

A Set Apart Marriage

The pressures and temptations of the world are real and intense. We are confronted with it daily. Our relationships are in many ways impacted by it, especially our marriages. Many marriages are not strong enough to stand through all this. How can we be prepared to face these challenges when they come our way? How do we make sure we have a strong foundation that will endure the storms of life?

YHVH has provided us with instructions on how to live our lives; His commandments. He instituted marriage and only through prayer and obedience to His instructions can we endure these storms.

We will commence by looking at how YHVH's authority structure works and how we fit into this structure.

YHVH's authority structure

Marriage should not, but often is, a power struggle and if we do not know YHVH's master plan for marriage, we will be in conflict with each other. YHVH has an authority structure in place. His authority structure can be referred to as a theocracy.

The word theocracy originates from the Greek people meaning "the rule of God". This in turn derives from the Ancient Greek θεός (theos), meaning "god", and κρατέω (krateo), meaning "to rule." Thus the meaning of the word in Greek was "rule by god(s)" or human incarnation(s) of god(s).

It was first coined by Josephus Flavius in the first century A.D. to describe the characteristic government for Jews. Josephus argued that while the Greeks recognized three types of government: monarchy, aristocracy, and anarchy, the Jews were unique in that they had a system of government that did not fit into those categories. Josephus understood theocracy as a fourth form of government in which only God and his law is sovereign.¹

In this theocratic government YHVH is the eternal, sovereign ruler and all is subject to Him.

Psalm 146:10

¹⁰ YHVH will reign forever, Your Elohim, O Zion, to all generations. Praise YHVH!

Paul goes further to expand on this authority structure.

1 Corinthians 11:3

³ But I want you to understand that Messiah is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and Elohim is the head of Messiah.

This authority structure was established from the beginning. We shall look further into this later, as we first need to look at the institution of marriage.

The institution of marriage

The woman was created to be a suitable helper for her man.

Genesis 2:18

¹⁸ Then YHVH Elohim said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”

The hebrew word “ezer” is translated as helper. Here is how it is defined by the Dictionary of Biblical Languages.

6469 I. עֵזֶר (*‘ē-zēr*): *n.masc.*; ≡ *Str* 5828; *TWOT* 1598a—1. *LN* 35.1–35.18 *helper, assistant, i.e., one who assists and serves another with what is needed (Ge 2:18, 20; Ex 18:4; Dt 33:29; Eze 12:14; Hos 13:9+)* ²

Then, YHVH fashioned a woman from Adam’s side and after this, marriage was instituted.

Genesis 2:23–24

²³ The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.” ²⁴ **For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.**

The Bible Knowledge Commentary explains it well:

2:18–25. This section records the creation of the first woman and the institution of marriage; so it says much about the mainstay of Israel’s society. God intended husband and wife to be a spiritual, functional unity, walking in integrity, serving God, and keeping His commandments together. When this harmony is operative, society prospers under God’s hand.

Adam was alone and that was not good; all else in Creation was good (cf. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). As man began to function as God’s representative (naming the animals [2:19–20] represented his dominion over them; cf. 1:28), he became aware of his solitude (2:20). God therefore put him to sleep (v. 21) and created Eve from his flesh and bone (vv. 21–23).

God decided to make a helper suitable (lit., “a helper corresponding to him,” or “a corresponding helper”) for the man (v. 18). “Helper” is not a demeaning term; it is often used in Scripture to describe God Almighty (e.g., Pss. 33:20; 70:5; 115:9, where it is trans. “help” in the NIV). The description of her as “corresponding to him” means basically that what was said about him in Genesis 2:7 was also true of her. They both had the same nature. But what man lacked (his aloneness was not good) she supplied, and what she lacked he supplied. The culmination was one flesh (v. 24)—the complete unity of man and woman in marriage. ³

Marriage...a covenant

YHVH made the woman from Adam's side; He separated her from him, made them into two and then made them one again, through what we know as marriage. It is written: "*For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh,*" YHVH instituted marriage. Y'shua also quoted this verse and added the following:

Matthew 19:6

⁶ "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore Elohim has joined together, let no man separate."

Not only was marriage instituted by YHVH, it is also a covenant.

Malachi 2:14

¹⁴ "Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because YHVH has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and **your wife by covenant**."

We shall write more on this in a future post. We have learned how marriage was instituted by YHVH. We now need to look at the authority structure within the marriage.

Authority in marriage

There was a divinely appointed subordination of the woman to the man from the beginning. Consider this:

- Adam was created first, and the woman was created from his side.
- The woman was created for the man ([Gen 2:18](#))
- The first commandment not to eat from the tree was given to Adam, before the creation of Eve ([Gen 2:16](#)). Responsibility was delegated to man to relay it to his wife.
- After they sinned, YHVH called out to Adam ([Gen 3:9](#))

From this we can derive that YHVH's authority structure was already in place. However, when sin entered, a change occurred.

Genesis 3:16

¹⁶ To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you."

The hebrew word "*masal*" is translated as rule

5440 II. מָשַׁל (*mā·šāl*): v.; ≡ Str 4910; TWOT 1259—LN 37.48–37.95 (*qal*) rule, govern, control, be in charge, i.e., have a person or entity exercise authority over persons or governments (2Sa 23:3), note: for *qal* act. ptcp. as a noun, see 5443.6; (*hif*) make one a ruler, have dominion (Job 25:2; Ps 8:7[EB 6]; Da 11:39+), note: for another parsing in Isa 28:14, see 5443.6 ²

Here is commentary on this verse from Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament

*The woman had also broken through her divinely appointed subordination to the man; she had not only emancipated herself from the man to listen to the serpent, but had led the man into sin. For that, she was punished with a desire bordering upon disease (תשוקה from שוק to run, to have a violent craving for a thing), and with subjection to the man. “And he shall rule over thee.” **Created for the man, the woman was made subordinate to him from the very first; but the supremacy of the man was not intended to become a despotic rule, crushing the woman into a slave, which has been the rule in ancient and modern Heathenism, and even in Mahometanism also—a rule which was first softened by the sin-destroying grace of the Gospel, and changed into a form more in harmony with the original relation, viz., that of a rule on the one hand, and subordination on the other, which have their roots in mutual esteem and love.***

In a sense, this relationship between husband and wife is restored, through Y’shua. It is not a slave-master relationship, but more in line with what was originally intended. However, the authority structure, established from the beginning, is still in place. We also find proof of this when we read the Apostolic Scriptures. Paul writes to wives in the Epistle to Titus:

Titus 2:5

⁵ *to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being **subject to their own husbands**, so that the word of Elohim will not be dishonored.*

“*To be subject to*” means:

36.18 ὑποτάσσομαι; ὑποταγή, ἡς f; ὑπέικω: to submit to the orders or directives of someone—‘to obey, to submit to, obedience, submission.’⁴

Also, in the Epistle to the Ephesians:

Ephesians 5:22–33

²² **Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to YHVH.** ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, as Messiah also is the head of the assembly, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. ²⁴ But as the assembly is subject to Messiah, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Messiah also loved the assembly and gave Himself up for her, ²⁶ so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ that He might present to Himself the assembly in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. ²⁸ **So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;** ²⁹ for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Messiah also *does* the assembly, ³⁰ because we are members of His body. ³¹ For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. ³² This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Messiah and the church. ³³ **Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.**

This passage in Ephesians brings us to a very important point. We see here that a woman is to respect her husband, and a man is to love his own wife.

Love and respect

Ephesians 5:33

³³ Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.

What is the meaning of the words “love” and “respect” from a Biblical context?

The Greek word “*agapao*” is translated as love.

Here is how it is defined according to the Dictionary of Biblical languages with semantic domains.

26 ἀγαπάω (*agapaō*): *vb.*;

- *love, (Jn 13:34–35);*
- *show love, demonstrate love (1Jn 3:17);*
- *take pleasure in, to love based on its regarded value (Jn 12:43) ²*

The Greek word “*phobemai*” is translated as respect.

5828 φοβέομαι (*phobeomai*): *vb.*;

- *be afraid, state of fear, be alarmed (Mt 10:28; 17:6; Ac 5:26);*
- *respect, show reverence for (Lk 18:2);*
- *worship, profound reverence (Lk 1:50; Ac 13:16) ²*

From this, we get an idea of what is meant when the words “*love*”, and “*respect*” are used.

Men have an inherent need to be respected and women a need to feel loved. We have seen how this was established in Genesis. The woman's desire will be for her husband, and he will rule over her ([Gen 3:16](#)).

To love your woman is to be her best friend, to share her joy and her tears, to make her feel special, to listen when she talks and to take pleasure in her. To respect your man is to look up to him, listen when he talks, ask for and follow his advice, treat him in a respectful manner and build him up.

If this does not happen, a crazy cycle of conflict starts, resulting in the man getting even less respect and the woman less love. This cycle needs to be broken, and it can only be broken if either the wife starts showing respect to her husband or the husband love to his wife. It is not easy to take the first step, but it is in line with Scripture to do so. Sometimes you would have to force yourself to do it, but it does cause a change. Applying this scriptural principle has saved many marriages.

Dr Emmerson Eggerich has built a whole ministry on this verse and has created many useful resources. We can really recommend it. He explains in a very practical way how applying this scripture to your life can change your marriage around.

You can get more information on their books and seminars at this link <http://loveandrespect.com/>

We have now learned how YHVH's authority was established and how we are to conduct ourselves within that. We are also taught that a woman is to wear a sign of this authority on her head.

The sign of authority

1 Corinthians 11:10

¹⁰ Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

The greek word “*exousia*” is translated as symbol of authority

2026 ἐξουσία (*exousia*), ας (*as*), ἡ (*hē*): *n.fem.*; ≡ *Str 1849; TDNT 2.562—1. LN 37.35 authority to rule (Lk 19:17); 2. LN 37.36 jurisdiction, the sphere of authority (Lk 4:6; 23:7); 3. LN 37.37 symbol of authority (1Co 11:10), note other interpretations are suggested, see commentaries; 4. LN 37.38 ruler (one who has authority over) (Lk 12:11); 5. LN 37.13 control, a state of control over someone (Ac 5:4); 6. LN 76.12 power, implying authority (Mk 3:15; Rev 9:19); 7. LN 12.44 supernatural power (Eph 2:2); 8. LN 30.122 right to judge, freedom to action (1Co 8:9)*²

The Louw Nida Greek-English Lexicon gives a more specific interpretation, based on semantic domains.

37.37 ἐξουσία, ας *f*: a means or instrument by which authority is marked or symbolized—‘symbol of authority, symbol of subjection to authority.’ ἡ γυνὴ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς

κεφαλῆς 'a woman should have on her head a symbol of authority (over her)' 1 Cor 11:10.
4

We have written an article on the topic of [head covering](#) as well as a follow up article to answer some [questions on the topic](#). We shall therefor not elaborate on this any further here.

We do find some wonderful advice from Peter on how we are to conduct ourselves and we can apply it to our marriages.

Advice from Peter

What to do when your husband is disobedient to the Word?

1 Peter 3:1–12

¹ In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of *them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, ² as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.

What do you do when your husband or wife is an unbeliever? The Apostle Paul taught this:

1 Corinthians 7:12–17

¹² But to the rest I say, not the Master, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her. ¹³ And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she must not send her husband away. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy. ¹⁵ Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such *cases*, but Elohim has called us to peace. ¹⁶ For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife? ¹⁷ Only, as YHVH has assigned to each one, as Elohim has called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct in all the assemblies.

Advice to wives

1 Peter 3:3–6

³ Your adornment must not be external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; ⁴ but the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of Elohim. ⁵ For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in Elohim, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; ⁶ just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

Advice to husbands

1 Peter 3:7

⁷ You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

Advice to both, husband and wife

1 Peter 3:8–12

⁸ To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For, “The one who desires life, to love and see good days, Must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹ “He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and pursue it. ¹² “For the eyes of YHVH are toward the righteous, And His ears attend to their prayer, But the face of YHVH is against those who do evil.”

Consider what Peter is saying here, memorize this, make it a part of who you are. We are to hear YHVH’s Word and do. There is always blessing in being obedient!

There is much more good advice in the Scriptures on what to do and not to do.

Four very important do nots:

1. Do not let the sun go down on your anger

Another piece of good advice is not to go to bed angry. This can be quite hard, but having a happy marriage is hard work. However, it is worth it!

Ephesians 4:26

²⁶ Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

2. Wives, do not be contentious

Interesting that Solomon would say this...He may have had some experience...

Proverbs 21:9

⁹ It is better to live in a corner of a roof Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

Proverbs 25:24

²⁴ It is better to live in a corner of the roof Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

Proverbs 27:15

¹⁵ A constant dripping on a day of steady rain And a contentious woman are alike;

3. Do not defile the marriage bed

The writer of Hebrews write that the marriage bed is to be undefiled. What does it mean to defile the marriage bed?

Hebrews 13:4

⁴ Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers Elohim will judge.

There are a few references in Scripture about defilement. To read these will give us some more understanding as to what is meant by defilement. We find quite a comprehensive list of defilement in [Lev 18:5-24](#).

In Hebrew the word “tamei” is translated as defile or unclean.

3237 I. תָּמֵא (tā·mē(‘)): v.; ≡ Str 2930; TWOT 809—1. LN 53.33–53.40 (*qal*) be unclean, be defiled, i.e., be ritually impure (Lev 5:3); (*nif*) made unclean, defiled, impure (Lev 11:43); (*piel*) make unclean, defile, desecrate (Lev 11:44); (*pual*) defiled (Eze 4:14+); (*hitp*) make oneself unclean, defile oneself (Lev 11:24); (*hotpaal*) be defiled (Dt 24:4+); 2. LN 88.271–88.282 (*nif*) improper sexual behavior, formally, defiled, i.e., initiate or receive improper sexual contact, and so be socially and ceremonially defiled (Nu 5:13), note: for another parsing in Mic 2:10, see 3239²

We also see that **marriage is to be held in honor among all**. What does this mean?

Here is some more clarification on the word “honor”

5508 τίμιος (*timios*), α (*a*), ον (*on*): *adj.*; ≡ DBLHebr 3701; Str 5093—1. LN 65.2 *precious, valuable* (Ac 20:24; Jas 5:7; 1Pe 1:19); 2. LN 87.6 *honored, of a high status* (Ac 5:34; Heb 13:4); 3. LN 2.29 *gem, precious stone* (1Co 3:12; Rev 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:11, 19+)²

Marriage is sacred; it is a covenant between one man and one woman, and is not to be broken. It is precious and is therefore to be held in high regard by everybody. We are not only to honor our own marriage, but that of others as well by not being a stumbling block to them. You dishonor another person’s marriage when you dress, talk or behave immodestly. Did you know that?

The marriage bed can also be defiled by fornication or adultery.

Fornication is any form of sexual immorality. The greek word “pornos” is translated as fornication.

4521 πόρνος (*pornos*), ου (*ou*), ό (*ho*): *n.masc.*; ≡ Str 4205; TDNT 6.579—LN 88.274 *sexually immoral person, one who commits sexual immorality* (1Co 5:9–11; 6:9; Eph 5:5; 1Ti 1:10; Heb 12:16; 13:4; Rev 21:8; 22:15+)²

It is interesting to note that the word for fornication is “*pornos*” in greek. The same word from which pornography is derived. Pornography in any form defiles the marriage bed and so will remarks or jokes of a sexual nature.

We are taught to flee fornication!

1 Corinthians 6:18

¹⁸ Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

4. Do not deprive one another

When a man and woman get married, they become one and are dependent on one another for the fulfillment of emotional and physical needs. We are taught not to deprive each other, except by agreement for a time. If we do, we can get into temptation because of our lack of self-control.

1 Corinthians 7:4–5

⁴ The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*. ⁵ Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

There is, however, one time that we are not allowed to have sexual relations. That is often referred to as the law of Niddah or the time of uncleanness.

The law of Niddah

This is the time when a woman is having her monthly period, or after she has given birth. In case of a normal monthly period, this time period is seven days. Here are some of the commandments regarding family purity. We may, at a later stage, go into more detail. If you are interested in learning more, please let us know in the comments below or via e-mail, then we will write a detailed post about this.

Leviticus 15:19

¹⁹ ‘When a woman has a discharge, *if* her discharge in her body is blood, she shall continue in her menstrual impurity for seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening.

Leviticus 18:19

¹⁹ ‘Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness during her menstrual impurity.

Some would say this only applies when the Temple is operational. Considering [Leviticus 20:18](#), I would not make such a claim.

Leviticus 20:18

¹⁸ ‘*If there is* a man who lies with a menstruous woman and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her flow, and she has exposed the flow of her blood; thus both of them shall be cut off from among their people.

This is quite a serious punishment and there is a good reason for it, but as I said, we may write on this in the future. Before we conclude, consider the example of Jezebel and Ahab’s marriage. This is a prime example of an ungodly marriage.

Jezebel and Ahab an example of an ungodly marriage

Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Tyre and priest of the cult of Baal ([1 Kin 16:31](#)). Together they led Israel into Baal worship. Jezebel wanted to be in control physically and spiritually. She ordered the prophets of YHVH to be killed, and it was plain to see who made the decisions in their home. When Naboth didn't want to sell his vineyard to Ahab, he sulked and wouldn't eat. His wife then took control of the situation after ridiculing him for his weakness. She devised a plan to have Naboth, and his sons killed in order to obtain the vineyard.

She was the mother of feminism, equal rights and free choice for women. She wanted to control, rebelled against YHVH and practiced and advocated sexual immorality. She could be considered the role model of many modern women.

This is not the example we are to follow.

Conclusion

Consider your marriage...Is it in line with what YHVH wants it to be, or do you need to make changes? Both husband and wife need to be working hard at this relationship. Satan wants to destroy marriages, because family forms the core of society according to YHVH's plan. You know the devastation that a broken-up family can cause; we see it every day around us.

YHVH instituted marriage as part of His plan for humankind. Two are better than one, and a cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart. When YHVH is part of your marriage, and you follow His instructions, your relationship will endure through the storms and temptations.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

⁹ Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. ¹⁰ For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. ¹¹ Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm *alone*? ¹² And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three *strands* is not quickly torn apart.

Make the decision today to make YHVH part of your marriage and follow His instructions. It is for your own good and that of your relationship.

References

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