

THE IDEAL WIFE

Numbers 6:24-26 "The Lord bless you and keep you! May the LORD make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! May the Lord turn his face upon you and give you peace!"

Let us remember that marriage was not created by men, but was created by God himself, and it is something extremely deep and intimate, which binds spouses more than any other relationship on earth. Therefore, if one chooses well and takes care of his marriage, he will have immense benefits and great blessings. If, on the other hand, one chooses badly or does not take care of his marriage well, he will suffer very heavy and painful consequences. In the Scriptures, God has left us a clear teaching regarding marriage, and that is that a believer should never marry an unbeliever.

THE UNBELIEVING WIVES

The wives not to be chosen, foreign wives that is, non-believers:

The People of Israel and Their People Today

Deut 7:1,3-4 "When the Lord your God has brought you into the land which you are going to possess, and you have driven out many peoples... You shall not be interrelated with them, and you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons: for they shall turn away from me your sons, who would serve foreign gods, and the wrath of the LORD shall be kindled against you.

Ex 9:1-3,10-12,14 ... The rulers came to me, saying, "The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of these lands, but imitate the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Pherezetes, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they took their daughters as wives

for themselves and their sons, and mingled the holy race with the peoples of these countries; the chiefs and magistrates were the first to commit this infidelity." When I heard this, I tore my clothes and cloak, tore the hair from my head and the hair of my beard, and sat down in dismay. For we have forsaken your commandments, the ones which you have given us through the prophets, your servants, saying: "The land into which you enter to take possession of it, is a land made unclean by the corruption of the peoples of these lands, by the abominable practices with which they have filled it from one end to the other with their defilements. Now, therefore, do not give your daughters to their sons, and do not take their daughters for your sons, and do not seek their prosperity or their well-being, and so you will become strong, and eat the best products of the land, and you will be able to leave it as an everlasting inheritance to your sons." ... Should we again violate your commandments and be related to these abominable peoples? Would not your anger be inflamed against us until it consumes us and leaves neither residue nor survivor?

1 Kings 11:1-4 King Solomon, besides Pharaoh's daughter, loved many foreign women, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Idumeans, the Sidonians, the Hittites, women of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, "Do not go to them, nor let them come to you, for they would surely pervert your heart to make you follow their gods». Solomon joined these women in his loves. And he had seven hundred princesses for wives, and three hundred concubines; and his wives perverted his heart. In the days of Solomon's old age, his wives turned his heart to other gods; and his heart did not belong entirely to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father was.

Ed 9:10-12 ... For we have forsaken your commandments, the ones which you have given us through the prophets, your servants, saying: "The land into which you enter to take possession of it, is a land made unclean by the corruption of the peoples of these lands, by the abominable practices with which they have filled it from one end to the other with their defilements.

Now, therefore, do not give your daughters to their sons, and do not take their daughters for your sons, and do not seek their prosperity or their well-being, and so you will become strong, and eat the best products of the land, and you will be able to leave it as an everlasting inheritance to your sons."

Ed 10:1,3,5,11,19,44 "While Ezra was praying and making this confession weeping and prostrating himself before the house of God, a very great crowd of Israelites, men, women, and children, gathered around him; and the people wept profusely. Let us make a covenant with our God, and commit ourselves to send away all these women and the children born of them, as my lord and those who tremble before the commandments of our God counsel: let them do what the law wills. Then Ezra stood up, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear that they would do as they were told. And they swore. But now confess your guilt to the Lord, the God of your fathers, and do his will! Separate yourselves from the peoples of this country and from foreign women!" They promised, by giving their hand, to send their wives away... All of these had taken foreign wives; and there were some those who had children by these wives.

Ne 13:23,25-27 "In those days I also saw Jews who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. I rebuked them, cursed them, beat some of them, pulled out their hair, and made them swear in the name of God that they would not give their daughters to their sons, and would not take their daughters for their sons or for themselves. And I said, "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin in this? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him; he was loved by his God, and God had made him king over all Israel; yet the foreign women also caused him to sin. Then should we allow you to commit an equally great evil, and thus become unfaithful to our God, by taking foreign wives?"

I would like to list some of the problems that there are in a mixed marriage:

1 - The couple could not agree on the most important thing in life: Glorifying God in their life together.

2 - The believer who marries a non-believer demonstrates to the non-believer that it is not important to obey God, so his testimony would take on little value.

3 - The bond with a non-believer would be a terrible obstacle to how long a believer could live to the glory of God. That believer would be hindered from having fellowship with other believers, because the unbeliever would want to fellowship with his nonbelieving friends. That believer would be hindered from participating freely in church life, because the unbeliever would regard it as a waste of time. The believer would not have the blessing of mutual edification with the most important person in his life. He could not speak of the heart of the things of God, because to the natural man, the things of God are madness.

4 - A marriage with a non-believer would become a terrible obstacle to spiritual growth. The bond of a marriage is extremely close, so the believer will inevitably be greatly influenced by the unbelieving spouse. Scripture is very clear:

1 Cor 15:33 "Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals."

The closer the company, the more it will have a negative influence, so when the company is one's mate, the negative influence will be extremely strong and the damage will be great. The fact that God commands believers not to marry unbelievers is not to limit the joy of believers, but rather to allow them to have the true joy that comes from a life of faith in God. If we want God's blessings, we must walk by faith.

5 - The teaching of children by both parents could create confusion, discomfort and disobedience towards the parents themselves, because the believing parent will try to instruct the children according to the

commandments of God, as God has commanded him, while the unbelieving spouse may oppose and lead the children to grow up in an undisciplined way and follow worldly teachings, vices, fashion, entertainment, etc.

BELIEVER AFTER MARRIAGE

There is still another type of situation to consider: What should be done in the case that God saves a person after marriage and therefore, a believer finds himself already married to an unbeliever? In this case, the believer has not sinned, because he was already married when God saved him, Scripture teaches that in this case, the believer must not leave the non-believer, vice versa if the non-believer does not want to be with the believer he can leave, but both are required to remain alone and not to remarry or to return to be together. (1 Co 7:10-11)

BELIEVING WIVES

The wives God had commanded to be chosen from among his people

The wife for Isaac

Ge 24:2-4,12-16 Abraham said to the eldest of the servants of his house, who was in charge of all his possessions, "Put your hand under my thigh, and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from among the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell; but you shall go to my country, to my relatives, and there you shall take a wife for my son, for Isaac." "O LORD, God of my lord Abraham, I pray thee, make me have a happy meeting to-day; be kind to Abraham my lord! Behold, I stand here by this spring; and the daughters of the inhabitants of the city will go out to draw water. Let the maiden to whom I say, "Lower your pitcher, I pray you, so that I may drink," and who will answer me, "Drink, and I will give your camels to drink also," be the one you have destined for your servant

Isaac. By this I shall understand that thou hast shown kindness to my lord." He had not yet finished speaking when Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, wife of Abraham's brother Naor, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. The girl was very beautiful in appearance, a virgin; no man had known her.

The wife for Jacob

Ge 28:1-2 "Then Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and commanded him, 'You shall not take a wife from among the women of Canaan. Depart, go to Paddan-Aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take a wife there, among the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.

The high priests had received this command from God to choose the wives.

Lev 21:13-14 "He will take a virgin as his wife." He will not take a widow, nor a divorcee, nor a dishonored woman, nor a prostitute; but he will take as his wife a virgin of his people.

The Levite priests who served God in the temple (we too are his priests today because Christ made us kings and priests) had been commanded by God how they should choose their wives.

Lev 21:7 "They shall not take a prostitute as a wife, nor a dishonored wife; they will not take a woman who has been divorced by her husband, because they are holy to their God.

Eze 44:22 "They shall not marry a widow or a divorced woman, but they shall take virgins of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest."

The apostle Paul shows the brothers in Corinth what kind of wife to choose: believer!

1 Corinthians 9:5 "We have no right to bring about a wife who is a sister in faith, as the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, also do and Cephas?"

The wife who pleases God is referred to in the scriptures as the virtuous woman:

Pr 12:4 A virtuous woman is the crown of her husband ...

Pr 31:10-31 Who will find a strong and virtuous woman? Its value is far greater than pearls. Her husband's heart trusts in her and she will always have gains. She does him good and not evil, all the days of his life. He procures wool and linen and works with pleasure with his own hands. She is like the ships of merchants: she brings her food from afar. She gets up when it is still night to distribute food to her family and give orders to her maids. She looks at a field and buys it; with the fruit of his hands he plants a vineyard. He girded his loins tightly, and strengthened his arms. He realizes that his trade is fine, and his lamp at night does not go out. He extends his hand to the distaff, and his palms grasp the spindle. He reaches out his hand to the poor and extends his hands to the needy. He is not afraid of snow for his family, because everyone in the house has a double role. He makes himself tapestry blankets, and his garments are of the finest linen and purple. Her husband is esteemed at the gates, when he sits among the elders of the village. He makes linen robes and sells them, and supplies the merchants with belts. Strength and honor are his

dress and he laughs at the days to come. He opens his mouth with wisdom and on his tongue is the law of goodness. She watches over the progress of her house and does not eat the bread of laziness. Her sons rose up and proclaimed her blessed; her husband also praised her, saying, "Many daughters have done great things, but you surpass them all." Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but the woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised. Give her the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her at the gates.

An example of a virtuous woman was Ruth the Moabite.

THE WIFE'S CONDUCT

A true Christian woman must be willing to accept and apply God-given principles for family happiness. The role of the woman has a great influence on the spiritual health of the family.

The Wife's Submission

Today, unfortunately, this term is very misunderstood, the thought that immediately comes to mind is that being submissive is a position of inferiority or even slavery, but it is simply a different role than that of the husband. In reality, the true meaning is to **let oneself be voluntarily guided with humility and love** without resistance or conditions, in a certain sense as the primitive church let itself be guided by Christ, by the Holy Spirit.

Woman shares the same nature as man and in God's eyes has the same value as man:

Ge 2:23 And the man said, This at last is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She will be called a woman because she was taken from man."

Gal 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek here; there is neither slave nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

But for the woman God has established subordination to the man, so that by honoring the man she sees she can honor God whom she does not see, giving an example also to her children. Submission is much more than just an outward form: it is an inner attitude, a heart clothed with honor and reverence for the husband. For example: When the church does not obey Christ, communion with God is interrupted, as a result the church is no longer able to fulfill its role. This is what happens when the wife does not respect her role, the family does not proceed in the right direction established by God. Just as the church voluntarily submits to Christ in response to His great love, so the wife voluntarily submits to her husband. Jesus himself was subject to the Father, but His was certainly not slavery:

Phil 2:5-9 "Have the same mind in you as was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he was in the form of God, did not consider being equal to God something to be jealously clung to, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and finding himself outwardly as a man, he humbled himself, making himself obedient unto death., and death on the cross. Therefore God has sovereignly exalted him and given him the name that is above every name.

2 Corinthians 13:13 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." Amen.