

Song of Solomon 4 Commentary

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SONG OF SOLOMON 4 COMMENTARY NOTES

SONG OF SOLOMON			
Union and Communion			
The Courtship (Falling in Love) Song 1:2-3:5	The Wedding (United in Love) Song 3:6-5:1	The Maturing Marriage (Struggling and Growing in Love) Song 5:2-8:14	
Fostering of Love	Fulfillment of Love	Frustration of Love	Faithfulness of Love
Falling in Love	United in Love	Divided in Love	Devoted in Love
Cultivating Love		Acclaiming Love	
Courtship Before the Marriage	Procession for and Consummation of the Marriage	The Honeymoon is Over! Song 5:2-6:13	The Marriage Deepens Love Matures Song 7:1-8:14
Chief Speaker: The Bride ("Darling")	Chief Speaker: The Groom ("Beloved")	Chief Speaker: Both	Chief Speaker: "Duet"
Theme - The joy and intimacy of love within a committed marriage covenant.			
Song of Solomon foreshadows Christ, the Bridegroom's relationship with His Bride, the Church. (Eph 5:32-note, Rev 19:7-8-note)			
Date - Circa 950-965BC Time Period estimated at about 1 year Before Solomon plunged into gross immorality and idolatry (Compare only 140 women in Song 6:8-note with 1Ki 11:1-4, 5-7, 8, 9-10)			
Adapted from Charles Swindoll's book chart			

SELECT RESOURCES

Song of Solomon 4

See also main resource page for Song of Solomon

Adam Clarke -

[Song of Solomon 4 Commentary](#)

Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges

[Song of Solomon 4 Commentary](#)

Century Bible Commentary -

[Song of Solomon 4 Commentary](#)

Thomas Constable - well done

[Song of Solomon Commentary](#)

Gene Getz short videos (3-12 minutes) -

[Song of Songs 4:1-15 Beautiful Words](#)

[Song of Songs 4:16-5:9 - Idealism and Reality](#)

Net Bible Notes synchronized with Thomas Constable's notes

[Song 4 Commentary](#)

Ellicott's Commentary -

[Song of Solomon 4 Commentary](#)

David Guzik

[Song of Solomon 4 Commentary](#)

H A Ironside

[Song of Solomon 4 Commentary](#)

Keil and Delitzsch - not always literal

[Song of Solomon 4 Commentary](#)

Lange - Comments by verse at top of page literal. Doctrinal section at bottom is allegorical.

[Song 4 Commentary](#)

Reformation Study Bible Notes

[Song 4:1–5:1](#)

[Song 4:1](#)

[Song 4:4](#)

[Song 4:6](#)

[Song 4:8](#)

[Song 4:9](#)

[Song 4:10](#)

[Song 4:12](#)

[Song 4:13–14](#)

[Song 4:15](#)

[Song 4:16](#)

Rob Salvato Sermon Notes

[Song of Solomon 3:6-5:1](#)

Third Millennium - relatively detailed comments

[The Young Man - Song of Solomon 4:1-15](#)

[The Young Woman - Song of Solomon 4:16](#)

Bob Utley - brief but insightful comments on Hebrew words and phrases

[Song of Songs 4 Commentary](#)

Steve Zeisler - sermon notes

[Song of Songs 3:7-5:1 You Have Made My Heart Beat Faster](#)

Solomon...

Song 4:1 "How beautiful you are, my darling, How beautiful you are! Your eyes are like doves behind your veil; Your hair is like a flock of goats That have descended from Mount Gilead.

2 "Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes Which have come up from their washing, All of which bear twins, And not one among them has lost her young.

3 "Your lips are like a scarlet thread, And your mouth is lovely. Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate Behind your veil.

4 "Your neck is like the tower of David Built with rows of stones, On which are hung a thousand shields, All the round shields of the mighty men.

5 "Your two breasts are like two fawns, Twins of a gazelle, Which feed among the lilies.

Solomon...

Song 4:1 "How beautiful you are, my darling, How beautiful you are! Your eyes are like doves behind your veil; Your hair is like a flock of goats that have descended from Mount Gilead.

THE BEAUTY OF CONSUMMATED LOVE

Song 4:1-11

KJV Behold, thou art fair, my love; **behold**, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead.

NET - Oh, you are beautiful, my darling! Oh, you are beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are like doves. Your hair is like a flock of female goats descending from Mount Gilead.

NLT You are beautiful, my darling, beautiful beyond words. Your eyes are like doves behind your veil. Your hair falls in waves, like a flock of goats winding down the slopes of Gilead.

ESV Behold, you are beautiful, my love, **behold**, you are beautiful! Your eyes are doves behind your veil. Your hair is like a flock of goats leaping down the slopes of Gilead.

The NAS misses the "**behold**" which is used twice in this verse. Thus the KJV is more accurate.

This passage is almost identical to Song 1:15-note.

HCSB on Song 4:1-5:1 - The wedding night begins with praise of seven aspects of Shulammitte (Song 4:1-7), then proceeds to invitation (Song 4:8), lovemaking (Song 4:9-11), and poetic consummation (Song 4:12-5:1).

Song 4:1–15 The next major section describes the physical charms of the bride, and finally moves to the marriage bed (Song 4:16–5:1). There in delicate symbolism that is found often in ancient Near Eastern love poetry, the lover comes "into his garden" to "taste its choice fruits." (Richards)

Behold ([02009](#))(**hinneh**) is an interjection meaning behold, look, now; if. "It is used often and expresses strong feelings, surprise, hope, expectation, certainty, thus giving vividness depending on its surrounding context." (Baker) **Hinneh** generally directs our mind to the text, imploring the reader to give it special attention. In short, the Spirit is trying to arrest our attention! And so hinneh is used as an exclamation of vivid immediacy (e.g., read Ge 6:13)!

The Lxx translates **hinneh** with the interjection "**idou**" a command that means to behold or look and emphasizes the size, degree, amount, or importance of something! The point is that he is awestruck by her beauty.

NET Note emphasizes that "The introductory demonstrative particle הִנֵּה (**hinneh**, "Behold!") is repeated for rhetorical effect. This particle is often used with verbs of seeing or discovering, making the narrative graphic and vivid. It enables the reader to enter into the surprise, wonder, and delight of the speaker. ([NET Notes on Song 4](#))

Beautiful...beautiful - repetition serves to intensify his compliment.

Longman - The present poem begins with a general exclamation of the beauty of the woman. It will also conclude with such an exclamation, thus forming what is called an *inclusio*, where a similar opening and closing gives a poem or literary passage a sense of closure.

Song 4:1-15 is Solomon's "positive communication" to his bride. Men, our communication is not some psychological gimmick but is a reflection of our oneness with our life partner and genuinely seeks to build up our wife. Song 4:1-7 The praise begins and ends with compliment of the whole person. Within these comprehensive statements Solomon admired Shulammitte's eyes, hair, teeth, lips, mouth, neck, and breasts. Between the compliment of her breasts and the concluding summary compliment is Solomon's answer to Shulammitte's request of Song 2:17. The placement of the answer just after the imagery of her breasts but within the overall praise is significant in that it supports the interpretation that "divided mountains" of Song 2:17 and "mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense" in Song 4:6 are metaphors for her breasts.

Tim Jackson alludes to the Song of Solomon in his column "Answers to Tough Questions", specifically in his discussion of the question is "**What's the purpose of sex?**" - In the Song of Solomon, the husband's description of his bride's body (Song of Solomon 4:1-15) and her description of his (Song 5:10-16) reveals the joy of love and sexual intimacy that God extols for a married couple. While sexual intimacy between a couple is not to be observed by anyone outside of the relationship, God, the One who sees and knows all, must smile with delight when He sees two of His children enjoying the good gift of sex He has given to them. ([What's the purpose of sex - Answers to Tough Questions](#))

Longman notes that "Scholars refer to this poem as a **Wasf**, an Arabic term meaning "description."...The poem is one that describes the physical beauty of the woman and is the first of four such poetic passages—two others are also directed toward the woman (Song 6:4–7; Song 7:1–9) and another one where the woman describes the physical beauty of the man (Song 5:10–16). The term comes from the nineteenth century, when biblical scholars recognized the similarity between these poems in the Song of Songs and wedding songs that were sung among Arabic tribesmen (see Delitzsch 1975:162–176).

POSB - by current standards some of his remarks do not seem romantic, they were very romantic by the standards of that day. As he gazed upon the body of his bride, he described her in the most beautiful ways he could imagine, and in ways that would encourage her mind and spirit. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

Beautiful...beautiful - He repeats this a third time in Song 4:7. **How often do you tell your wife she is beautiful in your eyes?** We need to learn from this love song!

Beautiful ([03303](#) - **יָפֵה**) (**yapheh**) is an adjective meaning lovely, beautiful, describing beauty of women (Ge 12:11, 14, 2Sa 13:1, Esther 2:7). Good looking or handsome men (2Sa 14:25). Jerusalem was described as "**beautiful** in elevation." Note that 11/38 uses of **yapheh** are in the Song of Solomon = Song 1:8, 15, 16; 2:10, 13; 4:1, 7; 5:9; 6:1, 4, 10. Jerusalem was described as "**beautiful** in elevation." A beautiful voice (Ezek 33:32). And one of my favorite verses...

He has made everything **appropriate** (**beautiful**) in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end. (Eccl 3:11) (Listen to this great song [In His Time](#))

Lxx translates **yapheh** with the Greek adjective **kalos** (**word study**) which means good; beautiful, applied by the Greeks to everything so distinguished in form, excellence, goodness, usefulness, as to be pleasing; hence (according to the context) equivalent to "beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, admirable"; a. beautiful to look at, shapely, magnificent.

The related verb is **yaphah** (03302) and is used in Song 4:10 (Lxx = kallioo = to be beautiful), Song 7:1 and Song 7:6 (Both uses of **yaphah** are translated in the Lxx with the verb horaioomai = to be beautiful).

Darling (07474)(**rayah** - רַעִיָּה) refers to one's companion and is used only in this book where it is found 9x - Song 1:9, 15; 2:2, 10, 13; 4:1, 7; 5:2; 6:4. Every use is translated in the Lxx with the adverb **plesion** which means near or close and in the NT is used to describe a neighbor (as one near) (Mt 5:43). BDAG helps us get a sense of Solomon's use of darling in that **plesion** is a "marker of a position quite close to another position."

POSB on **rayah** - It is a word that refers to an associate or companion. Solomon's use of it throughout the Song shows how delighted he was that she was to be his life partner. ([Ibid](#))

Eyes are like doves - The "like" is added in the translation so more this is a metaphor. As noted above, the exact intent is uncertain, but it is clearly a compliment. **Doves** in Scripture speak of innocence (cf Jesus' exhortation in Mt 10:16 to be "innocent as doves"), without mixture of deceit. Doves are small birds characterized by a tranquil character and symbolic of gentleness or softness. (See [RSB Note](#)) Where better for the lover to begin his **Wasf** than with the eyes into which he loves to stare?

POSB - This description emphasized the beauty, calmness, innocence, and character reflected in her eyes. ([Ibid](#))

Carr surmises that "most probably the comparison is to the deep, smoke-grey colour with flashes of iridescence." [The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries](#)

POSB - This striking image against the contrast of the young woman's dark skin is one of unusual, exotic beauty. Other commentators interpret the comparison to the purity and innocence reflected in her eyes, or to their peaceful softness. Rabbinic teaching emphasized beautiful eyes as a sign of beautiful character. Tremper Longman duly notes, "Indeed, perhaps we are missing a cultural background to [the significance of] this image, but from the context we can be certain that the metaphor is a compliment." ([Ibid](#))

Longman on **behind your veil** - the man sees her eyes behind the veil. This suggests a transparent veil that covers the entire face. The veil hides and reveals, it seems, and it is true that a partial glimpse of physical beauty is often more arousing than seeing the whole. The view of the part arouses the desire to see the whole.

NET Note - The expression "**your eyes [are] doves**" is a [metaphor](#) (implied comparison). Like most of the other metaphors in Song 4:1–7, this is probably a comparison of sight rather than sense: (1) the shape of a woman's eyes, especially in Egyptian art, resemble the shape of a dove, and (2) the white color of the eyeballs resemble the white color of a dove's body. On the other hand, many Jewish and Christian interpreters have suggested that this is a comparison of sense, usually suggesting that the dove is a symbol for purity and that the eyes of a person are the windows of their soul or character, that is, the bride has a pure character as can be seen through her eyes. ([NET Notes on Song 4](#))

Veil - the veil serves as a symbol of modesty but here apparently it was not so complete as to hide her eyes from his view. Such is the case with most modern veils which leave the eyes exposed.

Your hair is like a flock of goats - "The black goats of the region were considered a thing of beauty as they grazed on the mountains, their ebony coats shining in the sunlight as they blanketed the hillside. Perhaps standing behind her, he nestled his face in her soft tresses, and likened her beautiful black hair to this peaceful, beautiful sight." ([POSB](#))

Carr - Most Palestinian goats have long wavy black hair. The movement of a large flock on distant hill makes it appear as if the whole hillside is alive. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries](#))

In modern times, this comparison (hair like a flock of goats) might be deemed quite unflattering, but the context argues for exactly the opposite interpretation. Once again the student who is diligently seeking to rightly divide the Word of Truth reaffirms the critical importance of consideration of the context in interpretation of the Bible.

Hess - The picture of goats descending a steep terrain en masse conjures the appearance of a dark waterfall of waves in which the light plays off the innumerable reflections of each animal and creates a shimmering and enchanting spectacle.

POSB - This most wonderful of songs provides a model for courtship, a model for a wedding, and now a model for the honeymoon. An engaged couple who have heeded God's guidelines face their honeymoon with a variety of emotions, just as Solomon and the Shulamite experienced. An obvious excitement fills them as they anticipate journeying down the previously avoided path of sex. The couple will finally explore and discover the pleasures dreamed of for so long. This excitement is greatly heightened by the fact that they are now launching out on a lifetime journey with the one they adore and have committed themselves to. Sexual desire has been building, and it will at last be fulfilled. But excitement—although it is the prevailing emotion—is not the only one experienced by a chaste, soon-to-be bride or groom. Nervousness also fills their spirits: for the first time they will reveal themselves to each other; for the first time they will seek to please the other sexually. Fears accompany their nerves and, by their very nature, brides usually feel these fears more deeply than grooms. This chapter offers the opportunity to hear about the first night these newlyweds

united themselves in intimate sexual love for the first time. The Spirit of God, through the inspiration process (2 Ti.3:16; 2 Pe.1:21), allows God's people to receive a firsthand account of this precious experience. It is quite direct, but it is holy. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

Tommy Nelson - God's plan for any young couple getting married is that they have a holy, pure, and joyful wedding celebration to unite their lives as one spiritually, emotionally, and socially. And then, that they have a glorious [and] rapturous...wedding night in which to celebrate their wedding and unite their lives as one sexually. (The Book of Romance)

Glickman - How sensitive it was of the king to eloquently praise his bride on their wedding night. Even the loveliest girl might feel insecure on this occasion. Yet as always he was sensitive to her and careful to make her secure in his love. ([Solomon's Song of Love - Let a Song of Songs Inspire Your Own Romantic Story](#)).

Gilead - This refers to the region in central Transjordan around the Jabbok River gorge which was a very beautiful area. ([See picture and description of Gilead](#))

Guzik - As he spoke, it was evident that the beloved was skilled at showing affection to his maiden. The Apostle Paul would later write, Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her (1 Corinthians 7:3). It is wrong for a husband to withhold affection from his wife; and since Paul meant this to apply to every Christian marriage, it shows that every wife has affection due her. Paul didn't think only the young or pretty or submissive wives were due affection; every wife is due affection because she is a wife of a Christian man. Jesus is affectionate to His own Bride after the same pattern....It also evident that the beloved used his powers of observation and description; he was focused upon her and not upon himself. Taken with her beauty at the wedding ceremony, he continued the focus into the beauty. He wisely touched her with his words before he touched her with his hands, assuring her that she was captivating and interesting enough to both carefully observe and describe. The maiden could safely yield to a man who cared for her this much, and this unselfishly.

Solomon...

Song 4:2 "Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes Which have come up from their washing, All of which bear twins, And not one among them has lost her young."

SOLOMON "PAINTS" A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE WITH MULTIPLE TERMS OF COMPARISON

(See the Shulammitte's description of Solomon)

NET - Your teeth are like a flock of newly-shorn sheep coming up from the washing place; each of them has a twin, and not one of them is missing.

NLT Your teeth are as white as sheep, recently shorn and freshly washed. Your smile is flawless, each tooth matched with its twin.

NET Note - The metaphor describing the beautiful teeth of the bride probably pictures freshly washed sheep rather than freshly watered sheep. He praises his bride's teeth by comparing them to freshly washed sheep. In the ancient Near East it was customary to wash sheep before shearing them. The picture of freshly washed sheep depicts the whiteness of the bride's teeth. ([NET Notes on Song 4](#))

Eyes are like doves...Like a flock of goats...teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes...lips are like scarlet thread...temples like a slice of a pomegranate...neck is like the tower of David...breasts are like two fawns - The Song of Solomon makes liberal use of **terms of comparison // similes // metaphors**. A **simile** is easily identified by a preceding "as" or "like." **As** is used in 9v - Song 5:6, 8, 11, 15; 6:4, 10, 13; 8:6, 10. **Like** is used 47x in 36v - Song 1:3, 5, 7, 9, 15; 2:2, 3, 9, 17; 3:6; 4:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11; 5:11, 12, 13, 15; 6:5, 6, 7, 10; 7:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 8:1, 6, 10, 14. Ask the Spirit, your Teacher to guide you in the correct interpretation of these terms of comparison and this should greatly assist your understanding of this great love letter.

The young man "complimented her perfect, sparkling white teeth. The brightest, purest white he could imagine was that of sheep just shorn and washed. He noticed as she smiled that her teeth were straight and perfectly symmetrical." (POSB)

Longman makes a humorous comment on **teeth** - The second verse, which turns attention to the woman's teeth, also sounds comical from a modern perspective, reminding us that we need to put ourselves in the position of the original readers to truly understand these ancient writings. Ancient peoples did not have the same expertise in dental care that we have today. To compliment the woman's white teeth was indeed a compliment and may be compared to the nineteenth century English/American compliment about a person's "pearly white teeth." However, modern men should beware of saying what the ancient Israelite lover says next in his exuberant proclamation that none of his beloved's teeth are missing (Song 4:2NLT). Indeed, a person giving such an ill-considered compliment may find some of his own teeth missing as a result! This simply reminds us that beauty is both bound

by culture and sometimes found only in the eyes of the beholder.

Solomon...

Song 4:3 "Your lips are like a scarlet thread, and your mouth is lovely. Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate behind your veil.

NET - Your lips are like a scarlet thread; your mouth is lovely. Your forehead behind your veil is like a slice of pomegranate.

NLT Your lips are like scarlet ribbon; your mouth is inviting. Your cheeks are like rosy pomegranates behind your veil.

POSB - As he prepared to kiss her, he traced the line of her painted lips and commented on the lovely shape of her mouth....The new queen's modesty betrayed her, and her beloved noticed a twinge of [pomegranate \(picture\)](#) red on her tanned cheeks (Song 1:5-note)—she was blushing! Pomegranates were considered an [aphrodisiac](#), giving his statement an air of playful sensuality. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

Lxx (Nets) - Your lips are like a scarlet thread, and your speech is lovely. Your cheek is like a rind of pomegranate, apart from your taciturnity.

Lips....like scarlet thread - This is a comparison of sight, describing the color and shape of her lips, describing them as perfect in outline and delicately shaped. Husbands, he is giving us a "manual" to guide our times of intimacy with our wives. Of course, we don't don't simply parrot his words, but as the Spirit leads us, we speak words that are gracious and complimentary.

Scarlet thread - ("thread of scarlet") uses 3 times in OT (Josh 2:18, Song 4:3, 11).

Temples...like a slice of a pomegranate - or cheeks. He compliments her "rosy" complexion.

Carr - The term means more broadly 'the side of the face' i.e. cheeks. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries](#))

Constable - Women in Solomon's culture did not always wear a veil. Before their wedding they put one on and did not take it off until the wedding night (cf. Gen. 24:65; 29:19–25). From a distance a flock of black goats descending from the mountains at dusk was very attractive and reminded Solomon of his beloved's long black locks rippling and tumbling freely. ([Song of Solomon Commentary](#))

picture - i.e., "grained apple" (pomum granatum), Heb. rimmon. Common in Egypt (Num. 20:5) and Palestine (13:23; Deut. 8:8). The Romans called it Punicum malum, i.e., Carthaginian apple, because they received it from Carthage. It belongs to the myrtle family of trees. The withering of the pomegranate tree is mentioned among the judgments of God (Joel 1:12). It is frequently mentioned in the Song of Solomon (Song 4:3, 13, etc). The skirt of the high priest's blue robe and ephod was adorned with the representation of pomegranates, alternating with golden bells (Ex. 28:33,34), as also were the "chapiters upon the two pillars" (1Kings 7:20) which "stood before the house." ([See all dictionary articles](#))

Rimmon - 25v in NAS - Ex 28:33f; 39:24ff; Nu 13:23; 20:5; Deut 8:8; 1 Sam 14:2; 1 Kgs 7:18, 20, 42; 2 Kgs 25:17; 2 Chr 3:16; 4:13; Song 4:3, 13; 6:7, 11; 7:12; 8:2; Jer 52:22f; Joel 1:12; Hag 2:19

Song 4:3 - The prostitute Rahab hung a scarlet cord from her window as a sign to the invading Israelites to protect her home (Josh 2:18). Shulammite's speech, which expressed her character, was her protection. This indicated she belonged to God, just as Rahab's scarlet ribbon indicated she belonged to God and His people (Glickman, p. 207). Your brow could be translated "your lips" (Hb raqqah). In addition, the word translated slice is more precisely rendered "sliced opening," which is consistent with the drawings from this era that show the pomegranate sliced open but not cut into slices (O. Keel, The Song of Songs, p. 144). These compliments are a dazzling array of movement and color. The colors proceed from white doves to black goats to white sheep to red lips and mouth. They also alternate movement: doves flying out, a flock scampering down, shorn sheep scurrying up, lips beckoning in. (HCSB)

Solomon...

Song 4:4 "Your neck is like the tower of David built with rows of stones, on which are hung a thousand shields, all the round shields of the mighty men.

NET - Your neck is like the tower of David built with courses of stones; one thousand shields are hung on it— all shields of valiant warriors.

NLT Your neck is as beautiful as the tower of David, jeweled with the shields of a thousand heroes.

POSB on her **neck** - The tower of David was a stately military arsenal and a landmark in Israel (Ne.3:25). The mighty warriors would, in times of peace, hang their shields upon its walls in a show of allegiance to the king. Solomon was describing the stately elegance of his bride's neck and the beautiful, layered necklaces that adorned it. ([Ibid](#))

Guzik - The idea is not that her neck was as long as a tower or proportioned like one. Rather, it speaks of the noble and strong character displayed by her neck, both literally and symbolically. In the ancient world, the neck was one part of the body thought to reflect character. A bent-over neck was a picture of humiliation. A stiff neck was a sign of stubbornness.

Tower ([04026 - מגדל](#)) (**migdal**) means Tower, strong place; wooden podium, rostrum, pulpit. It refers to a military structure, such as a stronghold, arsenal, or defensive tower on the walls of a city (Jdg 8:9, 17; 9:51; 2Ki 9:17; 17:9; 18:8; 2Chr 14:6; 26:15; 27:4; 32:5).

Ryrie interprets this comparison as her bearing "herself regally and with strength of character."

NET Note on phrase **on which are hung a thousand shields** - refers to the common practice in the ancient Near East of lining the top wall of a military fortress tower with shields, behind which the soldiers could stand for protection leaving both hands free for bow and arrowsThis is supported by ancient Near Eastern art which pictures such a practice, especially by the relief of Sennacherib's siege of Lachish which shows the top wall of Lachish lined with shields....."The art of the ancient East often shows us the shields that were, in time of war, set in position on the towers of the city walls, so that defenders could safely fire arrows and hurl stones while standing upright behind them." Those who see this as the imagery all agree that the point of comparison is to jeweled necklaces with pendants which could be compared to shields, as in Song 1:10–11. McKenzie expresses this view when he posits that she was wearing jewelry around her neck and that this was being compared to the shields hung around this military tower: "One of the many physical charms that the Beloved finds in his mistress (Song of Sol. 4:1–4) is her long neck which, with its stately poise, reminds him of the lofty tower of David. Just as this tower is hung all round with shields placed there by mighty men of valor, so is his mistress' neck adorned with chains and strings of jewels. This is supported by the fact that Song 4:9 explicitly mentions a necklace with a multitude of jewels in it which she was wearing at this time. ([NET Notes on Song 4](#))

Solomon...

Song 4:5 "Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, which feed among the lilies

NET - Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of the gazelle grazing among the lilies. 6 Until the dawn arrives and the shadows flee, I will go up to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

NLT Your breasts are like two fawns, twin fawns of a gazelle grazing among the lilies.

POSB - The king continued on to compare her breasts to graceful, young fawns grazing among the lilies. Their youthfulness and smooth softness reminded him of the velvety coat of a fawn. Note that this is the first time in the Song that the young man's description is directed to any part of the young woman's body below her head ([Ibid](#))

Like two fawns - soft, lovable, innocent and attractive as young deer.

Glickman - A baby deer is soft and gentle, and everyone seeing these little deer long to pet them and play with them. Thus, when the king compares her breasts to two fawns, he is really saying that he longs to caress her soft and tender breasts. ([Ibid](#)).

Jack Deere - Looking on the soft coat of a little fawn makes a person want to stroke it. Solomon wanted his bride to know that her soft and gentle beauty had kindled his desire for her and he wished to express that desire with his caresses.

Longman - The fact that he compliments her on her breasts, an intimate body part in antiquity even as it is today, shows the closeness of their relationship. It also prepares us for the later reference to her "fountain" (Song 4:12, 15) and illustrates how these poems were uttered in anticipation of sexual union.

Trapp a good older commentator offers a somewhat fanciful, farfetched interpretation of her breasts, in his hesitancy to think this refers to literal breasts of a woman. He wrote "The Church's breasts here are said to be fair, full, and equally matched. Hereby some understand the two testaments." I would submit there is absolutely nothing in the context which would suggest the writer is describing the Old and New Testaments! We need to be very careful in interpreting figurative language lest we assign a meaning to it which the Spirit never intended!

Roy Zuck comments that in interpreting figures of speech, we need to first determine if the passage is indeed a figure of speech; i.e., sometimes a figure of speech is not recognized as such which can lead to significant misinterpretation. For example in 2 Timothy 2 Paul is not giving instructions to soldiers, athletes or farmers (2Ti 2:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8-see **notes** 2Ti 2:3; 2:4; 2:5; 2:6; 2:7; 2:8) but is using these figures of speech to encourage his disciple Timothy. The student needs to determine the image or picture

and what that picture is referring to. Finally, the student needs to determine what is the point of the comparison. For example, Isaiah 53:6 says "All of us like sheep have gone astray." In this passage, the image or picture is the sheep and "all of us" (all humans) is those to whom the image is referring and the point of the comparison is that all humanity is spiritually wayward!

Zuck goes on to point out that "The **points of comparison** are not always immediately evident in similes or metaphors. When Solomon wrote that the hair of his bride was "**like a flock of goats descending from Mount Gilead**" (Song 4:1), the meaning of that compliment may not be immediately transparent to Westerners. In fact it does not sound at all like a compliment! Goats in Palestine had dark hair, and when seen from a distance in the sunset as goats were descending from a mountain, they were a beautiful scene. Similarly Solomon's bride's black hair was considered beautiful. The similes in the Song of Songs require careful attention to determine what point of similarity would have been understood by people in the Middle East in Bible times. **If the point of similarity is not stated, the Bible student needs to be careful he does not assume the wrong similarity.** The same holds true in the English statement, "John eats like a pig." Some point of similarity is intended by that sentence between a pig and John. However, does the statement mean that like a pig he eats too much, or eats fast, or eats sloppily? Either an explicit statement giving the point of similarity or an implicit statement found in the context is needed for the interpreter to be sure of the precise meaning. ([Basic Bible Interpretation - THIS BOOK IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. It is authoritative, complete and well written so that the layman can easily understand the particulars of Biblical Hermeneutics or the "science" of interpretation as it relates to Scripture](#)) (Bolding and color added)

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Song of Solomon 4:1-5 -Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting. - Pr 31:30

TODAY IN THE WORD - In a Christianity Today article entitled, "Is Beauty the Beast?" author Karen Lee-Thorf notes that many Christians are uncomfortable with beauty and adornment because they believe such things lead to pride and division. "I am sure many of the people I know who are doing that are motivated by humility," she writes. "I, however, have found that rejecting beauty can be as serious a sin as worshipping it."

It has been said that "beauty is only skin deep." It does, however, play an important role in human love. In his song the groom repeatedly praises the physical beauty of the beloved. Although the images he uses to describe her may seem strange, and perhaps even humorous, to us today, he praises the beauty of her eyes, face, form, and cascading hair.

The bride has taken steps to adorn herself. The reference to her scarlet lips suggests she used the Old Testament equivalent of makeup. However, she does not put herself on display. Instead, she wears a veil, a symbol of modesty in that day.

Physical beauty is a gift from God, but as we have seen, it cannot compare with the beauty of godly character. Physical beauty, the writer of Proverbs warns, is fleeting. It cannot last, and it may be deceptive. The fact that one has an attractive physique does not necessarily mean that the personality is also attractive. The presence of beauty is also no guarantee of virtue. Scripture warns that a beautiful woman who lacks discretion is like a gold ring in a pig's snout (Pr 11:22).

Karen Lee-Thorf's warning is important. Physical beauty is a gift from God worthy of celebration. There is no spiritual virtue in taking steps to detract from our appearance. We should not reject physical beauty. But neither should we trust in it.

Some people practice a daily "beauty regimen" that includes diet, exercise, and steps to make their outward appearance more attractive. The same can be true on a spiritual level.

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Song 4:1–5:1 Recapturing Sexual Love - "Sex" has been a four-letter word for far too many years. Playboy, the movies, and increasingly TV, exploit our sexuality by portraying situations that titillate and arouse. We can pick up the telephone, dial a number, and listen as a stranger invites us to imagine joining her as she describes explicit sex acts. Even PG-13 films now strive not only for a quota of filthy language but also a quota of scenes advertising immorality. What's happened is that the world has recognized the importance of sex, and set about so distorting sexuality that Christians have become somewhat embarrassed about being sexual creatures. Reading Song of Songs, and especially these verses that so erotically and yet sensitively portray sexual love, reminds us that Hollywood didn't invent sex. God did. It reminds us that sex isn't "evil." Sex is a gift given to us by God. Our Creator, who made us male and female, designed our bodies for every sexual delight. And He sanctified sex by making foreplay and intercourse a bonding act, intended to unite one man and woman in a unique and exclusive relationship. It's this that we Christians have to recapture. We need to cleanse from sex that slimy but tingly sense of sin with which it is associated in the modern world. We need to purify our marriages of any residue of shame. And we need not only announce to the world that sex in Christian marriage is a pure and fulfilling delight, but also commit ourselves to exploring that delight fully with our spouse. It is perhaps here that Song of Songs makes its greatest contribution to our lives. It reminds us that sex-talk can be beautiful, and need not be dirty. And it reminds us that true spirituality does not rule out the full enjoyment of the sexual side of married life. **Personal Application** - Recapturing

sex from the world begins in the Christian home. **Quotable** - "Sex is holy as well as wholesome . . . it is the means by which we may cooperate with God in bringing into the world children of His own destined for eternal life. Anyone, who has once understood that, will be quite as careful as any Puritan to avoid making jokes about sex; not because it is nasty, but because it is sacred. He would no more joke about sex than he would joke about the Holy Communion—and for exactly the same reasons. To joke about it is to treat with lightness something that deserves reverence."—William Temple (Richards)

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The Beauty of Compliments - "How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are doves." [Song of Songs 4:1a] - Low self-esteem is regularly stated to be one of the most pervasive emotional conditions among women. Men, however, also suffer from bad self-images. As a "manual of love" the Song of Songs shows us the importance of compliments, and surely true praise and valid compliments will do wonders to restore a sense of real self-worth to the partners in a marriage. For the most part, the Song of Songs is simply an exchange of mutually-upbuilding compliments between two lovers, back and forth, one compliment after another. The Song is a celebration of the good points of the other person. **How many marriages begin on a basis of compliments and end in an exchange of insults?** Your spouse has the greatest power in this world either to affirm you or to destroy you. The comments of people we love weigh heavily upon us, either for good or for bad. Studies have shown that the compliments and criticisms we receive as children from those we respect have a great deal to do with shaping our later lives. The Song of Songs also shows us that we should openly receive true compliments. We should believe the good things our spouse and friends say about us. In 1:5 the bride frankly says, "Dark am I, yet lovely." She goes on to say that her darkened skin has come from working in the sun, but in spite of this, she recognizes her own value, her true beauty....The Song is not to be regarded as a simple allegory of Christ and the church, but since the church is married to Christ we can gain useful insights into our celestial marriage relationship with him. In our praise we compliment him; but notice in the Bible that he also compliments us. We were made as the very images of God, and we must not despise that image as a factor in assessing our worth, in spite of the problems sin has introduced. Notice how Paul, the Groom's spokesman, addresses the trouble-torn bride in 1 Corinthians 1:1–9. The bride is sanctified, holy, enriched in every way, lacking in no spiritual gift, preserved to the end, and destined for blamelessness. Only after affirming believers in this way does Paul go on to point out some areas in which improvement is needed.

Coram Deo - Are you the kind of husband or wife who compliments your spouse, or are you mostly critical? How about those you associate with on the job, in the classroom, or in the church? The other-affirming principles of the Song apply both in marriage and to every other covenantal relationship. Encourage one another. (Ed: And do it DAILY!!! = Heb 3:13)
(Tabletalk)

Solomon...

Song 4:6 "Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh And to the hill of frankincense.

7 "You are altogether beautiful, my darling, and there is no blemish in you.

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:6 "Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense.

INTIMACY DESCRIBED

NET - Until the dawn arrives and the shadows flee, I will go up to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

NLT Before the dawn breezes blow and the night shadows flee, I will hurry to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense.

Constable feels **mountain...hill** "are also metaphors for the girl's breasts." (cp Song 1:13) ([Ibid](#))

Longman adds "He tastefully states his desire to fondle her breasts."

Deere - A mountain of myrrh or a hill of frankincense would have been greatly valued. To Solomon, therefore, his bride's breasts were attractive and of great value to him.

POSB - Most commentators agree that in verse six Solomon is preparing for the act of intercourse. Aroused by his bride's beauty and the sensual aroma of her perfumes, he stated that he wanted to make love with his bride all night long. He identified the fragrances of myrrh and frankincense, which were expensive, imported perfumes. "Mountain of myrrh" and "hill of incense" may be references to his wife's breasts or possibly to a more private area. As Solomon proceeded to initiate personal relations with her, he may also have been referring to her body in its entirety. ([Ibid](#))

Guzik - The beloved welcomed the coming of the night, after the celebration of the wedding mentioned in the previous snapshot. Their wedding night was the appropriate setting for the consummation of their deep love.

Glickman - He will fulfill her request and hence declare that until the light of dawn breaks they will give their love to one another. ([Ibid](#)).

Until the cool of the day - Literally this reads "until the day breathes."

When the shadows flee away (Song 2:17) - Probably describes the morning. The implication is that they would share a time of intimacy until the morning.

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:7 "You are altogether beautiful, my darling, and there is no blemish in you"

"BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER"

NET - You are altogether beautiful, my darling! There is no blemish in you!

NLT You are altogether beautiful, my darling, beautiful in every way.

POSB - After seeing all of her for the first time, Solomon concluded that she was absolutely perfect from head to toe—she had no flaws. ([Ibid](#))

Deere makes the observation that "Solomon praised eight parts of his bride's body: her eyes, hair, teeth, lips, mouth, temples, neck, and breasts....Compared with this lavish praise of the beloved's beauty, some wives today may feel uncomfortable about their own appearance. However, one must remember that initially the daughters of Jerusalem did not seem to regard the beloved as a beautiful woman. Unlike the other royal ladies she was not fair-skinned, a preeminent sign of beauty in the ancient world (see Song 1:5–6). Yet in her lover's eyes she was beautiful, even though she did not meet the objective standards of beauty in her society. In other words, though few people in any age meet their own particular culture's standard of beauty, a woman is beautiful in the eyes of her lover simply because he loves her. Every husband who genuinely loves his wife can say, "To me you are beautiful and there is no flaw in you."

Daniel Akin - We really don't know what [the] Shulammitte looked like. What we do know is what she looked like to Solomon. In his eyes she was beautiful...no one compared to her." ([God on Sex- The Creator's Ideas about Love, Intimacy, and Marriage](#))

Guzik - After giving a seven-fold description of his maiden's beauty, the beloved summarizes his observations. She was more than fair; she was all fair, and there was no spot in her.

Constable proposes that "perhaps she was not really as perfect as Solomon claimed here (cf. 1:5–6). "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." She was perfect to him." ([Ibid](#))

Longman asks "Is there any woman who ever existed who has been without blemish (or any man)? Of course not. But the rapture of love causes us to focus in on what is beautiful. Love is indeed a strange thing."

Indeed, a good word to all husbands! Our own wife should be beautiful in our eyes!

In Song 5:2 she returns the compliment "My dove, my perfect one!"

Blemish (defect) ([03971](#) - מַמַּחַם) (**mum**) means defect, spot or blot (physical or moral - latter = Job 11:15). Used of the animals used for sacrificial offering and were to be without physical defect or blemish (Lev 22:20-21, Nu 19:2 = "unblemished red heifer") In Lev 22:20 mum is equated with "corruption in them" which alludes to their moral defect. In Dt 15:21 the defect could be "lameness or blindness" which was "detestable" to Jehovah (Dt 17:1). Mum describes Israel as acting corruptly (ruining) which was equated with "their defect (mum; Lxx = mometos = to be blamed)." (Dt 32:5) Mum described Saul's physical appearance (2Sa 14:25) and the young woman's physical appearance (Song 4:7).

The **Lxx** translates **mum** with the Greek noun **momos** which means blame, disgrace, or what causes disgrace either physically or morally.

Mum 17v - Usage: blemish(2), defect(14), injured*(1), injures*(1), insults(1).

Leviticus 21:17 "Speak to Aaron, saying, 'No man of your offspring throughout their generations who has a **defect** shall approach to offer the food of his God.

18 'For no one who has a **defect** shall approach: a blind man, or a lame man, or he who has a disfigured face, or any deformed limb,

21 'No man among the descendants of Aaron the priest who has a **defect** is to come near to offer the LORD'S offerings by fire; since he has a defect, he shall not come near to offer the food of his God.

23 only he shall not go in to the veil or come near the altar because he has a **defect**, so that he will not profane My sanctuaries. For I am the LORD who sanctifies them."

Leviticus 22:20 'Whatever has a **defect**, you shall not offer, for it will not be accepted for you.

21 'When a man offers a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD to fulfill a special vow or for a freewill offering, of the herd or of the flock, it must be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no defect in it.

25 nor shall you accept any such from the hand of a foreigner for offering as the food of your God; for their corruption is in them, they have a **defect**, they shall not be accepted for you."

Leviticus 24:19 'If a man **injures** (two words nathan = put + mum = defect) his neighbor, just as he has done, so it shall be done to him:

20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; just as he has **injured** a man, so it shall be inflicted on him.

Numbers 19:2 "This is the statute of the law which the LORD has commanded, saying, 'Speak to the sons of Israel that they bring you an unblemished red heifer in which is no **defect** and on which a yoke has never been placed.

Deuteronomy 15:21 "But if it has any **defect**, such as lameness or blindness, or any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 17:1 ¶ "You shall not sacrifice to the LORD your God an ox or a sheep which has a blemish or any **defect**, for that is a detestable thing to the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 32:5 "They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their **defect**; But are a perverse and crooked generation.

2 Samuel 14:25 ¶ Now in all Israel was no one as handsome as Absalom, so highly praised; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no **defect** in him.

Job 11:15 "Then, indeed, you could lift up your face without moral defect (Lxx = "hosper hudor katharon" = like pure water), And you would be steadfast and not fear.

Proverbs 9:7 He who corrects a scoffer gets dishonor for himself, And he who reproves a wicked man gets **insults** (Lxx = momaiomai = find fault with, censure) for himself.

Song of Solomon 4:7 "You are altogether beautiful, my darling, And there is no **blemish** in you.

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TODAY IN THE WORD (Song of Solomon 4:6-7) - A popular bumper sticker from a few years ago read, "Christians aren't perfect, just forgiven." Its point is well taken. Those who know Christ share many of the same weaknesses and failings as unbelievers. But this slogan is not entirely accurate.

In today's reading Solomon summarizes his impression of the bride by declaring that there is no blemish in her. In human relationships, we can conclude this only by looking at another person through the eyes of love. For Christ's bride, however, perfection is both a gift and responsibility.

When it comes to our standing before God, there is a sense in which Christians are already perfect. Those who know Jesus as Savior have been reconciled to God through the death of Christ. God sees them through the lens of Christ's perfections. As a result, they will be presented to Him "without blemish and free from accusation" (Col. 1:21). According to the writer of Hebrews, "By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (Heb. 10:14).

As far as the believer's practice is concerned, there is still room for improvement. The apostle Paul's goal in ministry was to present believers to Christ as "a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish" (Eph. 5:27). Similarly, Christians are commanded to "aim for perfection" in the way that they live (2 Cor. 13:11).

What, then, are the disciplines that lead to perfection? One of the most important is the discipline of studying God's Word. The apostle Paul wrote that one of his chief aims in preaching God's Word was to "present everyone perfect in Christ" (Col. 1:28). The one who studies the Bible will be "thoroughly equipped" (kjav: "perfect") for every good work (2 Tim. 3:17).

Use a concordance or Bible study software and do a search on the word **perfect**. In what sense can perfection be described as a goal in the Christian life? When can we expect it to be a state of being?

Solomon...

Song 4:8 "Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, May you come with me from Lebanon. Journey down from the summit of Amana, From the summit of Senir and Hermon, From the dens of lions, From the mountains of leopards.

9 "You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, my bride; You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes, With a single strand of your necklace.

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:8 "Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, May you come with me from Lebanon. Journey down from the summit of Amana, From the summit of Senir and Hermon, From the dens of lions, From the mountains of leopards.

THE GROOM'S REQUEST

NET - 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 the leopards.

NLT Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, come with me from Lebanon. Come down from Mount Amana, from the peaks of Senir and Hermon, where the lions have their dens and leopards live among the hills.

The meaning of this verse is difficult to determine, but clearly he was calling upon her to be completely his!

Come with me...come with me - Intensifies his expression of his desire to be with the young woman. Kinlaw adds "He wants her with him. 'With me' sums up his desire."

My bride - This designation supports the premise that Song 4:1-16 depicts their wedding night.

Constable - Solomon appealed to his bride to put all thoughts of her former life away. These included both the pleasant thoughts, such as those of the beautiful mountains of the Anti-Lebanon and Hermon ranges in Lebanon from which she had come, and fearful thoughts, such as those of wild animals. He urged her to give him her attention on this their wedding night. ([Song of Solomon Commentary](#))

Longman on Amana...Senir...Hermon - Confusion results if the reader tries to understand the geographical references literally. True, Amana, Senir, and Hermon are all peaks in the mountains of Lebanon, but she is not literally in these mountains. We are not to imagine that she is really hiding in the caves of wild animals. This is poetry, not a historical transcript. This rugged terrain represents her present distance from the man. Away from him, he implies, she is lonely and in danger. He desires that she come into his warm and protecting embrace.

POSB - How this fits into the narrative of the wedding night and the context of their lovemaking is vague. Some commentators insist that the Song is exclusively and purely poetic, and that there is no narrative content. Others see it as a request for the bride to consent to the sexual act—to come symbolically away from her mountain home and its dangers into the safety of Solomon's embrace and all that he would provide for her. Another plausible view is that the new bride seemed distracted and that Solomon was beseeching her to focus fully on him and their lovemaking. In any case, it is very clear throughout the account that Solomon did not force himself upon his new bride, nor did he rush her in order to satisfy himself. ([Ibid](#))

Craig Glickman has an interesting thought on **from the dens of lions...mountains of leopards** - "In asking her to come from such fearful places, he is really asking her to bring her thoughts completely to him and leave her fears behind and perhaps to leave the lingering thoughts of home behind as well ... he wished her to leave her fear and anxiety about the new life of marriage and simply come to him ... So he calls her from her fears to his arms. ([Ibid](#))

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:9 "You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, my bride; You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes, with a single strand of your necklace.

HIS HEART IS CAPTURED

NET - 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.

NLT You have captured my heart, my treasure, my bride. You hold it hostage with one glance of your eyes, with a single jewel of your necklace.

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

NIV 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.

The repetition of **made my heart beat faster** emphasizes how smitten he was with the young woman. One glance or one jewel of her necklace was enough to capture his heart. He was overcome by every detail of his companion.

Longman on made my heart beat faster - The heart represented the inner person in Hebrew culture and language. She has captured the very essence of who the man is. She has aroused his emotions. Indeed, this verb could be translated more colloquially as "you drive me crazy."...He expresses his passionate love for her. He is totally enthralled by her beauty. He is like a prisoner to his love for her, but it is an enslavement that he enjoys. He expresses this by means of the epithets of love that he showers upon her. She is his "bride" and his "treasure." Indeed, it does not take much to arouse his passion—just a glance of her eye or a single jewel of her necklace.

Grant Richison - A biblical view of sex always focuses on the mate's pleasure before one's own. After Solomon thinks of the Shulammitte, he then invites her to have sex (Song 4:8). He does not make demands but offers an invitation so that she feels safe with the experience. The Shulammitte responds positively to Solomon's invitation (Song 4:9, 10, 11)...Solomon indicates that the Shulammitte captured him sexually (Song 4:9). She ravished him by her enchanting power so that he could not resist her. He calls her his "sister," which in the ancient world meant "friend." **True sexuality has a friendship dimension** (See Word Study on the Greek verb that speaks of friendship = **phileo**). (From his free online book [Theology of Sex - Highly Recommended](#))

My sister - an affectionate term for his wife and certainly has no suggestion of incest! Four times Solomon calls the Shulammitte "my sister, my bride" (Song 4:9, 10, 12; 5:1, 2), which was an oriental way of denoting holy fellowship which should be at its pinnacle in the marriage of two who are one flesh. In the ancient Near East "sister" was a term for one's wife in love poetry and was used to emphasize the closeness of their relationship.

Brethren ("sistern") if your spouse is not your best friend, you need to study and meditate on the truths in the glorious inspired Song of Solomon and ask your Teacher the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth and thereby do a work of grace in your heart so that your mate becomes not just your sexual partner but your best friend!

And what is the result of when the husband and a wife are best friends? The world recognize such a bond in this "good work" and will thereby have a proper opinion of God in heaven. Why? Because a marriage between two believers that manifests this clear sense that the two partners are best friends is not a natural work but a supernatural work of God!

My sister - One of many phrases the young man uses for his darling - "most beautiful among women," Song 1:8; 5:9; 6:1 "my darling," Song 1:9, 15; 2:2, 10, 13; 4:1, 7; 6:4 "my beloved," Song 1:13, 14. "my beautiful one," Song 2:10, 13. "O my dove," Song 2:14; 5:2; 6:9. "my sister," Song 1:9, 10, 12; 5:1, 2 (one of several idioms common to Egyptian love songs), "my bride," Song 5:1, "my perfect one," Song 5:2, "O Shulammitte," Song 6:13, "O princess daughter," Song 7:1, "My love," Song 7:6. **Do you have many names for your beloved? They are an expression of your love and the fact that she is far from boring!**

My bride ([03618 - כלה](#)) (**kallah** which some say is from **kalal** = to complete or make complete - interesting! See Carr's comment below) is the first description of the young woman as his bride (used 34x in the OT with 17 translated "bride" and 17 translated "daughter-in-law"). This first use in Song 4:9 is followed by 5 more uses - Song 4:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 5:1. **Bride** is translated in the Lxx with the noun **numphe (nymphē)** which in the NT literally described a young woman engaged or newly married bride (a young wife) (Jn 3:29)

Carr on bride - The focus of the word is on the married status of the woman, particularly on the sexual element presupposed in that status as 'the completed one.' ([Ibid](#))

A single glance of your eyes - On the wedding night one glance of Shulammitte's eyes aroused Solomon (Song 4:9), here Solomon asked that she turn her eyes from him because they captivated (lit "aroused") him.

Guzik - Here the beloved went beyond praising the maiden's beauty and even character; he described the effect that she had upon him. With one look of your eyes, he was a changed man and deeply in love with her.

i. You have ravished my heart: “ ‘Thou hast hearted me,’ i.e., taken away my heart.” (Clarke)

ii. Sister: “At last she would become his wife ... that is the reason he calls her his sister. In their culture ‘sister’ was an affectionate term for one’s wife.” (Glickman)

iii. “My sister; so he calls her, partly because both he and she had one and the same father, to wit, God ... and partly to show the greatness of his love to her, which is such as cannot be sufficiently expressed by any one relation, but must borrow the perfections and affections of all to describe it.” (Poole)

iv. “As if he could not express his near and dear relationship to her by any one term, he employs the two. ‘My sister’—that is, one by birth, partaker of the same nature. ‘My spouse’—that is, one in love, joined by sacred ties of affection that never can be snapped. ‘My sister’ by birth, ‘My spouse’ by choice. ‘My sister’ in communion, ‘My spouse’ in absolute union with myself.” (Spurgeon)

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TODAY IN THE WORD - Many of the most popular songs throughout history have described the thrills and frustrations of romance. Common themes include loving someone who apparently loves someone else, feeling unsure of someone else’s romantic feelings, and the roller-coaster ride of falling in and out of love.

What usually passes for love in today’s world, however, is often only self-gratification. This kind of “love” is primarily a matter of physical attraction. When the initial thrill of desire fades, so does the love of the one who experienced it. The groom’s love for his bride was markedly different.

It did include physical attraction. The groom praised his bride’s beauty and said that she had stolen his heart with one glance of her eyes. But his love was not selfish. Instead, it was characterized by a desire for the bride’s well-being. He pleaded with her to come away from the lions’ dens and the haunt of the leopards to a place of safety and intimacy.

An abiding concern for the other person and an atmosphere of intimacy are the primary ingredients in a healthy love relationship. They are also interrelated. A genuine concern for the other provides the kind of environment that in turn allows those who love one another the freedom to be intimate.

The rewards of biblical love come to those who give of themselves on behalf of those they love. As scholar and author Miraslov Volf has observed, there is more to marital love than eros: “It has to do with how you treat each other when dishes need to be washed or garbage taken out, when misunderstandings arise and when one has transgressed against the other. Love is not the desire to be united with the other, but action on behalf of the other, and constancy in pursuit of his or her well-being.”

Author Rainer Maria Rilke has written that “Love . . . consists in this, that two solitudes protect and border and salute each other.” Human love is never completely devoid of self interest. However, the more we can nurture, protect, and respect the other, the greater the likelihood that our own desires will be satisfied.

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Today in the Word (Song 3:1) - Musician Charlie Hall wrote the worship song, “Chasing After You.” The lyrics beautifully reflect the believer’s relationship with God: “And I’m chasing after You / ‘Cause You first chased after me / And You purchased me with blood / I am free I am complete / Now a child of my King / Leaving old I am made new / ‘Cause You first chased after me / I am chasing after You.”

The third chapter of Song of Songs describes a chase. The woman describes two things that seem to have nothing in common: lying on her bed and chasing after the one she loves. Some commentators think that instead of describing an actual activity, she is portraying the state of her mind and heart. Whenever she is separated from her love, she actively longs and searches for the man she loves. Their love, like a journey, now winds through the streets of the city.

True loving relationships never come easily. They require effort on the part of everyone involved. Whether it is in our marital relationships, love between a parent and child, or our love for God, we “run after” the ones we love. Passivity is not an option.

The good news of Scripture is that this is not a one-way chase. As we make an effort to love, God promises us that we will be loved in return. The woman is surprised in her search to encounter the grand carriage of the king approaching her (v. 7). Solomon approached wearing a wedding crown (v. 10). Her love has been immeasurably returned. What a beautiful illustration of the love of God for His children. Although we make an effort in our relationship with God, we know that our love will be rewarded. He has “chased after us” from the very start.

Apply the Word - Many of us spend a good portion of our lives chasing after something. We may chase after wealth or fame. Some of us chase after a particular desirable person. Chasing is not wrong. It implies effort, determination, and action. It is helpful,

though, to evaluate the object of the chase. Is it worth it? Can it satisfy?

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Today in the Word (Song 4:9) - Lloyd and Marian Michael were sweethearts during World War II. Separated after Pearl Harbor, the newlyweds wrote hundreds of love letters to one another. When Lloyd returned from the war, the couple locked the letters in a trunk for safekeeping. In the late 1960s, burglars broke into their shed and took the trunk. "We just accepted they were gone forever," Marian said. Imagine their surprise when, in their late 80s, a man called to return the letters—241 in all. Reading them brought back many fond memories. In one, Lloyd had written to Marian, "When I got into my foxhole, I could look out and see that old moon. . . . I got a very warm feeling inside of me just sitting there, laying there, and looking at it, and thinking of you."

Chapter 4 of Song of Songs reads like a love letter. Sections of this book make some people uncomfortable with their detailed description of sensual, physical love. The man clearly adores the woman and appreciates her physical beauty in great detail. He uses the language of metaphor and objects of that culture to depict her attributes. He sees her completely, and he loves what he sees. He declares, "You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you" (v. 7).

Most of us deeply long to be loved like that—completely and utterly adored. The man felt that kind of love for his young bride, a love that was unabashedly open and true.

Do we also share this kind of love with the people in our lives, choosing to celebrate their most beautiful qualities and express our delight in being in their presence? We can be instruments of God's love when we care for others.

Apply the Word - Letters often convey the deep and personal messages of our heart. Some of us save letters to re-read again and again. They remind us of people and time in our lives that may now be gone. Scripture is a letter from God. We treasure this letter from the Almighty God who loves His children in an intensely personal way.

Solomon...

Song 4:10 "How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine, And the fragrance of your oils Than all kinds of spices!

11 "Your lips, my bride, drip honey; Honey and milk are under your tongue, And the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:10 "How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine, And the fragrance of your oils Than all kinds of spices!

HER LOVE: DELIGHTFUL AND SENSUAL

NET -How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine; the fragrance of your perfume is better than any spice!

NLT Your love delights me, my treasure, my bride. Your love is better than wine, your perfume more fragrant than spices.

LXX-NETS - How beautiful your breasts have become, my sister bride! How beautiful your breasts have become, above wine, and your garments' fragrance, beyond all spices!

Constable - **Milk** and **honey** not only connote sweet delicacies but also the blessings of God (cf. Ex 3:8). Lebanon was fragrant because of the many cedar trees that covered its hills. ([Song of Solomon Commentary](#))

Your love - This seems to refer to the physical expression of their love.

Love ([01730](#))(**dod**) refers to the state or condition of romantic affection, which can include sexual relations. Compare Song 7:12 - "There will I give thee my love"

Fragrance of your oils - her perfumes. Sweet fragrances stimulate the senses!

Deere - The verse might be more accurately translated, "How delightful are your kisses. How much more pleasing are your caresses than wine." Her physical expressions of love had a more refreshing and intoxicating effect on him than wine, just as his expressions had earlier affected her (cf. Song 1:2). Even her perfume added to the excitement of their love. The senses of sight, touch, smell, and sound were involved in their love-making.

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:11 "Your lips, my bride, drip honey; Honey and milk are under your tongue, And the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

NET -Your lips drip sweetness like the honeycomb, my bride, honey and milk are under your tongue. The fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

NLT Your lips are as sweet as nectar, my bride. Honey and milk are under your tongue. Your clothes are scented like the cedars of Lebanon.

Beautiful here is not the noun **yaphehh** but the related verb is **yaphah**.

Patterson on your lips...drip honey - it is probably better to understand that the sweetness of the passionate kiss is in view.

Longman adds that "The reference to the honey dripping from her mouth, however, creates a more sensuous picture. The picture of the woman is positive, and the desire for her is certainly proper. The same image, however, is used in a darker context in Prov 5:3–6 where the immoral woman's lips are also described as dripping honey; but there it is a deceit, since what looks sweet is actually poisonous....That her lips are sweet like nectar and that honey and milk are under her tongue indicate his desire to explore those regions. Deep kisses will do the job, to be sure. Again, the use of images that invoke the senses—in this instance taste—is notable. Like wine, honey and milk are heavy, sensuous liquids that leave a strong aftertaste—just like a kiss.

Guzik - The whole scene is intimate and filled with beautiful sights, smells, tastes, and words. We are poetically and tastefully brought to the point of the consummation of their intimacy.

Loved (01730) (**dod**) means beloved, loved one. 32 of 53 OT uses are found in the Song of Solomon. **Dod** conveys three thoughts (1) the name or address given by one lover to another (Song 5:4, 6:3, 7:9); (2) Love, where it speaks of the adulteress (Pr 7:18) and in a positive sense of the love between Solomon and the Shulammitte (Song 1:2, 4:10). Love is used symbolically of Jerusalem reaching the "age for love" (Ezek 16:8). **Dod** speaks of the adultery of Jerusalem in Ezek 23:17. (3) **Dod** in some contexts means "uncle" (Lev 10:4, 1Sa 10:14-16, Esther 2:15).

Dod - 53v - Lev 10:4; 20:20; 25:49; Num 36:11; 1 Sam 10:14ff; 14:50; 2 Kgs 24:17; 1 Chr 27:32; Esth 2:7, 15; Pr 7:18; Song 1:2, 4, 13f, 16; 2:3, 8ff, 16f; 4:10, 16; 5:1f, 4ff, 8ff, 16; 6:1ff; 7:9ff; 8:5, 14; Isa 5:1; Jer 32:7ff, 12; Ezek 16:8; 23:17; Amos 6:10. **Dod is translated in NAS as** beloved(31), beloved's(1), beloved's and my beloved(1), love(8), lovers(1), uncle(11), uncle's(6), uncles'(1).

Carr - "**Garments** is not the common word for clothing ... The salma is the outer garment which served both as a cloak for the day and a cover while sleeping. This latter usage gave rise to the use of the word for a bed-covering ... In the context here, some sort of sleep-wear (negligee?) may be implied." ([Ibid](#))

Grant Richison - A biblical view of sex always focuses on the mate's pleasure before one's own. After Solomon thinks of the Shulammitte, he then invites her to have sex (Song 4:8). He does not make demands but offers an invitation so that she feels safe with the experience. The Shulammitte responds positively to Solomon's invitation (Song 4:9, 10, 11)...Solomon indicates that the Shulammitte captured him sexually (Song 4:9). She ravished him by her enchanting power so that he could not resist her. He calls her his "sister," which in the ancient world meant "friend." **True sexuality has a friendship dimension** (See Word Study on NT parallel=**phileo**)...Solomon says that the Shulammitte is more intoxicating than wine. Her smell is beyond the smell of any spice (4:10). He tells her that her lips are sweet like honeycomb. He French kisses her, saying honey and milk are under her tongue (4:11). The Shulammitte placed fragrances on her clothes so that they smelled like cedar trees in Lebanon. Therefore, sight, smell, taste, and touch play a role in lovemaking. (**From his online book [Theology of Sex - Highly Recommended](#)**)

Longman on fragrance of your garments... - her clothes smell like the pleasant (and majestic) cedars of Lebanon, the most renowned wood of that part of the ancient world. Pleasant smells motivate one to move closer, to become intimate. And the next section grows more intimate indeed.

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TODAY IN THE WORD - While on an expedition to Palestine, Mark Twain met a young man named Charles Langdon from Elmira, New York. After the trip Twain visited Langdon at his home and fell in love with his sister Livy. When Langdon discovered this, he suggested that Twain leave immediately. Nobody was good enough to marry his sister. As they were about to depart, however, Twain was thrown from the seat of the wagon into the street. Although he was only dazed by the accident, Twain made the most of the opportunity. He remained with the Langdons for two more weeks and eventually married Livy.

Love, too, can make a person feel dazed. It is possible to be so overcome with love that the effect is like drunkenness. In our reading today, the groom says that the bride's love is more pleasing than wine. Elsewhere we read a description of the intoxicating effects of love (Pr. 5:19). This is a blessing, but it can also be a danger. Like the effects of wine, this rush of passion can lead to

impaired judgment.

Sadly, later in life Solomon became a victim of this. We read in 1Ki 11:1, 2, Solomon

"loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. They were from nations about which the Lord had told the Israelites, 'You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods.' Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love."

Scripture's warning proved true. Solomon's affection for his seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines prompted him to engage in false worship. "As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been" (1Ki 11:4).

Few people begin their marriage believing that they will eventually commit adultery. But misplaced affections can impair our judgment. The path to infidelity is a subtle one. It often begins with chaste friendship accompanied by a strong sense of attraction. As affections grow, the people involved grow more and more careless in their behavior.

Comment: Because of the truth expressed in the preceding devotional, it behooves every married couple to continually set a guard over their heart, for to one degree or another temptation will occur in this area of sexuality. **Memorize** and **meditate** and **put into practice** (cp Php 4:9-note and the warning of James 1:22-note) the **wisdom** of **Proverbs 4:23-see notes**. And if you are thinking something like "This could never happen to my marriage. We could never be tempted by the lure of infidelity.", dear reader, you are in even greater danger! (cp 1Pe 2:11-note where "wages war" is a picture of continual strategizing by your very own flesh! Read also Mt 26:41, Gal 5:17-note and don't forget Ep 6:11-note and "the schemes [methodeia]" of your mortal enemy, the devil, 1Pe 5:8-note, is ever on the prowl to destroy marriages, cp Jn 10:10b) Read and ponder 1Co 10:12, Pr 16:18, Live continually with a "holy fear" - Pr 28:14

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:12 "A garden locked is my sister, my bride, A rock garden locked, a spring sealed up.

13 "Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates With choice fruits, henna with nard plants,

14 Nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, With all the trees of frankincense, Myrrh and aloes, along with all the finest spices.

15 "You are a garden spring, A well of fresh water, And streams flowing from Lebanon."

Shulammitte (young woman)...

Song 4:16 "**Awake** (imperative = command), O north wind, and **come** (imperative = command), wind of the south; **Make** my garden **breathe** (imperative = command) out fragrance, Let its spices be wafted abroad. May my beloved come into his garden And eat its choice fruits!"

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:12 "A garden locked is my sister, my bride, A rock garden locked, a spring sealed up.

PRAISE FOR CHASTITY AND MORAL PURITY

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

NLT You are my private garden, my treasure, my bride, a secluded spring, a hidden fountain.

A garden locked - metaphor for Solomon's wife's loyalty to him and for no other man. She had kept herself a virgin to give to him alone! Dear readers let us learn from this Song the high value of this rare quality (sadly) in our culture! Let us teach it to our children seeking the Spirit's enablement to counter the current of moral relativism that is sweeping America in the twenty-first century. Notice the emphasis on the exclusivity and protected nature of their sexual relationship (**locked...locked...sealed up** = all suggest inaccessibility!). And by the way, there is no need to be "crude" in one's interpretation of these (or the following) metaphors!

Longman sees garden "as an image of the woman's sexuality."

Deere - Springs were sometimes covered, and fountains were sealed on the sides with clay to indicate private ownership. Similarly, she had kept herself "sealed" from all others, thus preserving her purity for her husband.

Grant Richison - The Shulammitte describes herself as a **locked garden**, an enclosed **spring**, and a sealed fountain (Song 4:12). With each phrase, she describes herself as property belonging only to Solomon. She sexually belongs only to him; the Shulammitte kept herself exclusively for Solomon (Song 4:12, 13, 14, 15). Solomon picks up the imagery of the garden in Song 4:13, 14. He

describes the Shulammitte using a list of items found in a garden. Although the Shulammitte locked the garden to other men, it was completely open to Solomon without reservation. There is a relationship between mutual, exclusive sex and sexual enjoyment. Now the Shulammitte speaks for the first time. She invites Solomon to make love with her in Song 4:16. (**From his online book [Theology of Sex - Recommended](#)**)

You are a garden spring...well of fresh water...streams flowing - **You** refers to the Shulammitte. Clearly she is not a garden, etc, thus Solomon is using metaphors to describe her. Notice the repetition of the metaphor of water (spring...well...streams), which is a wonderful picture of the Shulammitte in Solomon's eyes. Would his words build her up or tear her down? **Husbands, what lesson do we need to learn from Solomon's language?** How encouraging are your words to your wife? How does your "garden" grow? Are you "watering" the "garden" with wise words?

Longman feels 'the Song must be read in the context of the **garden** of Eden, where human sexuality is first introduced. The pervasive **garden** theme in the Song evokes memories of the **garden** before the fall. Since Adam had no suitable partner, God created Eve, and the man and the woman stood naked in the **garden** and felt no shame (Ge 2:25), exulting in one another's "flesh" (Ge 2:23-24)...the **garden** (as with the orchard and vineyard) is an image of the woman's sexuality. That there is a spring or fountain in the midst of this garden is also suggestive of the woman's most intimate place, the locus of lovemaking, her vagina. This imagery is used throughout ancient Near Eastern love poetry and elsewhere in the Bible (e.g., Prov 5:15-19)."

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:13 "Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, henna with nard plants

NET - Your shoots are a royal garden full of pomegranates with choice fruits: henna with nard,

NLT Your thighs shelter a paradise of pomegranates with rare spices-- henna with nard,

The young man delivers a tasteful figurative description of this sexually explicit scene ("Your thighs shelter a paradise"-NLT). "**Tasteful**" is a good word for all husbands! There is no room for crude sexual allusions when we approach our beloved for times of intimacy (or at any other time for that matter)!

picture - i.e., "grained apple" (pomum granatum), Heb. rimmon. Common in Egypt (Num. 20:5) and Palestine (13:23; Deut. 8:8). The Romans called it Punicum malum, i.e., Carthaginian apple, because they received it from Carthage. It belongs to the myrtle family of trees. The withering of the pomegranate tree is mentioned among the judgments of God (Joel 1:12). It is frequently mentioned in the Song of Solomon (Song 4:3, 13, etc). The skirt of the high priest's blue robe and ephod was adorned with the representation of pomegranates, alternating with golden bells (Ex. 28:33,34), as also were the "capitals upon the two pillars" (1Ki 7:20) which "stood before the house." ([See dictionary articles](#))

Orchard ([06508 - פַּרְדֵּס](#)) (**pardes**) means a preserve or park and is translated in Lxx with **paradeisos** which is transliterated into our English word "**paradise**." Used only in Neh 2:8 ("king's forest"), Eccl 2:5 ("gardens and **parks**") and here in Song 4:13. The original Old Persian (Avestan) term pairidaeza designated the enclosed parks and pleasure-grounds which were the exclusive domain of the Persian kings and nobility in the Achaemenid period. The Babylonian term pardesu means "marvelous garden," in reference to the enclosed parks of the kings. The term passed into Greek as paradeisos, "enclosed park, pleasure-ground", referring to the enclosed parks and gardens of the Persian kings.

Song 4:13-14 The word **paradise** may mean simply "park" or "orchard," but it may also allude to the perfection of Eden. The Hebrew rendered branches is difficult to translate but not difficult to understand. It refers to all the "extensions" from the garden soil: all the fruits, trees, and spices. It is not the word for "garden," but for all that the garden contains, so it anticipates the entire description in Song 4:13-14. Pomegranates were symbols of lovemaking and fertility; henna had small red and white blossoms; nard was famous for its aroma; saffron was linked with nard, possibly because the spices were in the saffron's stigmata, which when gathered together resembled a handful of yarn, perhaps providing a delicate metaphor of Shulammitte's sexuality. Calamus (Hb qaneh) and cinnamon (Hb qinnamon) are alliterative and, like nard and saffron, combine plant (the long, green-ribboned leaves of the calamus that grew in marshes) with fragrance. The trees of frankincense continue the movement to the larger, more overwhelming beauty of the garden, perhaps a metaphor for the increasing intensity of the experience. (HCSB)

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:14 Nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all the trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, along with all the finest spices

**A PLETHORA OF
PRECIOUS SPICES**

NET - nard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon with every kind of spice, myrrh and aloes with all the finest spices.

NLT nard and saffron, fragrant calamus and cinnamon, with all the trees of frankincense, myrrh, and aloes, and every other lovely spice.

Solomon (young man)...

Song 4:15 "You are a garden spring, a well of fresh water (living water), and streams flowing from Lebanon"

NET - You are a garden spring, a well of fresh water flowing down from Lebanon.

NLT You are a garden fountain, a well of fresh water streaming down from Lebanon's mountains.

Constable - Though she had kept her most intimate parts from others in the past, they were now open to Solomon, and he experienced full satisfaction with her love. ([Song of Solomon Commentary](#))

Deere observes that "This part of the metaphor contrasts with her inaccessibility as a garden and water in Song 4:12."

That which was "inaccessible" in Song 4:12 is "accessible" to the young man!

Compare Pr 5:15 - Drink water from your own cistern, and fresh water from your own well.

NET Note on garden spring - Heb "a fountain of gardens" or "a headwaters for gardens." The term מַעְיָן (m'yan, "fountain") denotes "source, headwaters" as the place of origin of streams (HALOT 612 s.v. מַעְיָן). The term does not refer to a water fountain such as commonly found in modern cultivated gardens or parks; rather, it refers to the headwaters of streams and rivers, such as Banyas as the headwaters of the Jordan....In Song 4:12–14 the bride is figuratively described as a garden with exotic plants; however, in 4:15 the metaphor shifts to the source of the water for the garden: מַעְיָן ("headwaters") and בְּאֵר (bé'er, "well") of fresh water flowing down from Lebanon. ([NET Notes on Song 4](#))

NET Note on fresh water - Heb "living water." The phrase מַיִם חַיִּים (mayim khayyim, "living water") refers to flowing, fresh water in contrast to standing, stagnant water (Gen 26:19; Lev 14:5–6, 50–52; 15:13; Num 19:17; Jer 2:13; 17:13; Zech 14:8; Song 4:15)....The adjective חַיִּים ("living") frequently refers to what is fresh (Ge 26:19), healthy (Sir 30:14), or thriving (Ge 43:7, 27). Fresh, flowing water is pictured as pure (Lev 14:5–6, 50–52; 15:13) and a source of refreshment (Ge 26:19). ([Ibid](#))

Guzik - The idea is not that this metaphorical spring or fountain is dried up and useless; rather that it is protected so that its water can only go to its rightful owner. "To 'seal' a spring was to enclose it and protect the water for its rightful owner; Hezekiah did this when he had the tunnel dug from the Virgin's Spring at Gihon to the Pool of Siloam to safeguard Jerusalem's water supply [2 Kings 20:20]." ([Carr](#))

Glickman - Her **garden** is a **paradise** of delightful fruits, fragrant flowers, colorful blossoms, towering trees and aromatic spices. She is overwhelmingly beautiful, as refreshing and uplifting as spring flowers and enchanting spices. She was the embodiment of the rich life of spring itself. ([Ibid](#)).

Guzik - In seeing the goodness and honor and blessing of virginity—of a woman's sexuality being protected and not trampled upon until it is ready to be properly yielded in marriage—it is almost impossible for those women who have not properly guarded their virginity (or worse yet had it stolen from them) to feel that they can never enjoy this blessing or anything like it. It is true that once entered, this garden can no longer be un-entered. But to extend the garden metaphor, a garden that has been trodden upon and is in disarray can be restored again to health and beauty through wisdom, self-control, effort, and most importantly through the work of the Master Gardener (the one who created the woman's sexuality). It cannot be un-entered if it already has been, but it can be restored to goodness. These principles apply equally unto men, who may of course also unwisely forfeit their virginity. Like the woman taken in adultery and brought before Jesus, one can hear the words from their Savior, "Neither do I condemn You" and "Go and sin no more."

Shulammitte (young woman)...

Song 4:16 "Awake (imperative = command), O north wind, and come (imperative = command), wind of the south; Make my garden breathe (imperative = command) out fragrance, Let its spices be wafted abroad. May my beloved come into his garden And eat its choice fruits!"

THE YOUNG WOMAN'S INVITATION TO INTIMACY

NET - Awake, O north wind; come, O south wind! Blow on my garden so that its fragrant spices may send out their sweet smell.

May my beloved come into his garden and eat its delightful fruit!

NLT Awake, north wind! Rise up, south wind! Blow on my garden and spread its fragrance all around. Come into your garden, my love; taste its finest fruits.

Awake...come...make...breathe - Three imperatives. She is calling for the wind to carry the fragrances (described in Song 4:13-14) to the young man

POSB - The word **awake** ('uwr) is the same word the young woman had used in her admonitions to her friends in Song 2:7 and Song 3:5. She had charged them to not stir up the passions of love until they were married. This had been her faithful, diligent practice, and now the right person and the right time had arrived to awaken her full, unrestrained, sexual desires. She continued the love language of her groom, and invited the winds to carry her fragrance to her beloved husband. Her call to both the north and south winds told her husband that she desired their lovemaking to be strong and passionate as well as tender and caring. ([Ibid](#))

Criswell - The Shulamite tastefully, poetically, and directly invites her lover to come and fully possess her in intimate lovemaking. She is available and willing for him to enjoy her as one would enjoy the choice fruits of a garden.

Longman on north wind...wind of the south - The mention of these two winds coming from opposite directions is a **merism** that signifies that the woman is opening herself completely and without reservation to the man.

Glickman - As the breezes of spring are the fragrant messengers of a garden sent to lure the outside world within, so now she requests those breezes to blow upon her garden and bring her lover to her ... With poetic beauty and propriety she asks her lover to possess her. ([Ibid](#))

Deere - The beloved's request that the winds blow on her garden, that is, herself (cf. Song 4:12, 15) was a delicate, poetically beautiful invitation to her lover to fully possess her (come into her).

Guzik on may my beloved come into his garden And eat its choice fruits - This is the moment of yielded virginity, where the beloved is invited to enjoy the previously protected and sealed sexuality of the maiden. A line before, the maiden called it "my garden"; now it was his garden. Her virginity, her sexuality, was protected so that it could be fully given to her beloved. "And she calls the garden both hers and his, because of the oneness which is between them ... whereby they have a common interest one in another's person and concerns." (Poole). The description is poetic and shy; the experience was deep and moving.. He and he alone has the right to eat the pleasant fruits of her garden; only he can enjoy the pleasure and blessing of the maiden's sexuality.

My garden...his garden - Notice the change of pronouns as she invites her beloved to possess her. She was now fully his, withholding nothing from him. (cp 1Cor 7:4).

My beloved - The young woman's term of endearment for the young man. This **specific phrase "my beloved"** occurs 24x in 23v - Song 1:13, 14, 16; 2:3, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17; 4:16; 5:2, 4, 5, 6 (twice), Song 5:8, 10, 16; 6:2, 3; 7:9, 11, 13; 8:14. (There are only 2 other uses in the entire OT - Isaiah 5:1, God referring to Israel and Jeremiah 11:15).

Guzik - Seeing the high value of virginity also helps us to understand the Biblical commands against pre-marital sex. It is helpful to refute many myths about pre-marital sex:

- **Myth: "The Bible says nothing against premarital sex."** Fact: The high value placed on virginity, seen here and in other passages such as Deuteronomy 22:13–29 shows premarital sex is wrong. But it also clearly found in the passages that speak against the sexual sin known in the New Testament as porneia, and commonly translated "fornication" (1 Corinthians 6:13 and 6:18; Ephesians 5:3 and 5:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Porneia broadly refers to all types of sexual activity outside of marriage (including homosexuality); it encompasses practically all sexual behavior outside of that which is practiced between a husband and a wife in the bonds of their marriage.
- **Myth: "He wants to have sex with me because he loves me."** Fact: His love for you will be proved by his willingness to wait for marriage. The desire for sex does not prove love in a man. In one survey, 55% of men said "yes" to the following question: "If you could be certain that your wife or girlfriend would never know, would you have sex with any of her friends?" And to the question, "Have you ever had sex with a woman you have actively disliked?" 58% of men said "yes". You are foolish if you think a boy loves you—or even likes you—because he wants to have sex with you.
- **Myth: "My boyfriend is a Christian and loves the Lord. I don't have to worry about that."** Fact: Christian men face the same challenges as non-Christians when it comes to sexual desires and lusts. They have the ability to overcome those lusts by the power of the Holy Spirit, but it isn't easy and many who thought they were strong enough have fallen to these sins.

• **Myth: “We are going to get married, so it doesn’t matter.”** Fact: It does matter. First, you are setting a value on your own sexuality; there is a sense in which a woman then gives her future husband the right to treat her as an object. Second, you are setting a pattern; you are agreeing that in some circumstances, sex outside of marriage is acceptable, and this is something you don’t want in your mind or in the mind of your marriage partner; especially because one of the most important aspects of a long lasting, fulfilling sexual relationship is trust. Third, you are only taking away from the blessing God intends for your sexual relationship when married.

• **Myth: “We can be married before God.”** Fact: If you were on a desert island without any intuitions of government or society, this might be an argument. But marriage in both the Biblical and cultural sense is being joined together in a public ceremony that is recognized as legal and legitimate by the law and the culture. You aren’t on a desert island.

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TODAY IN THE WORD - Despite evidence that indicates they are effective, abstinence programs continue to be a controversial approach to sex education in many public schools. Most abstinence programs do not use the Bible to convince young people not to have sex before marriage, but their strategy is based upon the old-fashioned biblical value of chastity.

Usually supporters argue that they do a better job of protecting young people from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. One program in Tennessee, for example, was credited with helping the county drop its state ranking in teen pregnancies from first to sixty-fourth, accomplished in three years.

In today’s reading, we find another important benefit to chastity. It not only protects from disease and unwanted pregnancy, it also enhances the beauty of sex in marriage.

The groom praises the chaste character of his bride by describing her as a “garden locked up,” a “spring enclosed” and a “sealed fountain.” The practice of abstinence did not make her seem like a prude, but rather like a beautiful private garden. Old Testament commentator Franz Delitzsch notes, “To a locked garden and spring no one has access but the rightful owner, and a sealed fountain is shut against all impurity.”

The practice of chastity is not rooted in a hatred of sex but an understanding of its true value. The chaste person recognizes the beauty of moral purity. Abstinence did not make the bride less attractive to Solomon, it increased his longing for her. Moral purity enhances one’s enjoyment of sex.

Chastity is a relevant issue for single and married alike. Both have an obligation to control their own bodies that today’s verse describes as “in a way that is holy and honorable” (1Th 4:4). For the single person this means abstaining from sexual activity until marriage. For the married person it means keeping the gate to this garden of secret delights locked to all but one’s spouse. Hebrews 13:4 warns, “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”

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Joe Guglielmo's Sermon Notes

SONG OF SOLOMON 4

Song 4:1-5

Do you think Solomon loves her? You bet he does and he tells her that there is no one who can compare with her! He is showing her how much he loves her by what he is saying to her.

Now what I want you to notice is that this love is not conditional. He does not say, “I’ll love you if you do this.” Or “I’ll love you when you do that.” Or “I love you but . . .” He tells his bride “I LOVE YOU - PERIOD!”

It is as Paul said in I Corinthians 13:4-8a, “Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.” If that is the kind of love we have for each other in our marriage then we would not have any problems. But once we move away from this Agape love, this unconditional love and start focusing on self, there are many problems. But Solomon shows unconditional love here for his bride!

There is great comfort in that. That kind of love removes fear. The wife can be who she is and does not have to live up to his standard. She sees his love for her and she can rest in that. That is how it should be in marriage men! It is as John said regarding God's love for us in I John 4:18. He said "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." May we have that kind of love for our wife!

Now I would not encourage you to use the phrases he is using to describe your wife, but back then they meant something and I guess something better than they do today. I am not sure if dove's eyes are beautiful, I have never looked that closely but to Solomon they were!

In regards to the goat's hair, their hair was black and as they gathered on the mountain side it looked like black silky hair. It was beautiful. If you say that about your wife today, that her hair is like goats hair, she might be a little mad. But back then, it was thought of as beautiful.

She has beautiful white teeth that were straight and she wasn't missing any I think is the idea here. Her lips were beautiful, no Botox here! Her temples were beautiful, her neck like "the tower of David" may be speaking that it was long! And he even speaks of her breasts as being satisfying to him.

Solomon is in love, he is head over heels in love with her! He is not embarrassed by speaking of her beauty and we should not be embarrassed to let others see that we love our wife! Now this might blow you away but God is head over heels in love with us!

Song 4:6

We are not sure who is speaking here. Some feel it is Solomon and he is just expressing his desire to be alone with his bride. It could be. But I lean more to this being his bride speaking, maybe embarrassed by what was said of her because as you get to verse 7 you see Solomon speak of his bride once again and how there were no imperfections in her, none at all!

I think this is also a beautiful picture of how we feel. We feel we don't deserve God's love and we don't. We don't think we are beautiful and I guess we are not in our own eyes but the Lord sees us as beautiful. But as we read on and see what Solomon says and as a picture of Christ and what He says to us, His bride, it does fit.

Song 4:7-8

Men, here is a lesson for us to learn. Our wives need to be comforted and that is exactly what Solomon is doing here. He comforts her insecurity by telling her she is perfect; there is no spot or blemish that he sees in her. Now I also like that because that is how God sees us. Not as we are, but what we will be in glory.

We have not reached that perfect state, God is bringing us to it, as Philippians 1:6 tells us, "being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Notice that I am not confident in myself that I will complete the work, but in God that what He began in my life He will complete. He began the work of my salvation some 30 plus years ago and what He started He will finish. You see, we should not have confidence in our flesh, only in Him. He chose me, called me, and will perfect me in Christ and the same with you. He will complete the work He has begun as Jude 24 says, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

We are told that he has come to pick up his bride in the area of Lebanon and is now bringing her home to Jerusalem. Glickman sums what is going on here for us as he wrote, "In asking her to come from such fearful places, he is really asking her to bring her thoughts completely to him and leave her fears behind and perhaps to leave the lingering thoughts of home behind as well . . . he wished her to leave her fear and anxiety about the new life of marriage and simply come to him . . . So he calls her from her fears to his arms."

Song 4:9-11

Do you think Solomon is in love? You bet he is, Solomon is love struck! Was Solomon physically attracted to her? You bet he was but that love was even deeper than that, he loved the beauty that was in her and that overflowed outwardly.

One of the things that attracted me to my wife, well, it was everything but there was one thing that drew me to her and that were her eyes. They are beautiful. "Pastor Joe, you were drawn to Julie because of her outward beauty?" Yes, you bet! I know, some will tell you that physical attraction is wrong. They will say that it is of the flesh. I disagree.

I think we should be physically attracted to the one we love, and as that relationship grows, it no longer is just a physical attraction, but runs much deeper. If it doesn't, the relationship will fade away, break up. Solomon was attracted to her beauty and like I have said, that beauty was not only outward!

Solomon is so excited that the one he loves is going to be his bride. And he speaks of this love that they had together and the word used here for “love” speaks of romantic love expressed with physical contact. He is telling her that the love they share together was more refreshing and more intoxicating than wine. All their senses were involved in this romantic love; sight, smell, touch and sound!

I can't imagine being married to someone that you did not love that way. Coming home day in and day out and there is no spark, there is nothing. That would be horrible. I realize that some would have you believe that intimacy, this kind of love is wrong, some even go to the extreme and feel that sex is wrong between a husband and wife if you are not trying to have children. Give me a break. God has given us sex to enjoy between a husband and his wife. Do I have Scripture to support that? You bet I do, for Paul tells us in Hebrews 13:4, “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” So if you are not enraptured with your spouse, why not?

Song 4:12-15

That phrase, “A garden enclosed” is a euphemism speaking of her virginity. He speaks of how much he valued her purity. I wish people would value their virginity today. The world has taken something that God has given us, the joy of sexual relations between married couples and has cheapened it, there seems to be no real value to being a virgin prior to your marriage today. And if you are people make fun of you, go figure!

How wrong a concept that is and I wish people would understand that. For those of you who aren't married, don't believe a person who tells you they love you and then want to have sex with you outside of marriage. They don't love you, they lust you! The relationship between Solomon and his bride was rich and deep and they did not have sexual relations until they were married.

Song 4:16

Keep in mind that they are married and she is calling for him to come and enjoy the fruits of her garden, to be intimate with her. Please understand what is going on here. The wedding ceremony began with a procession of the bridegroom coming to pick up his bride at her home. They were then escorted to the home he had built for them to live in, and that night the couple consummated their marriage. Then, the feast would continue on, sometimes lasting several days. It is on this first night that she is beckoning for him to come into her and consummate the marriage.

In a spiritual sense, we are to let the beauty of the Lord come upon us so that His fragrance may flow through us and touch the lives of others. And the only way that the fragrance of the Lord is going to permeate your life is if you come in contact with Him.

Paul tells us in II Corinthians 2:14-17, “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.”

I think many times, because we are so far removed from that culture we miss what is going on. Paul takes this illustration from the Roman Triumph Parade that was given to generals who were successful in battle, returning home in victory. Of this Barclay tells us:

In a Triumph the procession of the victorious general marched through the streets of Rome to the Capitol . . . first came the state officials and the senate. Then came the trumpeters. Then were carried the spoils taken from the conquered land . . . Then came the pictures of the conquered land and models of conquered citadels and ships. There followed the white bull for sacrifice which would be made. Then there walked the captive princes, leaders and generals in chains, shortly to be flung into prison and in all probability almost immediately to be executed. Then came the lectors bearing their rods, followed by the musicians with their lyres; then the priests swinging their censers with the sweet-smelling incense burning in them. After that came the general himself . . . finally came the army wearing all the decorations and shouting lo triumphe! Their cry of triumph. As the procession moved through the streets, all decorated and garlanded, amid the cheering crowds, it made a tremendous day which might happen only once in a lifetime. . . . That is the picture that is in Paul's mind. He sees Christ marching in triumph throughout the world, and himself in that conquering train. It is a triumph which, Paul is certain, nothing can stop.”- William Barclay

As Christ marches in He is leading us, and as we are close to Jesus the fragrance of our Leader, Jesus Christ permeates our lives and those around us will smell the fragrance of Jesus. The question is, “What kind of smell are you leaving behind?”

Now how does the world respond to the aroma that we leave behind? Paul says that to all we are the aroma of God just as the incense burnt to the gods in a Roman Triumph Parade spoke of the aroma, the power of the Roman general and Rome itself. This smell though did affect people differently. If you were part of Rome it was wonderful, joyous but if you were the defeated enemy it was the smell of death! For those that believe and receive Jesus into their lives it speaks of life, but for those that reject Jesus it is

the smell of death, eternal separation from God!

We also need to remember that we were created for His pleasure, for God to enjoy, and the fruit that is born in our lives is for Him to enjoy, it is for His glory. We think it is all about us and it isn't. I am not saying that God does not bless us, He does. But what we tend to do is put the cart in front of the horse and seek after all that we want, all that we desire instead of bringing God pleasure. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." He is first and if we have that right God will take care of our needs, not our wants. Focus is everything and our focus needs to be on the Lord. Remember what we are told in Revelation 4:11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (King James Version).

You see, people can't find satisfaction in their life even though their life is filled with all kinds of things because they are not doing what they have been created for, to bring pleasure to God! Folks, I can't imagine not coming to worship the Lord, I would be here every night if I could, but that is not the only way we worship the Lord. We worship the Lord in all that we do! And thus, if you want true satisfaction in your life, if you want peace like a river flowing from your life, if you want true fulfillment in your life, you need to submit your life to the King of kings and Lord of lords! He has created all things and for His pleasure we are and were created, may we not forget that! ([Song of Solomon](#)) -