

Song of Solomon 7:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

Analysis

The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved. The bride concludes her invitation by describing sensory delights awaiting her beloved. The Hebrew *haduda'im natenu reach ve-al-petacheinu kol-megadim chadashim gam-yeshanim dodi tsafanti lakh* (הַדּוּדָאִים נָתַנוּ רֵיחַ וְעַל-פֶּתַחַינוּ כָּל-מִגְדִּים חֲדָשִׁים גַּם-יִשְׁנִים דּוּדִי צָפַנְתִּי לָךְ) employs botanical and architectural imagery emphasizing abundance and anticipation.

"The mandrakes give a smell" (*haduda'im natenu reach*)—mandrakes (*duda'im*, דּוּדָאִים) were plants with fragrant fruit and roots, believed to enhance fertility and love (Genesis 30:14-16). The Hebrew root connects to *dod* (love), making *duda'im* wordplay on love-plants. Their fragrance signals season of love and fruitfulness. "At our gates" (*al-petacheinu*) indicates doorway or entrance—threshold between public and private, suggesting immediate accessibility. "All manner of pleasant fruits" (*kol-megadim*) uses *meged* (מִגְד), meaning choice things, precious fruits, delicacies—only the best.

"New and old" (*chadashim gam-yeshanim*) indicates both fresh recent harvest and preserved stored fruits—complete provision spanning seasons. This suggests the bride has prepared comprehensively, holding nothing back. "Which I have laid up for thee" (*tsafanti lakh*) uses *tsafan* (צָפַן), meaning to treasure, store, hide away for future use. The phrase emphasizes intentionality—she's been preparing, saving,

anticipating this moment. "O my beloved" (dodi) intensifies intimacy and ownership. Applied to Christ and church: believers store up spiritual treasures—acts of obedience, growth in grace, fruit of Spirit—as offerings to Christ (Matthew 6:19-21, Colossians 1:10, Galatians 5:22-23). The "new and old" treasures might represent progressive sanctification—both recent growth and longstanding faithfulness (Matthew 13:52).

Historical Context

Mandrakes grew wild in ancient Israel, flowering in spring with apple-like fragrant fruit ripening by summer. Ancient Near Eastern cultures attributed aphrodisiac and fertility-enhancing properties to mandrakes, making them valuable (Genesis 30:14-16). Storing "new and old" fruits was necessary in pre-refrigeration culture—preservation through drying, pickling, or storing in cool locations. Wealthy households maintained storerooms of preserved foods, spices, and delicacies. The bride's claim to have "laid up" such treasures demonstrates planning, resources, and devotion—she's prepared specifically for her beloved's enjoyment, not merely general housekeeping.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the image of storing up "new and old" fruits model the Christian life of continual growth while treasuring longstanding faithfulness?
2. What spiritual "mandrakes"—fragrances of devotion and obedience—does Christ desire to find at the "gates" of our hearts?

3. In what ways can believers intentionally "lay up" spiritual treasures—acts of love, service, worship—specifically for Christ's pleasure rather than human recognition?

Interlinear Text

הַמַּדְרָאִים	נָתַנּוּ	רֵיחַ	וְעַל	פְּתֵי בָנוּ	כָּל
The mandrakes	give	a smell	H5921	and at our gates	H3605
H1736	H5414	H7381		H6607	
מִגֵּדֵי	פְּרִי	גַּם	וְשָׂנִי	יְדִידִי	
are all manner of pleasant	fruits new	H1571	and old	for thee O my beloved	
H4022	H2319		H3465	H1730	
אֲנִי	לִי:				
which I have laid up	H0				
H6845					

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 30:14: And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.

Matthew 13:52: Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.