**Song of Songs 4:1-8**

**King to Bride**

**1**   Behold, you are beautiful, my darling; behold,

      you are beautiful.

      Your eyes are doves from behind your veil.

      Your hair is like a flock of goats which descend

      from Mount Gilead.

**2** Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn sheep

      which have come up from the washing,

      all of which are paired,

      and not one of them is alone.

**3** Like a scarlet thread are your lips,

      and your mouth is lovely.

      Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate

      behind your veil.

**4** Like the tower of David is your neck, built for warfare-

      a thousand shields hang upon it,

      all the shields of the mighty men.

**5**Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle,

     which feed among the lilies.

**6**Until the day breathes and the shadows flee,

     I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh

     and hill of frankincense.

**7**  You are altogether fair, my love, and there is

     no blemish in you.

**8** With me from Lebanon, O bride, with me from Lebanon come.

     Journey from the peak of Amana,

     from the peak of Senir and Hermon,

     from the dens of lions and mountains of leopards.

**A Very Special Wedding Night**

      For many centuries, the church, in general, has focused on her interpretation of the Song of Songs strictly within a frame that this Song depicts God’s unconditional love for His Bride, the Church.  But as we see now, chapter 4 is devoted to the mental and physical side of the newly wedded couple’s first night of the wedding day.  By studying chapter 4 alone we are sure that we are now appropriately interpreting this Song radically different from the traditional one maintained over the past many centuries.  This kind of a radical interpretation is well fit for what our Creator has truly intended for His beloved couple, Solomon and his Bride.  Thus, this Song is also to be interpreted in the same way for all the believing couples in the Lord God.  Their sexual intimacy and whole oneness are what God intended for them on their first night as a married couple.

**I.  Prelude to the Wedding Night**

1.             God intended in the beginning the sexual intimacy as a part of wholesome relationship between a groom and his bride.  For example, the sexual union of Adam to his newly wedded wife is described as “Adam KNEW his wife.”  Such a verb, “know” is exactly what God wanted Adam to maintain his constantly intimate relationship with his wife through the sexual intimacy.  Without a physical oneness through their sexual intimacy or lovemaking, there is no way for the first couple to obey God’s command to multiply and rule over the earth.

2.              There is no such thing as ‘sex only relationship’ between godly couples.  “No love, no sex” is what God intended for His beloved children when they got married.  In that sense, the physical, psychological, and spiritual dimension of sexual union between the married couple is a wholesome activity to produce or make love instituted by God.  By doing so they also obey divine command “multiply and rule over the earth.”

3.              There is a fundamental difference between the male and the female when both approach their sexual intimacy.  The privilege and duty of the husband is by all means to know his wife whom the Creator God made specifically and wonderfully for him.  In Adam’s case, he already carefully and thoroughly studied all creatures God brought to him in the Garden.  Adam appropriately named each of them upon his careful and thorough observation.  When God made a female for him and brought her to him, Adam instantly observed her as a human being like himself and accordingly called, “woman” meaning from a “man” in Hebrew language.  Nowadays, it takes time and tremendous efforts for a newly wedded husband to know his wife as God intended due to their respective innate sinfulness and selfish inclination.  Divine help and grace is of supreme importance for their blessed marriage life together.

4.              The Shulamite woman has her bridal embroidered cap, her face is covered with a veil that only her husband could lift off her face at their wedding night.  With her husband in the room, she is nervous and yet well contented, so she smiles and showing her beautiful teeth to her husband.  Solomon approaches her as a careful observer and lover, so he works on her with a psychological emphasis.  Verses 1-7 are all about Solomon’s such effort carefully thought out to make his bride relax and feel at home with him to make their wholesome oneness through their sexual oneness.

5.              Solomon knows when he pronounces his bride is “beautiful” at the outset it will melt her away and make her let her mental guard down easily.  Truthful yet soft voice of Solomon is what his bride wants to hear most from him when she is in an insecure state of mind after a long and tiresome wedding day activities.  Then Solomon begins his praises of his bride physical aspect one by one starting with her eyes behind her veil.  Then her naturally curly hair, her beautiful teeth while she smiles at him now relaxed, her lips, her mouth, the silhouette of her temples behind the veil on her face, then her neck, her breasts. By cascading his description of his bride Solomon’s paying her a great compliment. The way she carries herself reflects an integrity and character that breeds a healthy respect from all who see her including her groom, King Solomon.  King Solomon tells how perfect she is for him.  No question that King has a healthy appreciation for the outer beauty as well as the inner beauty of his bride.  Indeed, the Scripture does endorse such physical beauty.

6.              Yet the Scripture also endorses their lovemaking.  Just before the summary of King Solomon’s praise in verse 7, the King declares, “until the day breathes and the shadows flee, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh and hill of frankincense.”  This is really an answer to a request made by his bride during their courtship period.  Once she has asked of him, “Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of separation” (2:7).  The new day would breathe and the shadows of darkness flee at daybreak.  The phrase, “mountains of separation,” is likely her very delicate, soft and restrained reference to her own breasts.  By then with propriety, the Shulamite woman asks for that which cannot be given until their wedding night-the full expression of their love through the night.  Of course, for her restrained and simple reference to her breasts, Solomon adds appropriately they are “mountains of myrrh and frankincense – fragrant, refreshing and intoxicating as the best perfume that the whole world could afford.

7.              Now that the wedding night has finally come, it is perfume that King Solomon can and will enjoy.  Solomon will fulfill her previous request and declare that until the light of dawn breaks they will give their love to one another.  How sensitive it is of King Solomon to eloquently praises his bride on their wedding night!  Even the loveliest woman, like a Miss Universe might feel somewhat frigid and insecure on such occasion.  Yet as always, King Solomon is sensitive to her and careful to make her feel secure and at home in his wholesome love.

     Having praised his bride, King Solomon works on his “foreplay” as the final touch before their sexual, especially physical union. He calls his bride’s thoughts from afar, in verse 8,  “With me from Lebanon, O bride, with me from Lebanon come.

     Journey from the peak of Amana,

     from the peak of Senir and Hermon,

     from the dens of lions and mountains of leopards.”

     The peak of the high mountains and dens of lions and the mountains of leopards are fearful place for any travelers to the north in Israel, may close to her home.  In asking her to come from such fearful places, King Solomon is really asking her to bring her thoughts completely to him alone, and leave all her fears behind.  Thus, it is very significant that King Solomon makes his reassuring request just before they begin to give each other caresses of love because in the gentle kisses and caresses that follow they bring their thoughts completely to one another.  In his “foreplay” King Solomon makes him and her focus on one lover’s thoughts upon the other.  By now, she is ready for her body to respond to Solomon’s physical lead while her heart is emotionally prepared for genuine giving as well.  Indeed, one person cannot give with his whole heart while half of his heart is distracted by all events of a busy wedding day.  One purpose of petting- foreplay, then, is to enable both lovers to forget everything else and look only at the other.  In doing so they prepare themselves physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually for the wholesome giving in God’s presence with His full blessing.

     So by his request, King Solomon reveals his anxious thoughts on fulfilling his own desire frankly.  Yet at the same time Solomon considerately makes her somewhat fearful and insecure bride slowly and surely relaxed and aroused for getting ready to respond and fully experience their sexual intimacy by his careful and patient lead.

**Questions to Ponder with Prayers**

1.    What possible issues related to sexual union do you find difficult to bring up and frankly discuss with your fiancé/ fiancée?

2.     What more do you wish you knew about sexual intimacy at this point in time?