he wants very wisely to assure her of his unconditional and dedicated love for her, and guards against a possible misconception on her part. The misconception can be that the only reason king Solomon wished to make up with her is so he could make love to her.

2.4. King Solomon is ever ready to assure his wife of his genuine love in terms of forgiveness and acceptance as always as he was at their wedding night. Yet his praises and compliments carefully avoid the sexual aspects, unlike his wedding night that might lead her to suspect his motives. Although he omits some of those compliments with good reason, he adds certain others that are more suited for this reconciliatory reunion. “There are sixty queens and eighty concubines and maidens without number; (but) unique is she-my dove, my perfect one; unique is she to her mother; pure is she to the one who bore her.” (6:8-9) He is not regretting that he had married her. He is not wishing that he had married a girl from the palace court. She is as different from them as a “lily among thorns.” (2:2)

2.5. Most of the marriage conflicts and problems are mainly about ingratitude and pride besides financial hardships. Today here king Solomon teaches us how to resolve any marriage conflicts while maintaining mutual commitment and mutual love at all costs.

**Questions to Ponder with Prayers**

1.    What was God’s approach when He was harmed by Adam and his wife??

2.     “Forgive but will not forget” is why not a good attitude for any Christian marriage relationship?

3. How to overcome recurring memories of the bad experiences in your marital conflicts?