# SONG OF SOLOMON

CONFLICT & RESOLUTION – (5:2-6:3)

Part 1

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What are typical things that bring conflict in marriage or in relationships?
2. How do you “react” to your mate? For some it may be the silent treatment, for others, it’s like tripping a land mine. What are some unhealthy ways you’ve reacted to your mate in the past?
3. Our natural response to any offense is to retaliate and seek revenge. Is that Biblical? Look up 1 Thessalonians 5:15 and 1 Peter 2:21-25. How can these verses apply to marital conflict?
4. Has nagging ever helped transform a person? Why do we resort to nagging our spouses? From today’s lesson, what is the best way to seek transformation in our spouse?
5. Have you noticed traits in your spouse that you appreciate even more as a result of conflict? What are they?

No marriage is without conflict. A truly vibrant marriage is going to be marked by discussion; at times lively. Healthy disagreements arise naturally because both individuals maintain their unique perspectives, ideas and opinions. Debate is common about which course of action to take, since each person has individual preferences and reasons for holding them. Discussion, disagreement and debate, however, do not need to degenerate into a cold war. Discussions should reach a conclusion, disagreements should resolve into agreement, and debates should come to a decisive course of action. Marriages without conflict aren’t healthy and growing. It is far better to get differences of opinion out in the open than to keep them stuffed inside for the sake of perceived peace. Such peace is going to be fragile and eventually reach a breaking point. We will discuss the six stages of conflict and resolution after we review the annotations of the text.

**ANNOTATIONS OF VERSES:** Song of Songs 5:2-6:3 (CONFLICT & RESOLUTION)

Many scholars believe that Song of Solomon 5:2 -9 is a dream sequence of the Shulamite that followed a night of physical intimacy. It is not unusual to have a wonderful and exciting honeymoon that is followed by some type of conflict. (*The devil comes immediately to steal…Luke 8:12)*. One of the reasons given to support the dream theory is the way the Shulamite woman is treated by the watchmen in verse 7…*they struck me, they wounded me…they took my veil…*the contention is that Solomon would have their heads if they did this. I believe there is merit to the theory; but my focus is on the conflict that occurs and the means to resolving it.

(5:2) *“I sleep, but my heart is awake; it is the voice of my beloved! He knocks, saying, Open for me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is covered with dew, my locks with the drops of night*.” It appears that Solomon had been gone all night and returned early morning and came to the bedchambers of his bride (men and women had separate bed chambers in those days) knocking, seeking emotional and physical intimacy.

(5:3) *“I have taken off my robe; how can I put it on again? I have washed my feet; how can I defile them?”* Apparently she had gotten tired of waiting up for him and refused him when he came home; in modern language she is saying – I’VE GOT A HEADACHE!

(5:4-6) *“My beloved put his hand by the latch of the door, and my heart yearned for him. I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the lock. I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer*.” Solomon doesn’t force his way in, he is gentle and kind. He had spoken sweetly and lovingly to her. The myrrh that he left on the latch was a symbol of sweetness and his

attitude toward her was tender. As a result she is aroused by his kindness and tenderness. Note that Solomon had left myrrh on the lock – the very thing that kept him out; he overcame bad with good.

(5:7) “*The watchmen who went about the city found me. They struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me*.” The husband doesn’t punish her but she is chastened – let God chasten and correct your mate.

(5:8) *“I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him I am lovesick.”* The woman begins to speak poetically of Solomon’s kindness and infers that she cannot live without him.

(5:9) “*What is your beloved more than another beloved, O fairest among women? What is your beloved more than another beloved, that you so charge us?”* Her friends are asking, what is so special about this guy and what do you want us to tell him?

In verses 10-16 the Shulamite begins to describe the aspects of Solomon that sets him apart from all other men in her eyes. This shows the importance of man’s need for affirmation and appreciation as well as a woman.

(5:10) *“My beloved is white and ruddy, chief* (distinguished) *among ten thousand.”* He shines with divine favor; he was pure in his motives and behavior toward her. Ruddy, literally is red or rare; was descriptive of his father David which referred to his uniqueness.

(5:11) *“His head is like the finest gold; his locks are wavy, and black as a raven.”* He is respected even as a youth. His hair was black, with no evidence of the weakness of age.

(5:12) *“His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.”* Eyes of a dove symbolic of gentleness, beside rivers of waters speak of the fullness of blessings; fitly set, speaks of being fixed and unchanging; his focus was on her.

(5:13) *“His cheeks are like a bed of spices, banks of scented herbs. His lips are lilies, dripping liquid myrrh*.” Always affectionate, sweet and kind – his lips are full of blessings, gentleness and compliments.

(5:14) *“His hands are rods of gold set with beryl. His body is carved ivory inlaid with sapphires.”* He touches her with divine affection – he is spiritually strong (body should be translated abdomen or stomach; in Jewish culture, the stomach was the seat of emotions and spirituality.

(5:15) *“His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of fine gold. His countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars*.” She is proud of him – he is strong, unmoving, and steadfast from head to toe. He is majestic and lofty.

(5:16) *“His mouth is most sweet, yes, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem!”* His words are sweet which gives evidence of his heart. All women want a man who is a best friend.

(6:1) *“Where has your beloved gone, O fairest among women? Where has your beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with you?”* Many men would have put away their wives for lack of respect but she knew right where Solomon was – he had not left her – he had an unchanging character.

(6:2) “*My beloved has gone to his garden, to the bed of spices, to feed his flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies*.” Solomon had gone about his work and routine of his life, so she knew where he was and what he was doing.

(6:3) “*I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine. He feeds his flock among the lilies*.” She knows whose she is and whose he is. They belonged to each other.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT CONFLICT & RESOLUTION

***SIX STAGES OF CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION:***

## Both Parties Feel Harmed

Conflict occurs when both parties feel in some way wronged, denied, misunderstood, or unappreciated. We see this when Solomon comes knocking on the bed chamber door and she turns him away. Solomon continues to express his longing and love for her but she refuses to open the door. Two persons feeling wronged is the first part of a conflict.

At this stage of feeling wronged a conflict can be most easily resolved. HOW? You can determine that you do not need to react as your mate has reacted. Your response is subject to your will. Strife begins at the point when you allow yourself to have hurt feelings and then you choose to nurse that hurt and wallow in it.

Express yourself, but wait until your emotional temperature has cooled. Wait also until the one who has hurt you has cooled off or is in a good frame of mind to hear what you have to say.

What fuels a conflict rather than defuses it is the attitude, *“I am walking away from you until you get your act together and repent”* or stomping out of the room. Continue to pursue love and commit the person to God in prayer – allow God to work in the situation.

## A Change of Heart

When recognition is made that there is a conflict, then someone must experience a change of heart if there is to be a full reconciliation or resolution. That change of heart will then lead a person to “go after” the other mate to make amends and resolve the conflict. The Shulamite woman recognized that she and Solomon were in conflict and that she erred in her behavior. She knew she erred and felt the pain of conviction because God chastened her. Solomon did not inflict the pain upon her; it was the “watchmen,” the faithful guardians of God’s people. If your spouse wrongs you, give God time to work in your mate’s heart. It’s wrong to threaten abandonment, separation, or divorce in order to get your way in a marriage. That’s manipulation and not ministry. Ask God to do what you cannot do, and that is to change the human heart and transform the human mind.

## Reaching Out to Make Amends

Once Solomon’s wife renewed within her mind a right attitude and a loving perspective toward her husband, she went in search of him. The good news is that she knew exactly where her husband was to be found – because he had an unchanging character. He was consistent in his beliefs, his ethics, his morality, his opinions, and his behavior. (*She learned this during the dating and courtship stage).* Solomon was going about his work and daily routine. He was cultivating his gardens and tending his flock

Regardless of the conflict they had – they were committed to each other, thus having an “us” relationship. They were one. **Unless there is a desire to reconcile, no reconciliation can occur.**

There may be cases in which one person needs to separate momentarily from a spouse who is abusive, out of control, suffering from an addiction, or in need of physical or emotional treatment. But in such cases the spouse can continue to trust God, believe for God’s best, and hold out hope for healing and reconciliation. It is also important that the parties get professional help at this point along with their commitment to pray and be involved in a community of believers that will support and stand with them.

PART 2 will cover the last 3 stages…