

The Doctrine of Marriage

I. Introduction & Definition

A. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (10th Edition).

1. Marriage is the mutual relation of husband and wife: Wedlock.
2. The institution whereby men and women are joined in a special kind of social and legal dependence for the purpose of founding and maintaining a family.
3. Husband: a male partner in a marriage.
4. Wife: a female partner in a marriage.

B. Hebrew Terms

1. בָּעַל ba'al^{#1166}: *to marry, be lord over, rule* (Gen. 20:3; Dt. 21:13; 22:22; 24:1; Isa. 54:1,5; 62:4,5_{x2}; Mal. 2:11; Jer. 3:14; 31:32).
2. Qal.pass.participle "Beulah" בְּעוּלָה (Isa. 62:4).

C. Greek Terms

1. γαμέω^{#1060}: *to marry; give one's self in marriage; to give a daughter in marriage.*
2. γάμος^{#1062}: *wedding, marriage; wedding feast or banquet.*

II. Development & Application

A. Adam & Eve.

1. Genesis 1.
 - a. God's trinitarian creative work involved both אָדָם^{#120} Adam ("man" or "him") and "them." (Gen. 1:26-28).
 - b. Adam was created in the image & according to the likeness of God (Gen. 1:26,27).
צֶלֶם^{#6754}: *image*. דְמוּת^{#1823}: *likeness*.
 - 1) "In" (בְּ *in, as, by*) is so flexible, great care must be taken to accurately interpret this passage.
 - a) Put the dishes in the sink (**location**).
 - b) Written in pencil (**means/instrument**).
 - c) We're alike in some respects (**limitation**).
 - d) I want membership in the club (**inclusion**).
 - e) He broke the statue in peieces (**result**).
 - f) Here's what you say in reply (**purpose**).
 - 2) "In" (בְּ *like, as*) is also extremely flexible depending on context.
 - 3) Image and likeness are used interchangeably (Gen. 5:1,3). בְּ and דְ are also used interchangeably (בְּ with likeness and דְ with image).
 - 4) The prepositions "in" and "according to" are not interchangeable without a bit of help. Both Hebrew prefixes can be rendered in English with the preposition "as." Rendering the interchangeable Hebrew prepositions with an identical English preposition may help us to properly interpret the text.
 - 5) "Let Us make man **as** Our image, **as** Our likeness." This is the use of בְּ for the word "in" or "as" to reflect "functioning in the capacity of." Understood in this manner, mankind is created in God's image and likeness *functionally* rather than *qualitatively*.
 - c. Imaging God is the work assignment for mankind (humanity in general), and the man in particular.
 - 1) The woman supports the man in his work assignment to image God (cf. 1st Cor. 11:7-9).
 - 2) Although the fall obviously impacted Adam's original image, the work assignment and condition continued after the fall (Gen. 9:6; Jas. 3:9).
 - d. Rulership was entrusted to "them" (Gen. 1:26,28). רָדָה^{#7287}: *to rule over, dominate, direct, lead, control, subdue; i.e. manage or govern with considerable or forceful authority.*

¹ Material on "imaging God" taken from Michael S. Heiser's study "The Image of God." Michael Heiser received his PhD in Hebrew Bible and ancient Semitic Languages from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Heiser's translation work includes over a dozen ancient languages and dialects, including Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Ugaritic, Akkadian, Egyptian, and Syriac.

- e. אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ created him and אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתָם created them are two distinct clauses in v.27. The singular and plural pronouns “him” and “them” are consistent with the singular and plural work assignments to image and to rule.
- f. God blessed “them” וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֹתָם (Gen. 1:28) and commanded them to pursue His will in their physical and spiritual life. בָּרַךְ barak #1288; *to bless*.
 - 1) Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and (by so doing) subdue it (Gen. 1:28a).
 - a) פָּרָה parah #6509; *to bear fruit (produce offspring)* (cf. Gen. 17:6).
 - b) רָבָה rabah #7235; *to become many, become numerous* (cf. Gen. 8:17).
 - c) מָלֵא male' #4390; *to fill* (cf. 2nd Kgs. 4:6).
 - d) קָבַשׁ kabash #3533; *to subject, subdue, bring into bondage* (cf. Mic. 7:19).
 - 2) Rule over the animal realm of creation, and eat the vegetable realm of creation (Gen. 1:28b-30).
Note: the vegetarian diet ceased after the flood (Gen. 9:3).

2. Genesis 2.

- a. Adam’s circumstance of “being alone” was not good (Gen. 2:18). בַּד bad #905; *alone* (Gen. 32:24; Ex. 18:17; 24:2; Num. 11:14,17; Deut. 1:9,12; 8:3; 1st Kgs. 18:22; 19:10,14; Ps. 51:4; Ezek. 14:16,18).
- b. The solution to Adam’s only-ness was a helper. עֲזָרָה #5828; *help, one who helps*. Ezra = help.
- c. Suitable for him (Gen. 2:18,20). Corresponding to him (TWOT). “a helping being, in which as soon as he sees it, he may recognise himself” (Delitzsch).
 - 1) כַּנְגִידוֹ prep. כַּ + נִגַד neged #5048; *in front of, opposite to, corresponding to*.
 - 2) The medieval Jewish commentator Rashi explained, “if he is worthy, she will be a help; if not, she will be against him.”
- d. Adam’s song communicates tremendous principles of truth (Gen. 2:23).
 - 1) Bone of my bones. Adam lost a bone when his rib was removed. Without Eve something is missing. Adam is incomplete.
 - 2) Flesh of my flesh. Unlike the beasts, birds, and fish, Eve’s physical body (flesh) corresponds to Adam’s physical body for the propagation of the Adamic race (1st Cor. 15:39).
 - 3) The woman came out of the man. Her existence was designed to meet his need (his sake) (1st Cor. 11:8-9).
- e. “For this reason” indicates purpose clause (Gen. 2:24). On the basis of the origin of man and woman (one flesh), the Divine Institution of Marriage is designed by God as a one flesh relationship.
 - 1) The total commitment between a husband and wife is a relationship that necessitates a departure from parental submission (Gen. 2:24a).
 - a) Leaving father and mother does not mean abandonment or forsaking them (Matt. 15:4; 1st Tim. 5:4).
 - b) Honoring father and mother is still required, but obedience is no longer expected (Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:1).
 - 2) The union of a husband and wife is an act of God (Gen. 2:24b).
 - a) “Be joined” to his wife is in the passive voice, but “cleave to” is in the active voice.
 - b) God does this (Matt. 19:6), and instructs us to not humanly separate what has been divinely joined.
 - 3) Sexual union is designed for a man and a woman separated from parental authority and united in soul intimacy (Gen. 2:24c).
 - 4) Nothing is hidden (body or soul) between man and woman in marriage (Gen. 2:25).

3. Genesis 3-5

- a. The design of God for marriage was for the Lord to teach Adam, and for Adam to teach & lead his wife in Godly application (1st Tim. 2:11-12; cf. 1st Cor. 14:34-35).
- b. The fall of man featured Satan teaching Eve, and Eve leading Adam in Satanic application.
- c. Adam is without excuse because he knowingly, willingly, and volitionally rebelled against God’s command (1st Tim. 2:14).
- d. The effects of the fall upon marriage.
 - 1) The man’s labor became laborious.
 - 2) The woman’s childbirth became labor.
 - 3) Despite the effects of sin upon the male & female roles, humanity will continue to find fulfillment in living out these roles.
- e. A redeemed Adam & Eve were able to teach their sons the Truth (Gen. 4:4-5,25-26; Heb. 11:4).

B. Abraham & Sarah.

1. Abraham departed from the land of promise for temporal-life reasons (Gen. 12:10-20).
 - a. Abraham instructed Sarah to lie for his benefit (Gen. 12:11-13).
 - b. His actions were motivated by fear.
 - c. His actions were centered in selfishness.
 - d. Abraham's plan worked, but it didn't (Gen. 12:14-16).
 - e. God graced out Abraham & Sarah in spite of Abraham's poor decisions (Gen. 12:17-20).
2. Sarah instructed Abraham in a plan to assist God in fulfilling His promise (Gen. 16:1-16).
 - a. Her actions were motivated by resentment.
 - b. Her actions were centered in selfishness.
 - c. Sarah's plan worked, but it didn't (Gen. 16:4).
3. Both Abraham (Gen. 17:17) and Sarah (Gen. 18:12) laughed at God's promise.
 - a. Abraham is not rebuked for his laughter, which appears to be laughing with God in mental delight of His ability to make good on His promise.
 - b. Sarah is rebuked for her laughter (Gen. 18:15), which appears to be laughing at God in mental denial of His ability to make good on His promise.
 - c. Abraham did not grow weak in faith, and even while anticipating the birth of Isaac, had an intercessory prayer ministry for Ishmael (Gen. 17:18-22; Rom. 4:19-21).
4. As with Adam & Eve, Abraham & Sarah illustrate the pattern of Divine instruction and the husband's responsibility to instruct his wife and family (Gen. 18:19).
5. Earlier mistakes in a marriage can be repeated later in marriage (Gen. 20).
6. Earlier mistakes in a marriage can have long-term consequences throughout marriage (Gen. 21:9-14).

C. Isaac & Rebekah.

1. Abraham's parental responsibilities included the provision of a wife for his son (Gen. 24:1-9).
2. Arranged marriages were not merely a part of the culture.
 - a. The Divine Establishment institution of Nations was incorporated along family lines with linguistic and geographical parameters (Gen. 10:5,20,31; 11:7-9). Extended families in the form of clans, tribes, and nations formed the community interest in marriage arrangements.
 - b. The practice of arranged marriage was incorporated by God into the civil law of His earthly nation Israel (Ex. 34:15-16; Deut. 7:3; Jdg. 3:3-7; Ezr. 9:1-2).
 - c. Not every marriage was parentally arranged, and even the ones which were parentally arranged offered a volitional choice on the part of the child given (Gen. 24:58).
 - d. God the Father Sovereignly arranged the marriage for His Son, but each member of the Bride makes the volitional decision to accept Christ.
3. Abraham desired a believing wife for Isaac, and not an unbeliever from among the Canaanites (Gen. 24:3,6; 1st Cor. 7:39; 2nd Cor. 6:14-17).
 - a. Canaanite daughters were idolatrous.
 - b. Abraham's birth country was idolatrous.
 - c. Abraham's family had a witness to the LORD through Abraham's separation from idolatry.
 - 1) Though not "called out" from their nation, the descendants of Nahor believed in the LORD יהוה YHWH (Gen. 24:31).
 - 2) Bethuel & Laban (Gen. 24:50-51) and Rebekah (Gen. 24:58) each exercised positive volition to serve the LORD through Rebekah's marriage to Isaac.
 - d. The marriage contract being made, there was no ceremony to speak of (Gen. 24:62-67).
 - 1) Rebekah veiled herself as the only element of "ceremony" (v.65).
 - 2) Abraham's servant communicated the Divine Guidance he had received for Isaac's marriage (v.66).
 - 3) Isaac accepted the Will of God for his marriage, and learned to love Rebekah (v.67).

D. Jacob & Leah & Rachel & Zilpah & Bilhah.

1. Jacob volitionally entered into polygamy when he could not accept Leah as his one and only wife (Gen. 29:21-30).
2. Rivalry between Jacob's two wives led to his marrying two more (Gen. 30:1-13).
3. Jacob finally came to realize that Leah was his right woman (Gen. 37:10).
4. Levirate Marriage was commanded in the Law (Deut. 25:5-10), but polygamy was otherwise discouraged (Ex. 21:10; Deut. 17:17; 21:10-17).

E. David & Bathsheba.

1. Marriages may have awful beginnings (2nd Sam. 11:26-27).
 - a. Adultery.
 - b. Murder.
 - c. Divine discipline.
2. David learned from the Lord, and led his wife in their recovery from extended carnality and endurance of Divine discipline (2nd Sam. 12:24-25).
3. Solomon's Proverbs reflect the Biblical teaching of his father and mother (Prov. 1:8; 3:12; 4:1,3; 6:20).
4. David's commitment to Bathsheba is seen in his old age (1st Kgs. 1:15-21,28-31).

III. New Testament Teachings for Christian Marriages (Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18-19; 1st Pet. 3:1-9; Rm. 12:9-21).

A. God honors marriage, and will avenge attacks upon it (Heb. 13:4).

1. Marriage must be respected by all. Τίμιος ὁ γάμος ἐν πᾶσιν.
 - a. τίμιος ^{#5093}: pert. to beign of exceptional value; *costly, precious*.
 - b. Eternally rewarded work-assignments are precious (λίθοι τίμοι *precious stones* 1st Cor. 3:12).
 - c. God's provision for food is precious (τίμιος καρπὸς τῆς γῆς Jas. 5:7).
 - d. The blood of Christ is eternally precious (τίμιον αἷμα 1st Pet. 1:19).
 - e. God's promises are eternally precious (and magnificent) (τὰ τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἐπαγγέλματα 2nd Pet. 1:4).
2. The marriage bed must be kept undefiled. Not the only way in which a marriage is disrespected, but a tragic way in which it commonly is.
3. God judges fornicators and adulterers. God is the avenger (cp. the blood avenger Num. 35:19,21,24,25,27_{x2}; & warnings against adultery in Prov. 6:32-35).
4. The exaltation of marriage (Heb. 13:4) comes in the midst of the enduring φιλαδελφία love for the Body of Christ (Heb. 13:1-17).

B. Husbands and wives will either portray glory or disgrace in the view of angels (1st Cor. 11:3-16).

1. A husband who does not understand and submit to the headship of Christ (1st Cor. 11:3a) will not properly exercise his headship over his wife (1st Cor. 11:3b).
2. A wife who does not understand and submit to the headship of Christ will not properly exercise Biblical submission to her husband (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18).
3. In order to understand the headship of Christ, the husband and wife must study Christ's submission to the headship of God the Father (1st Cor. 11:3c).
4. The husband and the wife have different parts to portray in the Divine Diorama of manifold wisdom (1st Cor. 11:4-7,10; Eph. 3:10).
 - a. God the Father displayed His Son (Rom. 3:25-26).
 - b. God the Father made a display of His enemies (Col. 2:15).
 - c. God the Father displays us (Eph. 3:10).

C. Husbands and wives have the blessing of portraying Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:22-33;

Col. 3:18-19).

1. Marriage is a relationship between a head and a body (Eph. 5:23).
2. The Head is the Savior (Eph. 5:23), which is why the husband's love must be sacrificial (v.25).
3. The role of the body is to exalt the head, and the role of the wife is to support her husband (Eph. 5:22,24).
 - a. She helps where he lacks (Gen. 2:18).
 - b. His work assignment requires wisdom (Prov. 31:1-9), and his wife will be his greatest blessing (Prov. 31:10-31).
 - 1) He trusts in her (Prov. 31:10-12).
 - 2) He has impact in the community (Prov. 31:23).
 - 3) He builds her soul not with flattery, but with edifying praise (Prov. 31:28-31).
4. The husband's sacrificial love must nourish and cherish his wife (Eph. 5:25-29; 2nd Sam. 12:3).
5. Marriage has been around since Adam and Eve, but marriage as a portrayal of Christ and the Church is a "great" mystery for application in the Dispensation of the Church (Eph. 5:30-32).
6. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Job 28:28; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10), and the fear of the husband is the beginning of marital wisdom (Eph. 5:33).
 - a. φοβέω ^{#5399}: *to fear, be afraid; have reverence, profound respect*. Heb. יָרֵא *yare'* ^{#3372}.
 - b. Having fear is not being frightened (1st Pet. 3:6).

- D. Heirs together of the Grace of Life have a powerful prayer ministry (1st Pet. 3:1-9).
1. A wife in fellowship engages in fervent effectual intercessory prayer for her carnal husband (1st Pet. 3:1-6).
 - a. “In the same way” means that the wife entrusts her soul to the One who judges righteously (1st Pet. 2:23).
 - b. The wife’s internal mental attitude and external behavior serves Jesus Christ regardless of how carnal their husband may happen to be (1st Pet. 3:1).
 - c. The wife’s external behavior serves as a testimony to Jesus Christ (1st Pet. 3:2).
 - d. The wife’s soul beauty is Divinely attractive (1st Pet. 3:3-4).
 - e. Biblical examples provide the “encouragement of Scripture” and remove any human fear of submission (1st Pet. 3:5-6; Rom. 15:4-6).
 2. A husband in fellowship engages in fervent effectual intercessory prayer for his carnal wife (1st Pet. 3:7a).
 - a. “In the same way” means that the husband also entrusts his soul to the One who judges righteously, and is willing to lay down his life if necessary for the body he loves (1st Pet. 2:21-3:1).
 - b. The wife will have particular vulnerabilities and needs that the husband must consider. Considering her needs as more important is the essence of sacrificial love (Phil. 2:3,5).
 3. A husband and wife in fellowship together engage in fervent effectual intercessory prayer for their natural family and local church family (1st Pet. 3:7b).
 4. A husband and wife in fellowship together inherit the harmonious blessings of the grace of life (1st Pet. 3:7-9).
- E. Marital application of Ecclesiastical Harmony (Church harmony) (Rom. 12:9-21).
1. The context of this passage centers on the local church body (Rom. 12:3-8), but the principles are those of sacrificial love (Rom. 12:9; Eph. 5:25,28,33), granting honor (Rom. 12:10; 1st Pet. 3:7), devotion to prayer (Rom. 12:12; 1st Pet. 3:7) & harmony (Rom. 12:14,16; 1st Pet. 3:8-9).
 2. The parallels to Eph. 5 & 1st Pet. 3 demonstrate that principles of ecclesiastical harmony will promote marital harmony.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Non-hypocritical love. b. Abhor evil. c. Cling to good. d. Be devoted with <i>φιλαδελφία</i> love. e. Outdo one another in showing honor. f. Don’t let diligence “lag.” g. Stay “fervent” in fellowship. h. Serve the Lord. i. Rejoice in hope. j. Persevere in tribulation. k. Devoted to prayer. l. Supply the needs of saints. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> m. Practice hospitality. n. Bless and not curse the persecutor. o. Rejoice and weep with those who do likewise. p. Be of the same mind. q. Do not be haughty. r. Do not pay back evil for evil. s. Consider your witness to all mankind. t. Keep your mental attitude one of reconciliation. u. Leave room for God’s wrath. v. Be an overcomer.
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IV. Summary & Conclusion Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

- A. All earthly marriages are dissolved in eternity (Matt. 22:30).
- B. Believers in the Dispensation of the Church have a greater Marriage to look forward to.
 1. The Bride of Christ will be presented to Jesus Christ in glory (Eph. 5:27; 2nd Cor. 11:2).
 2. God the Father also makes a presentation of the Bride to His Son (2nd Cor. 4:14).
 3. The Son presents His Bride to His Father (Col. 1:22).
 4. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is a celebration announced in heaven (Rev. 19:7-9), and transpiring on earth (Matt. 22:2-14).
 5. Israel will celebrate their King and Queen (Ps. 45:1-17).
 6. The Groom and Bride will dwell in the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2,9-27).