

Creating Intimacy with Your Husband through Honor *Lesson 7*

Men in particular need to know that their wives believe in them. Men need to know their wives admire them. When a woman communicates genuine admiration to her husband, he feels special. In fact, Dr. Willard Harley states, “When she tells him that she appreciates him for what he has done, it gives him greater satisfaction than he receives from his paycheck.”¹

Song of Songs 1:12-14

**12 While the king was at his table,
my perfume spread its fragrance.**

**13 My lover is to me a sachet of myrrh
resting between my breasts.**

**14 My lover is to me a cluster of henna blossoms
from the vineyards of En Gedi.**

In verses 12-14 the woman reciprocates the man’s comments (verses 10-11) by her own praise of her man. She is expressing how much she values her man.

“While the king was at his table, my perfume spread its fragrance.” --1:12

The table was probably a round couch where one reclined to eat. It was a place to relax and converse. The metaphor is a table surrounded with the most delightful perfumes and the woman’s presence is the most fragrant perfume of all.

Nard or perfume was derived from a plant in north and east India. Quite fragrant and expensive, it was used as a love charm in the Ancient Near East. It is also interesting to note that nard emits its scent only when it is rubbed.

“My lover is to me a sachet of myrrh resting between my breasts.” -- 1:13

While the man calls the woman by the pet name – *darling* (verse 9), now, in verse 13, the woman calls her man *my lover*. She uses this pet name twenty-seven times in the book. The word expresses her joy and delight in him. *My lover* describes how she sees her man. She does not see him as a warrior, a worker, or a father; instead, she sees him as her lover.

A husband has many roles. He may be the provider, the handyman, the gentle father, the disciplinarian of the children. He may be the protector, and the strong shoulder to lean on. A man does not resent these roles, but he is incomplete if he is not also viewed as a lover. Notice how secure the man feels in verse 13 as he is resting peacefully with the woman. A man feels special when he is physically and emotionally close to his wife.

¹Willard Harley, His Needs, Her Needs, 156-7.

A sachet of myrrh between the woman's breast was an Oriental custom in which a woman would wear a small sack of myrrh around her neck at night. All the next day the fragrance would linger with her. The woman of the Song of Songs sees the presence of her man lingering with her all through the day.

“My lover is to me a cluster of henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi.” – 1:14

The woman continues to sing the praise of her man by comparing him to a bouquet of flowers from Solomon's oasis garden. En Gedi was a vineyard Solomon had planted west of the Dead Sea. It was a luxurious oasis nestled in a ravine in the desert. Excavation at Tell el-Jurn shows considerable evidence that there was at one time a major perfume industry at En Gedi.

Notice in verses 12-14 that the woman does not praise the man's physical appearance, but instead she praises how the man's presence makes her feel. The thought of their relationship lingers in her mind as the scent of perfume lingers through the day. The woman sees her man as an oasis in a desert. The way for a wife to make her husband feel special is by letting him know that he makes her happy. In every activity from love making to cleaning out the garage, men feel special when they know they have pleased their wives.

The woman in the Song of Songs refers to her man as being like the oasis of En Gedi. A man and woman should be able to find refuge from a dry and parched world in the security of their home. The marriage relationship should promote growth in a world that often hampers improvement. It seems that when our marriage is growing in intimacy, we have the courage to face difficulties in other areas of life. In other words, when all else is going badly, an intimate marriage can make life seem good. When everything is falling apart in the man's life, the unconditional love he finds at home may be the only thing between him and total breakdown.