

# Explore the Bible: August 30

By Laura Lee Leathers

**Relational Investment • Song of Songs 5:6-16**



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Actor Jackie Gleason created the sitcom entitled, *The Honeymooners*, in 1955. It depicted a working-class married couple, living in a neglected apartment in Brooklyn. The show dealt with various aspects of Ralph and Alice Kramdens' life together and his poor choices that resulted in some unusual predicaments. It was clear their honeymoon was over!

The honeymoon period refers to a time of initial bliss. Everything is new, rosy, or hunky-dory. It can apply to a pastor's first month at a new church, the initial weeks on a new job, or the months that follow the wedding day. Eventually the newness wears off, conflicts and tensions arise, and reality sets in. The actuality that the honeymoon phase is over is addressed in Song of Songs, chapters five through eight. The happy couple has their first argument! Reconciliation occurs from 6:4 through 8:14; the newlyweds learn how to invest in each other for the betterment of their marriage.

**The Cry for Companionship (Song of Songs 5:6-8 ESV).** Commentators differ regarding the passage referring to another dream from the new bride, or if the situation was a reality. Either way, the point is this to remember the "little foxes" referred to in 2:15! They are visiting!

The scene unfolds with the bride hearing a knock at the door. She opens it only to discover her beloved is gone. She looked for him and he had vanished. She called after him but there was no reply. Could this signify the husband and wife's failure to meet the emotional needs of one another?

While seeking her husband in verse seven, there is a description of the watchmen and abuse. It's unlikely that this happened, because she was the king's wife and protected by security. An all-points bulletin was issued, asking the daughters of Jerusalem to assist in locating her beloved because she was "sick with love." The takeaway from this section is: "Marriages get into trouble when spouses are distant emotionally even though they're present physically" (Lifeway).

**The Call for Remembering (Song of Songs 5:9 NIV).** Using questions is an excellent tool to help us remember various situations. A good interrogator knows how to ask the right questions, causing the individual to remember the 'whys' and 'how comes.' The young women ask not once but twice, "How is your beloved better than others?"

Couples married for many years will tell you they have changed significantly since they first met. They have weathered many challenges, celebrated in many ways, and along the journey their relationship has grown substantially. "Remembering why you got into a relationship in the first place can help keep you in that relationship" (Lifeway).

**The Crux for Celebrating (Song of Songs 5:10-16).** There are three distinct themes in this passage, as the bride recounts all of the excellent characteristics of her husband. She begins with his physical attributes: strength (v. 10), his hair (v. 11), his eyes (v. 12), his face and lips (v. 13), his arms and body (v. 14), his physique and physical presence (v. 15), and even his kisses (v. 16).

The next theme is that of her husband being her friend (v. 16). How often have you heard an older couple say, referring to their spouse, that he or she is my best friend? Their relationship takes priority over all other friendships. There is an investment of time, communication, and companionship.

Third is the bride's desire to support and work towards a true partnership. The bottom line is this: "Successful marriages are multi-dimensional: emotional, mental, and physical" (Lifeway).

In *The Honeymooners* the Kramdens argued consistently, yet it's apparent Ralph thought Alice was the greatest and vice versa. Couples must invest in their relationship, just as believers must invest in their relationship with God. And... "Away we go!"

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