

The Song of Songs

LESSON 6: SEX AND THE SENSES

Intro:

BIG IDEA: All our _____ contribute to marital love's _____ and worship.

Structure:

Beloved

¹² While the king was on his couch,
my nard gave forth its fragrance.
¹³ My beloved is to me a sachet of myrrh
that lies between my breasts.
¹⁴ My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms
in the vineyards of Engedi.

- The scene shifts from the fields to the _____.
- “*On his couch*” could be translated “*at his table*.” The idea is _____ together: intimacy.
- “Nard was an ointment derived from a plant that grew in northern and eastern India. It was considered very fragrant and quite expensive.”³³
- Nard was used as a _____ in the ANE.
- Origen notes that the plant produces its smell when the stem is _____.
- Her beloved (the king or the shepherd or are they the same guy?) is like _____.
- Myrrh is a _____ from trees in Arabia & India. It was valuable and used as an _____.
- It perfumed _____ for special people and/or special occasions, lovers’ bed (Prov. 7:17) and to prepare women to visit the _____ (Esther 2:12).
- Women would wear this satchel _____ so the fragrance would linger the next day.
- “*Lies*” or “*rests*” is a weak translation. Gledhill suggests it should be “*spends the night*.”³⁴
- The idea would be that her lover between her breasts is a _____ as a sachet of myrrh there.³⁵

³³ Kinlaw, pp. 1220.

³⁴ Gledhill, pp. 116.

³⁵ Longman, pp. 106.

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“Cyril of Alexandria is at his creative best when she suggests that this verse describes what we today would call biblical theology. The breasts are the Old and New Testaments, presumably only linked by their two-ness, Jesus Christ is the sachet of myrrh. . . . Jesus spans the testaments as the sachet spans the woman’s two breasts.” **Tremper Longman**³⁶



- Henna was a _____ found in the region. People used the leaves to produce a bright _____ - _____ dye.
- Sprigs of henna were often worn in the _____ and _____ of young women, which may link it to the previous verse.
- The blossoms are quite _____. She enjoys his smell and is drawn to him.
- En Gedi is an _____ on the western shore of the Dead Sea. It was a center for the _____ business. It also had a _____ and stream, hidden and private, adding a hint of _____.
- If he is the henna blossoms, and she was previously a _____ (vs. 8), this could be another allusion to _____.
- Marital sex is viewed as a very _____ and _____ act of love shared. Their love is blossoming!

³⁶ Longman, pp. 106

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- The sense of smell is very important to lovemaking. A pleasant smell draws a lover in, an unpleasant smell _____ desire.



Christian Allegorical Interpretation: “We have before us a picture of King Jesus sitting at his table, a table spread with the rich morsels of the gospel, manifesting himself to his people. We have here a picture of communion and fellowship with Christ himself.”³⁷ The nard is the preaching of the gospel by the preacher.

Dramatic Interpretation: the scene moves to the wedding banquet.

Wisdom: the desire for intimacy bridges the distance between people in the marriage relationship. It is not easy to find in a fallen world. Prolonged singleness and distant marriages are common. These verses remind us that love is not a mirage. There can be passion in marriage.

Typological Interpretation: “Our passionate desire for human intimacy, our longing to love and be loved deeply by someone else, is a reflex of the thirst for the intimacy that may be found only in Him.”³⁸

“Very often the woman who feels secure in her husband’s love and protective concern takes great delight in sex with her husband.” **Joseph Dillow**³⁹

³⁷ Fortner, pp. 37.

³⁸ Duguid, pp, 89.

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Mutual Affirmation: Lover

¹⁵ Behold, you are beautiful, my love;
behold, you are beautiful;
your eyes are doves.

- Her eyes are like _____, is one example of his tender speech.
- It could mean her eyes are like a dove's: _____ and pearly-grey with specks of other colors.⁴⁰
- It could refer to their _____. Perhaps they are _____, fluttering & darting about like.
- Since we are called to be as innocent as doves, some think this is a reference to _____.

Christian Allegorical Interpretation: The dove stands for the Spirit. The church is enlightened and guided by the Spirit.

Mutual Affirmation: Beloved

¹⁶ Behold, you are beautiful, my beloved, truly delightful.
Our couch is green;
¹⁷ the beams of our house are cedar;
our rafters are pine.
I am a rose of Sharon,
a lily of the valleys.

- She responds in similar fashion; he is _____, delightful to _____.
- She describes the home, their _____. Is it a home or the countryside?
- She's not caught up in the _____, but "verdant" (NIV) may point an expectation of _____.
- The language of nature "hints of a return to _____ with its simplicity, naïveté, equality, and purity."⁴¹
- It is a wooded area with some grass to cover the ground.
- Sharon is a _____, lush plain between the coast and the _____ of western Israel.
- The rose of Sharon was a _____-colored _____ flower with a leafless stem.
- She _____ expresses her beauty. She is one among many other beautiful women.

³⁹ Dillow, pp. 23.

⁴⁰ Gledhill, pp. 119.

⁴¹ Kinlaw, pp. 1221.

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Christian Allegorical Interpretation: “Our union with Christ is a firm and lasting union. ... It is both an ancient and durable union, a union that shall never be broken.”⁴²

The rose of Sharon “speaks of his redeeming blood. ... Through the righteousness of Christ we have been made pure and white as a lily.”⁴³

Dramatic Interpretation: They have now moved into the bed chamber. He suggests a couple’s room be conducive for love-making: satin sheets for special occasions, scented candles, music ...

Lover

² As a lily among brambles,
so is my love among the young women.

- Bramble as _____ and lilies are _____.
- He sees her as a _____ woman surrounded by _____ women.
- It is not important that she be beautiful to _____, but to _____.

“It is the oil that makes the machinery of everyday life run smoothly. ... Many men would rather die than praise their wives. Perhaps we all need to break down barriers of reserve and inhibitions in this respect.” **Tom Gledhill**⁴⁴

It is hard for some of us to speak in this way. Why?

⁴² Fortner, pp. 43.

⁴³ Fortner, pp. 47.

⁴⁴ Gledhill, pp. 121.

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Wisdom: Mutual attraction has an important place in marriage. Romance should not end after courtship. Both spouses need to convey love, appreciation and affection.

Christological Focus: In the Bible, Christ speaks often of His love & His delight for His people. He speaks, and provides images for us to excite our desire for Him and His benefits. As we think much of Him the hold that the gods of this world have lessens. Thomas Chalmer spoke of his in his famous sermon *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*. In our personal and public worship we speak well of Him.