

10 Things Husbands Want to Hear From Their Wives

Mark Twain once commented, "I can live for two months on a good compliment." I agree. There is nothing like specific and detailed praise and validation to energize a marriage. After some research here at Family First, we found the 10 things husbands want to hear most from their wives. And if we missed one, please post your idea in the comments section below.

1. "I love being your wife." As simple as it sounds, husbands want to know that their wives are content in their marriage and truly enjoy just being with them. When is the last time you thanked your husband for marrying you? Don't just assume he knows. Tell him!

2. "You're an outstanding father." Deep in the heart of every man is the desire to be seen as a hero—especially to his children. Specifically tell your husband why he is your kids' hero. And tonight at dinner, tell your children why he is so special.

3. "I'm really attracted to you. You are the man!" It's a myth that women are always more looks-conscious than men. As guys' hairlines begin to recede and stomachs start protruding, they can become quite sensitive about their appearance. Never joke about how your husband looks. Tell him he's "hot" and how attracted you are to him.

4. "I really respect the decision you made." When a man makes a decision, especially a tough one, he doesn't want his wife being critical of it or questioning him about it. He wants to know that his wife is behind him and admires his ability to make good decisions.

5. "I know how important it is to live within our means. I'm with you on this." Your husband is concerned about the future

of your family. That means he is concerned about taking care of his family financially. Having a wife he can rely on to spend and save wisely is a tremendous comfort to him.

6. "I'm so grateful for your spiritual leadership." All of us are hardwired for a relationship with God, and many men want to be seen as the spiritual caretakers of their families. Encourage your husband in his faith and for taking his role as a spiritual leader seriously.

7. "You are so wise." Many men are born problem-solvers and relish the process of thinking through something and arriving at a solution. This, incidentally, is why your husband is always trying to "fix" your problems when all you want him to do is listen. Recognizing your husband's mental prowess and complimenting him on his intelligence will pay massive dividends to you. Emphasize to him that you trust his wise judgment.

8. "I appreciate how hard you work to provide for our family." There are many things in life that your husband cannot control, but one he can control is effort. It brings him great pleasure to work hard and see the results. To directly control and be the man responsible for creating something from nothing thrills him. Encourage his great work ethic.

9. "Thank you very much for helping me with that." When a man serves his wife, he wants her to recognize it. A simple "thank you" is all he needs.

10. "I'm impressed with how you handled that situation." Sometimes a wife will point out when her husband does not handle something well. So when he handles a particularly difficult situation well, let him know.

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3 Steps to a Healthy Family

I love sharing my passion about health and fitness with families. Men, women and children can all benefit from healthy fun, healthy food and a healthy family.

On several occasions I have parents ask, “How do I get my family to take health seriously?” or “How can I change my children’s attitude about healthy food?” Let’s digest these questions separately.

The question about families taking health seriously really needs to be looked at in a couple of ways. Let’s first address the question based on *young people* taking health seriously. Think about it: If you thought you were going to live forever and that health problems were something to consider when you get old—like, say, 30—would you take your health seriously? Of course not! You would eat what you want, anytime you wanted to, without a second thought. You would sit in front of a computer monitor or TV screen without the slightest interest in getting up and going outside. Life is sweet in the recliner seat, with chips and candy on the side.

Adults are no different than youth when it comes to thinking about health. We are over-worked, over-stressed, over-committed and under-valued. Our time off from work finds most of us sitting in front of a computer monitor or TV screen without the slightest interest in getting up and going outside. Life is sweet in the recliner seat, with chips and candy on the side. Sound familiar?

The fact that some adults even consider their health a priority is because it has *suddenly* become a concern. Elevated cholesterol levels, heart disease, diabetes and obesity are

striking the “boomer” generation with a mighty force. Emotional and relational concerns are knocking us off our feet and into the psychologist’s chair. Physically we want to be more desirable to our spouse, more active with our kids and grandkids, or gain back our youthful appearance. And we hold tightly to the thought, “I can’t believe this is happening to me.”

Looking at the previous health question from this viewpoint would suggest the only difference between how a young person views health and a mature person thinks is age. With that in mind, let’s see what can be done. I will answer the second question about young people having a positive attitude toward healthy eating as we go along.

This is going to be fun, but it may not be what you expect. In order to get the attention of our young people, the mindset paradigm about healthy living has to be embraced as a family *lifestyle* change. You can’t expect to change their mind with words. Showing them you’re serious makes all the difference; together you can “*walk the walk!*”

1. Healthy Fun

Physical activity is a great place to start in the race to getting healthy. Ask your kids what they like to do for fun, and try it with them. Or if their current idea of fun doesn’t include sweating, start something new. Many young people love to play DDR, the dance-dance-revolution game. My youngest daughter would take a friend of hers and spend an hour or more trying to match her dance steps with the ones on the screen as she moves her body to the rhythm of the selected music. “Mom, it is the coolest thing. I love it!” Do you get the idea that she is having fun? Mom and Dad can join in the fun with some family competition—anything that gets you moving together.

My youngest, Sammie, has a blast with his dad as they play co-op video games. But there’s not any real physical activity

happening there, unless you count their bodies moving up and down on the couch as they yell, "Not fair! He so didn't get me!" So after about 30 minutes of couch time, Sammie hits the great outdoors for some R&R with the dogs, racing around the yard, making noise and just plain having fun.

As a family we like variety in our physical activity, so "change up" is the name of the game. Soccer, basketball and Frisbee are great examples—anything to get our bodies moving. Walking is a great way to start if you are not doing anything now. The key is finding something your young people like to do and then doing it with them. You may be surprised how much you enjoy yourself.

Sammie's recreation of choice is golf, and he walks the course, so 18 holes over four hours is not too bad for endurance, but it won't cut the mustard if you're looking for a cardio workout. You need to elevate the heart a bit more. Embrace being physically active for 30 minutes a day most days of the week, and it will change the future health of your entire family.

2. Healthy Food

When someone thinks of a healthy diet, the first thought is bad-tasting food; second, it's a diet, so it must be a temporary change; and, finally, it has to be expensive. Wrong on all three counts. Good nutrition goes hand in hand with physical activity, and the best way to continue the race toward healthy living is to *start making positive eating choices as a family.*

The easy way to know if you're serving a balanced meal is to look for a variety of color on your plate. This would include a couple of veggies; a lean meat, fish, or chicken; whole grain bread or pasta; fruit; and for one meal a week, add a moderate dessert—low calorie but tasty.

In judging portion size, just look at the palm of your hand.

What ever fits in it is one portion. You can make this fun with the kids. Let them serve themselves. See how close they come to choosing a “proper portion.” Then explain they need to have different colors on their plate as well. No matter how old you are, these are two balancing tools everyone can use.

3. Healthy Family

The concept of healthy living has to become a 24/7, 365-day-a-year thought process to become a habit. Sadly, as I stated earlier, most people only think about getting healthy when it becomes a concern. As adults, it’s our responsibility to lead by example. It’s not the school’s or the church’s responsibility to teach healthy habits. Kids learn by what they live.

So when it comes to encouraging a healthy lifestyle in every area of living, remember “someone” is watching every move we make and we are setting the standard with every bite we take. If you smoke, stop. And limit or eliminate alcohol intake. Start expecting a higher level of accountability from your children, and you will get it. Let them know how important good health is to you, and they will embrace it.

Face it: A healthy family is a happy family. So get out there and have fun. Join a gym, sign your child up for sports or take karate as a family. Don’t just think about being healthy—get out there and kick up some dirt.

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For the original article, visit .

Problem Solving Exemplifies Mature Manhood

Let's face it—we all have problems. Some problems are small; some problems are large. Some problems are simple; some are complex. Some problems are a nuisance; some are disastrous. Handling and solving problems is an art form that we must master.

Do you remember the old reruns of "Father Knows Best?" It certainly was a different era. The premise of the show was pretty simple—a mid-western family consisting of the father, Jim Anderson, his wife, and three children. Each show featured a problem the father would work through on everyone's behalf, and then he would offer the best solution to "the worst thing that could ever happen."

As men, we are often considered the problem solvers in the family. We should not only embrace this responsibility but we should master it. Problems are gates to your significance. The solving of problems can distinguish you from others and position you for promotion.

Run to Roar

David was a great example of this. As a young shepherd boy guarding his father's sheep, he learned how to solve problems by running toward them and not away from them. When a predator wanted to take one of the lambs, David would run to the roar! Instead of running away from the problem, he ran to it.

This kind of problem solving developed David into a would-be king. He fought a lion. Then he fought a bear. When a giant came out against his fellow Israelites, David ran to the

giant. As a result of this approach he was promoted to lead an army and a nation.

Problems link you to others. There are people you will get to know when you face problems. Some of these people will be important links to your future. Friendships are revealed during problematic times. A wise man once said, "There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother." You will find that some problems may cause some people to exit your life while drawing others into close relationship with you.

You will be compensated according to the problems that you are willing and able to solve. This is the reality of economics. People will pay you to solve their problems. Lawyers solve legal problems. A mechanic solves your car problems. Doctors solve your health problems. The dry cleaner cares for your laundry. Notice however, they are not each paid equally.

Years ago I learned a valuable lesson—not everyone wants their problems solved. As strange as that sounds, it is true. There are people who love to remain in the middle of their problems. They love the drama. They feel important when they are being overwhelmed.

A married couple came to me for advice. After investing a year of my time meeting with them both on a weekly basis, I discovered all they wanted was a listener—not a problem solver. They didn't want to change in order to solve their problems, they wanted to remain in the mess of their choosing and wanted someone to dump their problems onto—and that would be me.

Their problem was not their problem. Not wanting a solution was the problem.

James gives us an incredible promise: "Consider it a sheer gift, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of

anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.” (James 1:2-4 Message)

Learn the art of solving problems so that your family members will want to run to you for advice and guidance. The very essence of maturity is the wisdom to solve problems.

*For the original article, visit [. FivestarMan](#) was founded in 2008 by **Neil Kennedy**. Kennedy has passionately promoted God’s Word for 25-plus years of ministry. He is known for practically applying biblical principles that elevate people to a new level of living. As a business, church, ministry and life consultant, Kennedy has helped others strategize the necessary steps to reach their full potential.*

al-Assad’s Porsche: Arab Madness Personified

Could there have been two more contrasting images this week than a scene from Syria and a scene from Holon, Israel?

In Syria, the butcherous dictator Bashar al-Assad made a rare public appearance. Was he huddled with his war cabinet? Was he comforting the widows of soldiers? Was he in a mosque praying for the dead?

No—he was caught on tape, strolling around (in jeans and a t-shirt) getting in to his beautiful Porsche sports car and cruising off to who knows where!

Seriously? Seriously.

While the man with the blood of 120,000 (and counting) people on his hands was living the high-life, a 4-year-old Syrian girl lay in a hospital bed in—of all places—Israel. You read that correctly, Israel.

In the midst of the ongoing Syrian civil war (now in its third year), the little girl's mother made a desperate journey to save her dying child's life. Born with only one heart ventricle, she had only weeks to live. After fleeing to Jordan, the girl's family got in touch with an American-Christian organization who then contacted Israel's Save A Child's Heart Foundation, which for years has brought children from Arab and Muslim countries to the Jewish State, for life-saving surgeries they couldn't otherwise have.

The surgeon, Doctor Lior Sasson told Ynet News: "It's uplifting to perform surgery on a child from a hostile country. We can show Syrians and the world we look for peace."

What a remarkable statement.

As Syria descends deeper and deeper into madness (did you see the YouTube video of the Syrian rebel leader eating a human heart?) and the world stumbles and bumbles about, without a clue as to how to stop it – a calm gesture of humanity, in the eye of the storm.

But beyond just the beautiful irony of an Israeli hospital saving the life of a Syrian child, I was forced to ask myself, "Why did this child need to come to Israel?"

There are dozens of Arab and Muslim countries around us, with billions and trillions of dollars of oil wealth. Surely they have the resources to save the life of this Syrian child, right? Tragically, they don't.

When the late king of Jordan was dying of cancer, where did he seek treatment? It was America's Mayo Clinic. When Saudi Arabia's King needed back surgery, where did he go? He went to

New York's Presbyterian Hospital. When the brother-in-law of Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh needed heart surgery, where did he receive the life-saving procedure? He went to Israel.

Which again begs the question—why don't these oil-rich countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran and Kuwait and Libya, have the greatest medical facilities in the world? We're sending them billions and billions each year to buy their oil!

It's because of their priorities.

The U.S., Israel and Canada and other "rational" nations, put a premium on life. We build hospitals and schools and universities and laboratories where we try to cure diseases.

These Arab and Muslim countries put their resources into terrorist training facilities, weapons, religious police forces and the best public relations firms to try to fool the world that they're really the victims of the evil western imperialist nations (and Israel, of course).

They go to Russia and North Korea to buy the latest and greatest nuclear technology and missile defense shields. But they can't find any money to build a clinic or a research facility or a medical college or a concert hall.

They take to the streets to protest YouTube videos insulting Muhammad. They throw rocks and launch rockets in honor of Nakba Day (the "Day of Catastrophe") marking Israeli Independence. They stage votes in their parliaments to kick Israeli diplomats out of their countries. They hold never-ending talks about peace and nuclear disarmament that never result in either, and on and on and on. They do nothing—nothing to build up their own societies and their own people.

It pains me to write these words. I hate painting with broad brushes and speaking in generalizations. That is usually the

root of all ignorance—to classify all of one certain type of people as being “this or that.”

But, this week, I reached my limit—again—on the sickening hypocrisy of the Arab world.

If there are good and decent Arabs and Muslims, then where are they? Why don't they stand up and finally do something about the madness that is being perpetrated on this planet by their own people group?

We are living in an era of history that is defined by a never-ending threat of horror and pain and evil inflicted on the majority of humans by Muslims.

As Nigeria institutes a state of emergency due to Muslims slaughtering Christians; as limb-less citizens of Boston lay in hospital beds one month after the marathon bombing' as the new spiral is hoisted on top of the new One World Trade Center building (remember how the old ones were knocked down?); as Syrian mortar shells land on Israel's Mt. Hermon; as Hezbollah and Iran and Hamas continue to threaten Israel and the world—we must ask ourselves, “Is this what life is going to be like from here on out?”

Is this plague of Islam-inspired violence what now defines our era in history?

I'll end where I began. With a 4-year-old Syrian girl, getting a second chance at life, thanks to the generosity of Israel.

Who will pay her medical expenses? Will President Assad? Oh wait, he can't. He spent all of his money on a new Porsche.

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'Clean': Arm and Protect Yourself From the Enemy

Most of us don't want to be that warrior not using his God-given weapons. You, I hope, want to be a man who not only keeps himself clean but also protects his family and his brothers and leaves the legacy of a clean life. You deserve to be a clean man. Following are some characteristics of men who have their weapons facing the enemy, alert like Gideon's men at the water (Judg. 7).

1. Men who protect are armed and ready to commit to be clean.

A man aiming his weapons the right direction will have made a specific commitment to be clean. While speaking at singles and youth conferences, I often have young men and women come to the altar to commit their sexuality to Christ. Why do that? It gives them at least one point in time where they have consciously made a commitment to live a clean life. That moment, that physical separating from the crowd, regardless of past mistakes, gives them the anchor of having at least made a decision. You have committed to be clean.

The Bible says, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7, KJV). As a psychologist, I know we are the sum of our commitments and the discipline to keep them. As a man, if I commit to something, I will attract the people and things I need to fulfill that commitment. When a man makes a commitment, he is immediately confronted with distractions from keeping it. My son and daughter are both commitment-type people. When they decide to go for something, be it football, cheerleading, debate team or Tae Kwon Do, they are totally in, and that immediately pushes other things to a much lower priority.

When men commit to a clean sexual life, it attracts people, ideas and strategies, such as accountability software, accountability partners, support groups and resource materials to help them stay clean. The commitment in your heart already may be the reason God brings these people and resources into your life. Your clean commitment clears your vision, and you will begin to see threats clearly as well. Prepare for them, and enjoy victory and a clean conscience after winning those battles.

2. Men who protect have a plan. When you carry weapons with you, it's easy to remember you are at war. The enemy is taking out a large number of our men and our male Christian leaders in this war. I remember having to fly out of town after my pastor fell because of sexual impurity. I sat on the plane with the proverbial napkin and wrote down the names of my pastors and their wives who had fallen specifically to sexual sin. I counted exactly 50 percent of my pastors or their wives who fell publicly to this attack.

I can't say it enough: This is a war on our sexuality and our families! Warriors should have a plan for staying pure in their various environments. Let's start at a warrior's home. The Internet is selectively blocked because he doesn't want a porn store attacking him or his family. There are clear boundaries and accountability around the cell phone and Facebook (real warriors have little time for this anyway). Accountability software reports are sent to his wife and accountability partner.

He has a plan for work—whom he can go to lunch with and appropriate boundaries for conversations. He has a plan for when he or his spouse travels. He has a plan for the opposite sex in general regarding hugs, touching and praise. He even has a proactive plan for entertainment—television, magazines, movies. He is thinking ahead of the devil, not thinking about what he can get away with but rather how he can get away from the world's filth.

3. Men who are armed and ready are honest and accountable. A plan is great only if it is implemented. A couple that plans to have a million dollars in the bank when they retire at 60 is admirable. But if they never follow the plan or have others keep them accountable, they will have only created a plan and not reached their desired dream. It takes discipline every month to arrive at that dream.

A man whose sword is protecting himself and those he loves is honest and accountable. He still lives in an environment of temptation, as we all do. But if he opens an email and sees something inappropriate, he tells somebody immediately. He cooperates with his wife in telling her the things she wants to know, and he has a trusted man or men to confess any inappropriate thoughts to as well.

Let me give you an example. I was exhausted after three days in Canada speaking at a men's and marriage conference and doing professional training for Christian counselors on sexual addiction. I got on my plane and took out my tablet to write a chapter of a book. The woman sitting next to me reached into her bag and began to pull out a magazine. All I could see was the red letter *P*. I instantly knew it was going to be a *Playboy* magazine.

I looked the other way and sat facing the bathroom. I was angry. I prayed in my spirit, "Lord, if she'll put it away, I'll witness to her." I didn't have an "accident" and look; I stayed focused. She put her magazine back in her bag, went to the bathroom, and when she came out, she pulled an everyday magazine out of her bag. I tried to share, but she seemed more comfortable with silence. When I got off the plane, I immediately called my accountability partner and my wife. I hadn't seen anything inappropriate; I just didn't want to be slimed by her issues.

When you're at war, you utilize the weapons of honesty and accountability. A man that has a commitment and a plan for

this is much more likely to be successful. If he drops his weapons at a lust level and then gets honest and accountable, then he is really less likely to drop it on the sin level. He would have to choose to lie to get that far down the road.

Here is an idea that can literally quash inappropriate behaviors for those who struggle. Some men don't mind being honest about the occasional or even regular slip of lust, porn or masturbation, but they don't stop these behaviors. They do what I call "puke and go," then continue to go back to the vomit of their unclean behavior (Prov. 26:11).

The man in this situation may have a sex addiction, or he may just need to put consequences in his life for his behaviors. Most guys struggle because of classical conditioning. That includes positive conditioning for a behavior. To change a behavior, you might want to change your conditioning, from positive rewards for lust to setting up a negative reward for this behavior. If you look at something or do something inappropriate, have a consequence set up and enforce it. A consequence is something that hurts you (negative reinforcement). Let me give you a list of suggestions:

- No media for one, two or three weeks
- No cell phone for one, two or three days
- Walk to work
- Pick up trash for two to four hours
- Give money to a political or nonprofit organization you really disagree with
- Eat a raw onion
- Run two miles (if you're not in shape)
- Eat Ben and Jerry's at 10:00 p.m. (if you are in shape)

- Leg lunges for half a mile or one mile
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*The preceding is an excerpt from **Dr. Doug Weiss'** book Clean, used with permission from Thomas Nelson Inc. A leading expert in sexual addiction recovery, Dr. Weiss is a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart-to-Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., and the president of the American association for Sex Addiction Therapy (AASAT). He is the author of more than 20 books on marriage, men's issues, addiction recovery and self-help, including The Final Freedom; Sex, God and Men; Intimacy; and his latest, Clean: A Proven Plan For Men Committed To Sexual Integrity.*

To read previous excerpts, click [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Israel Sends Staunch Warning to Russia, Syria

U.S. officials told *The Wall Street Journal* on Thursday that another round of Israeli airstrikes could target a new Russian transfer of advanced anti-ship missiles in the near future. Israeli and Western intelligence services believe the Yakhont missiles, which have been sold by Russia to Syria in recent years, could be transferred to Hezbollah within days, the newspaper reported on its website Friday.

At the same time, *The New York Times* reported Friday that the Yakhont missiles have already been delivered to Syria's armed forces. Israel has repeatedly reinforced, with words and actions, its stated red line: that it will not allow the

transfer of “game-changing” weaponry to Islamic terror groups such as Hezbollah. Israel has also relayed messages that it is not seeking a confrontation with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s forces, but will act against transfers of weaponry through his territory.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s last-minute trip to Russia on Tuesday apparently did not change the Russians’ intentions to also deliver the advanced S-300 anti-aircraft missile system to Syria. According to the *Journal*, U.S. officials believe that Russia is moving more quickly than previously thought to deliver S-300 surface-to-air defense systems to Syria. U.S. officials told the paper that the S-300 system, which is capable of shooting down guided missiles and could make it more risky for any warplanes to enter Syrian airspace, could leave Russia for Syrian port of Tartus by the end of May.

Together, the S-300 anti-aircraft and anti-missile system, and the Yakhont anti-ship system, would pose a formidable threat to any outside intervention in Syria, based on the international Libya model. The anti-ship missiles would be a serious threat to the Israeli navy, as well as the facilities above Israel’s newfound underwater gas reserves. The S-300 could threaten Israeli military and civilian aircraft flying Israeli airspace, and not just over Lebanese and Syrian airspace.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Russia has sent a dozen or more warships to patrol waters near its naval base in Syria, a buildup that U.S. and European officials see as a newly aggressive stance meant partly to warn the West and Israel not to intervene in Syria’s bloody civil war. Russia’s expanded presence in the eastern Mediterranean, which began attracting U.S. officials’ notice three months ago, represents one of its largest sustained naval deployments since the Cold War, according to the *Journal*.

The paper reported that Russia currently has 11 ships in the eastern Mediterranean, organized into three taskforces, including destroyers, frigates, support vessels and intelligence-collecting ships. Another three-ship group of amphibious vessels is headed to the region. Russia's navy chief confirmed that warships from Russia's Pacific Fleet had entered the Mediterranean for the first time in decades, and that the taskforce might be reinforced with nuclear submarines, as the country starts building up a permanent fleet in the region. The group includes the destroyer Admiral Panteleyev, two amphibious warfare ships called Peresvet and Admiral Nevelskoi, and a tanker and a tugboat.

"The taskforce has successfully passed through the Suez Canal and entered the Mediterranean. It is the first time in decades that Pacific Fleet warships have entered this region," Pacific Fleet spokesman Capt. 1st Rank Roman Martov told RIA.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meanwhile told Lebanese TV station al-Mayadeen on Thursday that Moscow had not backed down from its contract to supply S-300 systems to Syria.

"We are not signing any new contracts, but we will complete the old ones, especially with regards to aerial defense systems," Lavrov said. In what could be perceived as a message to Israel, he said, "Those that aren't planning on acting aggressively against sovereign nations should not have any reason to fear this."

The unofficial response from Israeli government officials to Lavrov's statements amounted to saying that actions will be the deciding factor and not declarations. A senior government official noted that the deal between Russia and Syria had been signed in 2010 and was delayed multiple times, despite numerous Russian statements that it would be carried out.

"We relayed the message [to Russia]. Bringing weapons to Syria destabilizes the area and carries the risk of seeing them

transferred to Hezbollah," a government official said.

In a sign of the growing tension in the region, CIA Director John Brennan arrived in Israel Thursday and met with the top officials in Israel's defense establishment, with a central focus on the developments in Syria. It was Brennan's first trip to Israel since assuming his position two months ago. The CIA chief went straight into a meeting in Tel Aviv with Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon, a senior Israeli official told AFP.

Channel 10 TV said that Ya'alon reaffirmed during the talks that Israel "will not permit the transfer of weapons" from Syria to Hezbollah in Lebanon. According to local press reports, Brennan's visit is aimed at coordinating U.S. and Israeli positions over the escalating crisis in Syria, specifically as international diplomatic momentum between the U.S. and Russia gathers for a peaceful resolution to the crisis.

According to the reports, the U.S. is concerned that Israel will act independently to strike any advanced arms shipments in Syria it believes may be headed to Hezbollah, potentially scuttling the international diplomatic maneuvering.

For the original article, visit .

Maoz Israel: The New Government, Obama and Turkey

I just couldn't wait for the new Israeli government coalition to form. Boy, was I going to write a doozie! Nothing like these politics had ever been seen before. No one knew from day

to day what the new government was going to look like. Would it be ultra-Orthodox? Labor? Far left? Or would it be some weird combination?

For 39 days, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fought, wooed, bluffed, enticed and threatened the leaders of two other major political parties, *Yesh Atid* (translated "There's a Future") and *Bait Yehudi* ("The Jewish Home").

The rules of the game were known to all. Twelve parties had won seats in the Knesset. Netanyahu and his merged co-partners gained a total of 31 seats out of 120. They needed another 30 seats to form a government.

I can't go into all the details, because then I would be writing you the article that I'm not going to write. But what Netanyahu wanted more than anything else that this world has to offer (except his family) was to have his old buddies, the two ultra-Orthodox parties, with him in his government.

The reason isn't hidden from any Israeli living in this country. The ultra-Orthodox demand only two things:

1. Not to have to serve in the army.
2. To receive billions of shekels for its population that does not work.

That's all. If they receive these two benefits, Netanyahu has friends that stick closer than a brother. The only problem was the two ultra-Orthodox parties won only a total of 18 seats.

Still, Netanyahu was determined to have them in his government. Maybe he could entice the leftist Labor party with 15 votes to join him and the ultra-Orthodox? The Labor leader would hear none of it.

The Two Brothers

Two young, inexperienced politicians won a total of 31 seats: First-time secular politician Yair Lapid (*Yesh Atid*) won 19

seats on the basis that the ultra-Orthodox would be obligated to serve in the army for the first time ever. He also campaigned to restructure Israel's incompetent coalition system and its deteriorating education system, and help small businesses in a shrinking middle class—all areas that would rile up the petrified stick-in-the-muds used to doing things the bureaucratic way.

The second first-time politician, Naftali Bennett (*Bait Yehudi*), is the modern and moderate Orthodox face of the settlers' party. However, as an experienced entrepreneur who made millions in a startup company, he endorses many of the same common-sense values as Lapid. (Note: The ultra-Orthodox have no love for the Orthodox and vice versa.)

To make an incredibly long story short, Yair and Naftali joined together in an unusually strong pact that Bibi was not able to break apart. They literally forced Bibi Netanyahu to include them and to exclude the ultra-Orthodox in the new government. Together with Tsipi Livni and her six-member center-leftist dovish party (who was promised the office of conducting peace negotiations with the Palestinians), the government was born—literally minutes before the 40-day deadline was breached, which would have triggered new elections.

Two Days Later

Before I was able to get to my computer to write about the dazzling negotiations, President Obama came to town. As our daughter Shani has written, Israel had never seen the likes of such a celebratory hosting of a visitor before in all its modern history.

Before Obama's arrival, a reputable poll in *Ma'ariv* (an Israeli Hebrew news daily) showed that Obama had a 10 percent approval rating among the Israeli public.

And then Obama arrived! An Obama that Israel had never seen

before. He never once mentioned forcing Israel back to the 1949 armistice lines, nor giving up the ancient city of Jerusalem. He didn't even demand Israel discontinue building homes in the West Bank—although he did say he thought it would be wise to stop. All of the above Obama had demanded in the past—or else! It was a 180-degree U-turn.

Most of all, he assured Israelis that they have U.S. backing, that the U.S. would not let Iran get nuclear weapons under any circumstances, and that the U.S. would supply Israel with the weapons she needs. He talked about Israel's rich heritage in the Holy Land (Muslims profess to believe that Israel has no history here), and on and on. He astonished and literally dumbfounded the Israeli people.

The polls found a huge drop in Israelis who see Obama as hostile.

Israelis Crave Love

Ra'anana Gissin, Ariel Sharon's former spokesman, explained it like this: "Jews always need warmth. It has to do with our history. We crave for others to love us because we were always hated and castigated."

Don't get me wrong. We are glad that, at least for now, Obama has decided to stand with Israel. We know that the nations are being weighed in the balance by a God who sees everything. The evil that is spreading in ever-increasing waves across North America will one day bring judgment. Yet I believe that God will delay the most devastating judgments yet for a while as He remembers His promise to bless the U.S. and Canada and every other nation—there are so few—that stand with Israel.

Obama's trip was so stunning that it was important for me to write an article that would enable you to catch a sense of the euphoria in this country. But before Obama left town, the TV and radio and Internet blared the latest breaking news.

Turkey Is Our Friend Again?

Just before he left, Obama joined Netanyahu, who got on the phone with Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan to apologize for the deaths of nine Turkish activists among the hundreds who tried to break Israel's naval blockade of Gaza in 2010.

If justice were the issue, Erdogan should have been apologizing to Israel—for approving the clubbing of Israeli soldiers who had boarded to inspect the MV Mavi Marmara ship. Under international law, Israel has the right to enforce a blockade in order to keep Hamas from receiving arms by sea to attack Israel.

But justice was not the issue. With so many enemies everywhere, Israel needs and wants Turkey's friendship. In fact, for many years there were extremely close relations between the two nations until the Islamic Prime Minister Erdogan was voted in office.

Slowly but surely, Erdogan began to pull away from the Jewish nation. Then when the Israeli soldiers, attempting to defend their own lives from hundreds of vicious attackers aboard the ship, killed nine activists on the boat, Erdogan broke diplomatic relations with Israel, and since then has taken every opportunity to demonize Jews.

"Zionism must be regarded as a crime against humanity," the Turkish premier said. "Israel is a terrorist state," etc., etc., etc. Turkish movies portrayed Jews as killing Gentile children in order to use their blood in Passover matza and the like.

But Obama had been working on reconciliation between the two countries—of national interest to the U.S. because both are strong allies of America. And so, wonder of wonders, with Obama listening, Erdogan accepted Netanyahu's apology. Euphoria knew no bounds in Israel! Israelis who used to love

to go to southern Turkey for vacations started calling tour agencies to once again book flights to that exotic country.

But just as I was about to write this story, Erdogan decided that he had additional demands before there would be an exchange of ambassadors. Namely, he insisted on a million dollars to the families of each activist killed by the Israel Defense Forces. But the real non-starter was his demand for a complete removal of the Gaza blockade—meaning that Hamas would be free to bring in all the weapons they wanted. Israel's officials called for "patience" with the Islamic prime minister.

Actually, Erdogan has gotten a lot of mileage out of this phone call. Large billboards were put up by the Ankara municipality to thank Erdogan following Israel's apology. "Israel apologized to Turkey. Dear prime minister, we are grateful that you let our country experience this pride," the billboards read.

One thing is sure: There's nothing like Islamic pride! Bennett posted on his Facebook page that if Erdogan keeps this up, Israel will regret the apology. Well, we tried.

Syrian Update

But before I could put together information about Turkey, we learned that Syria had started shooting across the Israeli Golan Heights border and actually struck an army vehicle, although thankfully not injuring any Israeli.

News also leaked out that Israel has set up a field hospital on the Syrian border, caring for wounded Syrian opposition rebels, whose last hope is to beg the Israelis for medical help. Israel greatly fears a deluge of wounded Syrians. But on the other hand, Jewish values cannot allow them to lay there at the border and die.

Today U.N. officials are warning that the Syrian bloody

conflict might spill into the Jewish state sooner rather than later. The U.N. Security Council expressed grave concern at all violations of the “Disengagement of Forces Agreement” between Syria and Israel.

If the 1,000 U.N. peacekeepers are forced to leave for their own safety, then this becomes a very dangerous situation. Remember that both Syria’s President Assad and the opposition are enemies of the Jewish state. Remember, too, that Syria is floating in chemical and biological weapons.

Oh, well. I better stop now before something else happens and I end up writing an article.

Stop the Presses

Wait until you hear this. Israel has gone from rags to riches. From a tiny country that had almost no natural resources, our country discovered natural gas three years ago 50 miles off the coast of Haifa. Today, the first piped-in flow of natural gas reached the shores of Israel through its new pipeline.

And it is only the first of even massively larger reserves discovered that will allow Israel to move toward not only an energy independent nation, but also an exporter of natural gas. There’s that euphoria again!

Shira Sorko-Ram, along with her husband, Ari, is a co-founder of Maoz Israel Ministries. The couple has pioneered several Messianic Jewish congregations in the Tel Aviv area and sponsored national conferences for the Israeli believers.

For the original article, visit [.](#)

Stepdads: Don't Compete With the Child's Father

Orville is about to become a stepfather, and he wrote to me with a question: The 8-year-old son of his fiancée minds his father very well but wreaks havoc at home. "What should I do?" Orville writes.

These situations are always more complicated than I can do justice in a few minutes. But let me give stepdads a few ideas to start with.

First, realize that you are naturally set up in competition with the boy's father. It could be that the boy behaves better for his father because the father has fewer rules and lets the boy get away with whatever he wants. Or it could be that his father lavishes him with gifts and good times. Or it could be that they have a healthy father-child relationship and they both see you as a threat.

In any case, as the new stepfather, don't get caught up in that competition. It's a no-win situation. The child probably feels the need to defend his father—and that's normal. What you need to do is make sure you don't give him a reason to think of you as the enemy.

Say good things about his father. Honoring their relationship will only help you in your role as a stepfather. If possible, work at open communication with the father. Even if you don't see eye to eye on discipline issues, you can be advocates for each other and send the message to the child that you're cooperating in raising him.

Most of all, build your own relationship with the child. Listen; do things together; and, most of all, affirm him for who he is. That will pay off when it comes time to administer your own loving discipline.

Be united with your wife in your approach and work as a team, but make sure it's clear that the child is loved through it all. You could say, "I know your dad loves you a lot, and he has his way of doing things. But we love you a lot too, and we've decided this is the best way to handle it in this household."

And maybe that's the key: love. You can't force any child to love you, but you can love him or her first.

Dr. Ken R. Canfield is founder of the National Center for Fathering and served as its president and CEO from 1990 through 2005. He is the author of *The Heart of a Father* and numerous other books including the award-winning *7 Secrets of Effective Fathers*.

All Pro Dad is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a by-product, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include: daily emails, blogs, Top 10 Lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook, Twitter, YouTube** and **Instagram**.

1 Way to Inspire Your Kids to Read the Bible

More than any other thing, Christian parents want their children to grow up and stay true to faith in Jesus. And

nothing has more potential to transform our children into faithful followers than reading God's Word. But it won't happen by itself.

My wife, Patsy, and I had an unconventional idea about this. When our kids were about 12 and 9, we decided to pay them to read the Bible. We told them, "If you will read five minutes a day for 25 or more days in a month, we'll give you the money to buy whatever CD you want. You can use a Bible devotional if you want."

I thought I detected a yawn.

Then we added, "And if you read 25 days for 10 out of 12 months, we will pay you \$250." Suddenly their eyes lit up!

Paying our kids to read the Bible was the single best thing we ever did for our children's faith.

Finally we said, "But if you read 25 days or more a month for all 12 months, we will double that and pay you \$500." That really got their attention!

Our kids made monthly calendars, taped them to their mirrors, and made an X through each day they read. We put them on the honor system and even gave them the ability to make up missed days.

Was that bribery? I prefer to think of it as inspiration.

I don't know. All I know is that our kids always did their daily devotions and their friends didn't. Paying our kids to read the Bible was the single best thing we ever did for our children's faith.

If you try this, just make sure to focus on shaping their hearts and not controlling their behavior. It worked for us because we raised our children in a grace-based home rather than a performance-based home. Don't let it become legalistic.

*Note: The preceding is an excerpt from the book Man Alive, now available for **Father's Day** in Man in the Mirror's Books! by the Box program. You can get them in **boxes of 48 for less than \$2 per book**, including S/H. There are others titles as well, including The Man in the Mirror, Raising a Modern Day Knight, Halftime and more.*

This Miracle Mineral May Save Your Life

What is not a drug but more powerful than drugs in many ways? What is the go-to treatment at hospitals in many emergency situations, such as heart failure? What mineral has an astoundingly long list of more than 3,500 medical conditions that are related to its deficiency? Meet your new best friend: magnesium, the miracle mineral.

It is sadly ironic that such a vital yet inexpensive mineral—which used to come to us from the dirt in which our food was raised—is now causing tremendous problems. By conservative standards of measurement (blood or serum magnesium levels), 65 percent of people admitted to the intensive care unit today have a magnesium deficiency.

Sources of magnesium are whole grains, greens, nuts and seeds; however, the soil where these are grown is becoming depleted of magnesium and so these foods do not have nearly as much magnesium as they did 50 years ago.

This problem is only compounded by today's highly processed diet that is based mostly on white flour, meat and dairy (all

of which have no magnesium). In other words, many of us receive practically no magnesium from what we eat.

This is further complicated by the fact that magnesium is often poorly absorbed and easily lost from our bodies. To properly absorb magnesium, we need a lot of it in our diet.

Yet our lifestyles are conspiring against us to drain our bodies of what little magnesium we do ingest. Our magnesium levels are being further decreased by stress, excess salt, coffee, phosphoric acid in sodas, alcohol, profuse sweating, chronic diarrhea, excessive menstruation, diuretics (water pills), antibiotics and other medicines.

Perhaps a recent scientific review of magnesium in *Medical Hypotheses* said it best: "It is highly regrettable that the deficiency of such an inexpensive, low-toxicity nutrient results in diseases that cause incalculable suffering and expense throughout the world."

So, now that you have met your new best friend, what should you do? Try these three simple things.

1. Stop draining yourself of magnesium. Cut back on coffee, colas, salt, sugar and alcohol. Ask your physician if any of your medications could be causing magnesium loss. (Many high blood pressure drugs or diuretics cause loss of magnesium.)

2. Eat foods high in magnesium. Start including these natural sources of magnesium in your diet as often as you can: wheat bran, wheat germ, almonds, cashews, kelp, buckwheat, brazil nuts, dulse, filberts, millet, pecans, walnuts, rye, tofu, soy beans, brown rice, figs, dates, collard greens, shrimp, avocado, parsley, beans, barley, dandelion greens and garlic.

3. Take magnesium supplements. Most people will benefit from 400 to 1,000 mg a day, and the most absorbable forms are magnesium citrate, glycinate taurate and aspartate. Be sure to avoid magnesium carbonate, sulfate, gluconate and oxide. They

are poorly absorbed (but are the cheapest and therefore the most common forms found in supplements).

Foods Highest in Magnesium:

1. Squash/pumpkin seeds: 535 mg per 100 grams
 2. Flaxseed: 392 mg per 100 grams
 3. Almonds: 286 mg per 100 grams
 4. Cashews: 273 mg per 100 grams
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Don Colbert, M.D., is board certified in family practice and in anti-aging medicine. He also has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine, and he has helped millions of people discover the joy of living in divine health.

For the original article, visit [.](#)