

“THE PRIORITY OF THE HOME”

GENESIS 2:21-25

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INTRODUCTION

In this passage Yahweh established the very first and most important institution—marriage and the home. The first institution was not Israel—a nation, or the church, or government, or some business/industry. The home is the foundation of society and healthy homes are essential to the health and well-being of society. In this dispensation, without healthy homes the church cannot function successfully.

Please note that *Christ’s teaching on Marriage is based on Genesis 1:27* [He created them male and female] and on Genesis 2:24—He quotes both passages in Mt. 19:3-4 & Mk. 10:2-12. If we want answers to the question of what is a proper marriage, we must understand, accept, and follow the teachings of this passage.

YOU MUST HONOR THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE—whether or not you are married.

I. THE SOLUTION—CREATION OF THE WOMAN (21-22)

A. The State of the Man—God “caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept.”

- Notice that Yahweh—the faithful God of the covenant did this; Elohim—the Mighty and powerful God did this.
- This sleep was like a comatose state, or like being under anesthesia—not a hypnotic trance. Man’s feelings and consciousness was enveloped by God’s gentle care.
- Not because of potential pain—no pain in a perfect creation.
- Rather, to avoid the *gruesome sight* of the divine operation and also of the thought of the *loss of part of his body*.

B. The Operation on the man

- God took a rib—including some of the flesh; for she was his “flesh and bones”—v. 23.
- God closed up the opening with flesh—in place of the rib, “instead of it.”
- **Man does not have one less rib today!** Such traits are not inherited.

Why would God perform this kind of operation on man in order to create Eve?

1. **The Unity of the Human Race** (Rom. 5:18ff); otherwise Christ could not have taken the nature of all men; nor would Adam’s sin have represented that of all men.
2. The **true dignity of womankind** is shown by this procedure—she is not of inferior substance.
3. Woman has the **truest kinship with man**. She is of his bone and flesh.
4. The action takes on a **symbolical significance**: Not taken from his head in order to show her *superiority* over him, nor taken from his feet in order to show her *inferiority* to him; rather taken from his side in order to indicate her to be *a helper* by the side of the man and *on the same level* with him, and in order to evidence the fact that he must manifest *love, care, and protection* of her as *one close to his heart*.
5. The part of the body taken—a rib which may easily be dispensed of without hindering proper bodily function, or even being noticed.

C. The Construction of the Woman (22)—and the Lord God [on these names see above] fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man.”

- The verb means “built” and involves constructive effort of some importance.
- Could not use the verb “mold” as in 2:7 since He was using flesh, not dirt!

D. The Marriage—“he brought her to the man.”

- As a father brings his daughter to be wed.
- **God is the author of sex and marriage.**

- II. THE SATISFACTION OF MAN (23) [who had looked with anticipation for such a mate]
- “Now”—i.e. “now at last”
 - These lines form **the first poetic couplet** in the Bible; Adam expresses his joy.
- A. Recognition of close connection—“bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh.”
- B. Giving of a Name
1. Adam’s naming of his mate/wife indicates his leadership over and superior position over her—cf. his naming of the animals this action concludes the naming process begun in vv. 19-20.
 2. The class name he gives to her marks her as superior to all other creatures whom he had named.
 3. “Woman”—*ishah*—is a play on words; for she was taken out of *ish*
 4. This name shows the closest possible intimate relationship of the two beings, expressed even by the kinship of sound.
- III. FORMULA OF MARRIAGE (24)
- Who speaks the words of v. 24?
- Not Adam—he could not speak of a father and mother.
 - Moses, the author of Genesis, speaks; “therefore” in Genesis usually indicates an explanation given by the author of the book.
 - Moses spoke by divine revelation; note that Jesus in Mt. 19:5 calls these words those of God.
- A. Exclusive
1. Leaving parents—“cutting the umbilical cord”; why spoken only of man?
 - a. The wife had to leave.
 - b. The husband had authority in his home.
 - c. He must see to it that parental dependence is terminated.
 - d. He and his spouse often lived in close vicinity/same house with his parents.
 - e. He still was obligated to honor his parents.
 2. Only **one** wife—two become one.
- B. Permanent: “Cleave” to his wife—Hebrew verb conveys the idea of permanence.
1. Loyalty and physical proximity.
 2. “Hold on firmly”—for “dear life”!
 3. No divorce permitted—Jesus’ application in Mt. 19:6—“no more two, but one flesh”; God has joined, let no man separate.
 4. No sex before marriage—leaving comes before cleaving; **commitment first**.
- C. United: “They shall become one flesh.”
1. This bond is “God-sealed”—“What therefore God has joined together” (Mt. 19:6)
 2. Complete identification in their interests and pursuits, consummated in physical union.
 3. The union involves communication, sharing, spiritual growth, and physical love.
- IV. SHAMELESSNESS OF THE COUPLE (25): “Man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”
- No sin; no guilt; no shame
 - Shame over nakedness is connected with the transferral of sin associated with the propagation of the human race.
 - Literal nakedness is a picture of spiritual nakedness before God, which needs to be covered by the garment of Christ’s righteousness.

CONCLUSION

God made both man and woman; God is sovereign and has the right to set the terms of marriage.

Marriage is important and is the foundation of a strong and healthy society.

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