

END-TIMES ISSUES



#112 Commandment #7 – What Adam knew about marriage.

GOD DOESN'T TELL US TO KNOW ALL THE END-TIME DETAILS. HE TELLS US TO BE READY.

A N D B E Y O N D I

1

A FEW WEEKS AGO

WE LOOKED AT HOW THE NATURE OF "MALE AND FEMALE" IN HUMAN MARRIAGE IS A REFLECTION OF THE NATURE OF GOD.

- **God created humans in his image**, to reflect his glory, as *individuals*, and also as "*male-female units*" (i.e., in the union of marriage).
 - ✓ We, who have God's fullest self-revelation in the New Testament, can see it more clearly than they did in the past – though hints of it were given throughout the Old Testament era.
- **But what did Adam know?** He might not have known *any* of this!
 - ✓ *So did he know what was necessary*, in order to live and interact properly with his wife? *Could* he know it?
 - ✓ The very events related to the creation of him and his wife were sufficient! And it was further reinforced by what happened at the time that sin entered the world.

What this means: Even without the additional New Testament revelation about God, *we can still know how to live properly as male and female!*

2

WHAT DID ADAM KNOW ABOUT THE NATURE OF MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS? EVE ALSO KNEW ABOUT THESE THINGS!

- **Our goal is to look at some of these things.**
 - ✓ We will focus on the Genesis account about Adam, but will also point out a few places where the *New Testament* has the same focus. (This would indicate that the same facts were still relevant in the New Testament era.)
- **Be aware that things that were once recognized as obvious are now being denied, or even suppressed.**
 - ✓ This is the consequence of rebellion against the God who created these things. As the rebellion in our nation intensifies, *you can expect that denial of these things will intensify.*

Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ...
Romans 1:22 (NAS)

3

ADAM KNEW (AND SO DID EVE)...

1 The word "man" is both specific and generic, representing BOTH a male human (specific), as well as a group of humans (collectively, generic) – a group that could include both male and female.

- ✓ This is why Scripture considers it *perfectly acceptable* to use the word "mankind" to represent all people.
- ✓ The Hebrew word used here ('ā-dām) is also used for the name of the first man, "Adam." It means "red," probably referring to the color of the soil, from which he and all humanity came.
- ✓ The following passage uses the word *both* ways (referring to Adam specifically and to humans in general). Note that God gives "them" (plural) the name "man" (singular).

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in His own likeness. Male and female He created them, and He blessed them. And in the day they were created, He called them "man."
Genesis 5:1-2 (BSB); see also Genesis 1:26-27.

4

ADAM KNEW (AND SO DID EVE)...

2 "Man" (as in "mankind") is described in terms of only two genders: male and female. However, this gender concept is described in two ways.

- ✓ **The first concept: A focus on biological distinctions.** God uses two *biological* terms to define gender: male (zā-kār) and female (neqē-bā(h)). Both passages that describe humans ('ā-dām) as being created in God's "image" or "likeness" use these words for "male" and "female."

In the day that God created man, He made him in His own likeness. Male and female He created them, and He blessed them. And in the day they were created, He called them "man."
Genesis 5:1b-2 (BSB); see also Genesis 1:26-27.

- ✓ These words emphasize the biological component of gender, emphasizing the *sexual differentiation*.

5

- ✓ **The second concept: A focus on the relational connection of the two.** When God brings the woman to the man, he (Adam) *names* her, based on her *relation* to him.

[God] brought her to him. And the man ('ā-dām) said:
"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called 'woman,' ('iš-šā(h))
for out of man ('iš) she was taken."
Genesis 2:22b-23 (BSB)

- ✓ Here, the "generic man" Adam takes on a new significance, when presented with the woman. And so, he takes on the name "man" ("ish" in Hebrew) referring specifically to the *male* aspect of humanity.
- ✓ Because of this relational connection, he gives her a name that refers specifically to the *female* aspect of humanity – and also to her connection to the *male* aspect of humanity. Specifically, she has been "taken from man." She is "ish-shah" because she was taken from "ish."

6

ADAM KNEW (AND SO DID EVE)...

3 The woman had a special significance in three ways.

1. She was formed in a special way – a way that was *different from all the rest of creation*. Ultimately, she was from the ground, through the man. But the immediate way she was formed was from *an already-living being*: the man. *No other entity was formed in this manner.*

So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep, and while he slept, **He took one of the man's ribs*** and closed up the area with flesh. And **from the rib** that the LORD God had taken from the man, **He made a woman** and brought her to him.

Genesis 2:21-22 (BSB)

* (2:21 Or took part of the man's side; similarly in verse 22.)

- ✓ The man recognized this fact.

"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh..."

Genesis 2:23b (BSB)

7

2. She was formed to be a *helper*. She would be capable of "completing" the man – the previously missing part of the "male-female unit."

- » Though people, as "generic humans" can reflect the "image of God" *individually*, they, as "*male-female units*," would be able to do so in ways that cannot be done on an individual level.
- » The *man* was given an assignment (by God) to work with creation and to develop it in a way that would reflect the glory of God. This *could not* be fulfilled without the woman; so without her, the results could not be *good*.

The LORD God took **the man** and put him in the Garden of Eden **to work it and take care of it.**

Genesis 2:15 (NIV)

- » God also gave the man a specific task (perhaps as an object lesson) to *teach* him about his need.
- » The Scripture passage that describes this is on the next page. Note that it was *God* who defined not only the woman's *role*, but also the man's *need*.

8

The LORD God also said, "It is **not good for the man to be alone**. I will make for him **a suitable helper**."

And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and He brought them to the man to see what he would name each one. And whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field.

But for Adam no **suitable helper** was found.

Genesis 2:18-20 (BSB)

- ✓ A "**suitable helper**" – She was his "counterpart" or "complement" – one who was at his side (= where she came from). They would *work together*, to enable him to accomplish fully the task he was originally given. Without her, things would not be "good."
- ✓ Note that *nothing* in the word "helper" has anything to do with the woman's *value*. Rather, it focuses on her *function*.

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3. She would have a part in accomplishing something that the man would *never* be capable of doing.

- » For people to fulfil the global task that God created them for, there would need to be more image-bearers. Only the *woman* would be capable of doing this. Without her, the task would *forever* fail.
- » Adam named his wife "Eve," because she would be the one from whom this *life* could come. (In Hebrew, part of the name "Eve" sounds like the word "life.")

And Adam named his wife **Eve**, because she would be the mother of all the **living**.

Genesis 3:20 (BSB)

There is more here than just a focus on *biological* life. This event was a response to the judgment for the sin that had just occurred (Genesis 3:6-7). It was an expression of *faith* and *hope* for the future. Yet (sadly) all this life-giving would be associated with pain and suffering, because of the existence of sin in the world.

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- ✓ In these passages, we see several things:

- » **Each of them had a specific duty** for accomplishing the over-all goal of "ruling" and "subduing" creation (mentioned in Genesis 1). *These roles were determined by God, not invented by people.*
- » **There was also a specific order and method of creation.** This might not mean much to us, today. But at that time, it would have been considered very significant.
- » *These things were understood* by people in the Old Testament era, (to whatever extent that they followed the God of the Bible). It was also considered significant in the *New Testament* era.

- ❖ **Until sin entered the world**, this relationship resulted in complete harmony, with both of them proving to be inseparably needed, and equally important for accomplishing God's will for the world.
 - » Sin brought competition; and its corrupting influence caused *each* to respond to the other with *self-serving* motives (instead of being *God-serving*).

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A HELPER? Responding to the world (1): The wicked have twisted this "helper" concept, to make it imply "inferiority"; and this view has crept into the church. Today, probably most books on this topic view the issue this way, and may even *attack* what God said! *This has not always been the case!*

- » Many people now *denigrate* the concept of "helper." They claim it implies that women are *inferior* to men, and is used as a means to *suppress* women. Yet *they suppress the fact that this word is normally used to describe God, in the way that he helps people!* In this matter, *God wants women to be like him!*

HELPERS

- ❖ **How God describes the role of the woman:** Genesis 2:18, 20.
- ❖ **Used to describe people** who were helpers, or who were *not* a help to others: Isaiah 30:5; Ezekiel 12:14; Daniel 11:34.
- ❖ **Used to describe God:** Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:7, 26, 29; Psalm 20:2; 33:20; 70:5; 89:19; 115:9-11; 121:1-2; 124:8; 146:5; Hosea 13:9;

- ★ It's those who *attack* this concept, who keep linking it to "inferiority"! ★

12

Responding to the world (2): The wicked have even twisted Scripture that describes *salvation*, using it to *attack* this concept.

- » God says we are "one" in Christ. We are all *equally* saved; there are no "levels" of salvation. No separate "categories" of saved people.
- » *These people distort this concept, in order to deny differences that do exist between people – differences that are not "salvation issues."*
- » This requires them to *suppress* what many other New Testament passages say about the legitimate existence of these other categories, as well as the differences of obligations and duties that people within each of the categories mentioned in these verses:

You are all **sons*** of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. **There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3:26-29 (BSB)

* (Note that the word "sons" is used generically, the same way "mankind" is.)¹³

ADAM KNEW (AND SO DID EVE)...

4 How sin entered the world, and how it would complicate life.

- ✓ In Genesis 3, we learn about how sin entered the human race. The ways that the man and the woman fell into sin were different; and this is something that would influence the nature of how they related to each other, from that time on.
 - » The serpent tricked Eve, convincing her that it would be for her good. In contrast, the man had to make a deliberate, willful choice to side either with God, or with his wife.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eyes, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom, she took the fruit and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.

Genesis 3:6 (BSB)

- » In the end, *both* became self-serving, and were no longer working together for the glory of God.

• The abuse and rebellious tendencies we see today are *not* because of God's standards.

- ✓ It was *only as sinners* that:
 - » The man chose to misuse his authority to abuse the woman.
 - » The woman chose to rebel and try to usurp the man's role.
- **Even when people *tried* to follow Scripture standards...**
 - ✓ The influence of sin – both within the individual, as well as in society (i.e., the influence of the culture they lived in) – meant that people never fully lived-up to the standard God gave at the beginning.
 - » But it wasn't the standard's fault; rather it was sin's influence.
 - » We should be careful when we condemn them. Though we may have to do so, in order to be *truthful*, we also need to remember that we have temptations to commit the *same* types of sins. And like them, *our imperfections do not negate the reality of God's standards.*

15

ADAM KNEW (AND SO DID EVE)...

5 The presence of sin in the world complicated the way the man and the woman would interact (just like it complicated *everything* else).

- ✓ Even the way that sin entered the world (the nature of Eve's sin vs. Adam's sin) would influence matters.
 - » Eve was *tricked*, and then tried to get her husband to join her in eating the fruit. She was definitely *not helping!*
 - » Adam made a *deliberate choice*, having to choose between loyalty to her and loyalty to God. He was definitely *not leading!*
- ✓ When God pronounced the *necessary* judgment, it included an effect on their relationship – which was probably related to the ways they yielded to their individual temptations.

"Your desire will be for your husband,* and he will rule over you."

Genesis 3:16b (BSB)

* [Or: "You will desire to control your husband." (Translations vary.)]

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? →

16

"Your desire will be for your husband,* and he will rule over you."

Genesis 3:16b (BSB)

* [Or: "You will desire to control your husband." (Translations vary.)]

• What does this verse mean?

- ✓ Most people today don't like what they think this verse says. (It doesn't help that the world has redefined the concepts mentioned here.) So generally, people tend to either: ① change its meaning to "fit" what they want to believe, or ② attack it, based on their *false* perception of what it means (along with attacking any other passage that they presume has a similar emphasis).
- ✓ This verse is part of God's *necessary* judgment for sin. He is not saying, "you are going to sin" (which many people seem to think the verse says), but "because of your sin, this must happen." Yet because people have *redefined* these issues, based on the world's perspective, they often define it as describing sin.

17

"Your desire will be for your husband,* and he will rule over you."

Genesis 3:16b (BSB)

* [Or: "You will desire to control your husband." (Translations vary.)]

• If we don't understand this verse, how should we respond to it?

- ✓ (It is not our purpose to argue over the verse's interpretation, or to spend the time needed to carefully analyze its meaning.)
- ✓ This verse is just stating a *fact* – the way it will be. It's not a *command*. If we don't understand it, it won't matter, *as long as we are willing to obey the clear commands found elsewhere in Scripture*. This verse will not contradict those commands.
- ✓ We must realize that *both* men and women are sinners; and *both* will sin. If this verse did represent an obligation, you could expect that *both* men and women would distort what it told them to do, and would use it against each other.
- ✓ No matter how we interpret this verse, we can rest assured that sin has affected human relations; and we can expect (though not condone) the problems that will exist because of sin.

18

ADAM KNEW (AND SO DID EVE)...

6 In the midst of God's judgment against sin, there was hope – and this hope would come through the woman.

"And I will put **enmity** between **you and the woman**, and between **your seed and her seed**.

He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Genesis 3:15 (BSB)

- ✓ The focus here is on judgment of the *spiritual entity* that controlled the snake. We also call him the devil or Satan (Revelation 20:2).
- ✓ There are three parts to this judgment. Here are the first two:
 - » Between the serpent (Satan) and Eve: There will be lifelong hostility between them. No longer will Eve trust the Serpent.
 - » Between the spiritual offspring of the serpent (= those who are wicked) and the spiritual offspring of Eve (= those who are righteous). [The same concept is mentioned in Revelation 12:17.]
- ✓ Our focus here is on the third part of this judgment. ↪

19

"He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Genesis 3:15b (BSB)

- ✓ Here, the focus changes to one specific offspring of Eve - who we now recognize as being Jesus Christ. Through this specific offspring, the serpent will be forever destroyed. Yet he (Jesus Christ) will also suffer in the process of accomplishing it.
- ✓ What this means: From the woman – Eve – would come the giver of *eternal life* (= the one who would undo the spiritual *death* that already occurred in us). He is the one who will someday destroy both death and the author of death (the spiritual "Serpent," the devil).

- ✓ Why all this? Because judgment is necessary, but embedded in the judgment is the first expression of a future hope. This statement is the first expression of what would eventually be called the "Good News" about Jesus. It shows us that ultimate victory belongs not to the Serpent (Satan), but to Christ.

20

★ AWARENESS OF THESE ISSUES GOES BEYOND ADAM AND EVE. ★

- ✓ **Adam and his offspring knew how these things should influence male-female interactions.** They *experienced* these things, which would later be recorded in the book of Genesis.
- ✓ **The Jews knew these things were necessary,** or at least *could* have known them (if they paid attention to Scripture). We see examples of some Jews living by God's standards (or close to them) ... and examples of others who didn't live by them.
 - » In addition, some of the regulations God gave them in the Law, expressed similar concepts.

These facts show the continuity between the earliest times in earth's history, on through the time of the Flood, and down to the time of the Jews.

21

- ✓ **The Gentiles, after Babel, either did *not* know them, or else distorted them.** This was because their ancestors rejected the God of the Bible, and turned to the worship false gods.
- ✓ **Paul re-introduced these concepts, when he preached the Good News to the Gentiles.**
 - » This is why Paul's letters contain many of the same focuses that we see in the Old Testament. *The New Covenant did not change the nature of male-female interactions!* Nor did it change any adjustments that became necessary because of sin in the world. (But it *did* change how men and women would respond to these things.)

There is *no* New Testament passage related to these issues that even *hints* that the obligations mentioned would someday cease apply to Christians.

- ✓ **In the "Christian era" - these things were practiced until just recently** – with increasing opposition occurring in just the last half century.

22

EXAMPLES OF WHAT PAUL TAUGHT.

We will not go into much detail, because of time considerations. Most of these verses have been so strongly opposed (and often distorted and maligned), that it would take too long to work through all the issues. Anyone who is truly interested in exploring things further is welcome to do so.

- **The creation order and the way sin entered the world:** Paul tells us that *both* of these events teach us something about the relationship between men and women. Just like we see in Genesis 2, he also points out the *need* for *both* men and women. They are *dependent* on each other, though in different ways. (In the context surrounding the following passage, Paul describes certain responsibilities for *men*, and different responsibilities for *women*.)

For Adam was formed first, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman who was deceived and fell into transgression.

1 Timothy 2:13-14 (BSB)

23

- **The creation order and the purpose for which each was created:** These things are to influence the attitudes that each has in public worship, as well as how they demonstrate their attitude.

For man did not come from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

1 Corinthians 11:8-9 (BSB)

- ✓ At the same time, he points out the *interdependence* of each.

In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For just as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.

1 Corinthians 11:11-12 (BSB)

- ✓ Paul used these facts to demonstrate the *need* for certain practices. And if anyone wants to dispute it, Paul says:

If anyone is inclined to dispute this, we have no other practice, nor do the churches of God.

1 Corinthians 11:16 (BSB)

24

- Both Paul and Peter use the word "submission" to describe roles within the family, as well as in the church and in society in general.
 - ✓ Paul wrote these instructions to Gentiles who did not know them. Peter wrote to a *mixture* of Jews and Gentiles.
 - ✓ Both of them gave examples in which certain people were to submit to others. Basically, we *all* have people we are to submit to; and all are to submit to God. They also gave examples of how those in authority (who were to be submitted to) were to act towards those under their authority.
 - ✓ *Don't ignore the fact that both groups of instructions are there, and both need obeyed... otherwise, things will not work out the way that God desires!*

- Jesus said that the nature of husband-wife relationships is based on Genesis 2:24. (We will look more at this issue next time.)

IT WAS ONLY SINCE THE 1970s THAT HOSTILITY TO THESE MATTERS BEGAN CREEPING INTO THE CHURCH.

- Prior to that – *for all the rest of Christian history* – all these concepts were considered *authoritative and binding on how we were to live*.
 - ✓ The world's "great rebellion" against authority was in full force in the late 1960s. Soon after that, people began to apply those views to Scripture. Today, it is popular to either: ① deny that any such passage in Scripture is still relevant ... or (less often) ② claim that they still represent valid principles, but that they need applied in a "more culturally-relevant" way. (In reality, those who take this second view *rarely* make any attempt make such an application.)
- In contrast, Scripture shows that their relevancy *transcends any one culture*. They applied in the sinless environment of Eden; they applied in the time after the fall, in the Jewish culture, and in the Gentile culture (among those who were saved). It was also practiced in the church for nearly 2000 years. *No verse exists that says they would cease to be relevant in the 1970s!!*

WHAT SHOULD WE CONCLUDE?

- ✓ First of all, Adam and Eve knew the right way to live in a marriage situation (i.e., as a "male-female unit"), even without knowing what *we* know about the nature of God. This was our primary focus today.
- ✓ Second, their knowledge was not lost, but has been communicated (in Scripture) to all generations since then.
- ✓ Third, you have to decide *your* response to all these things that are found in Scripture.
 - » Are you going to accept them? (The perspective held in the Bible and in the church for nearly 2000 years.)
 - » Are you going to claim they are "culturally irrelevant" today? (The perspective that has become increasingly popular in the past 50 years.)
 - » Are you going to distort the very meanings of the verses, attack what they say, and perhaps even reject Scripture as being our authoritative guide for all of life? (Gaining popularity in many "liberal" churches.)

- Most people like verses that tell husbands to love their wives. But when they come across the verses that mention the women, they act as though such verses have no relevance in today's world... or they act as though they actually *promote* mistreatment of women!

❖ YOU HAVE TO DECIDE ... Are you going to treat Scripture one of these ways?

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Wives, submit to your husbands, ... Colossians 3:18a (BSB) | Will you distort it into something like: | Wives, submit to your husbands, until you decide it's no longer relevant ... Colossians 3:18a (distorted) |
| Wives, submit to your husbands, ... Colossians 3:18a (BSB) | Will you distort it into something like: | Wives, let your husbands do anything they want to you, even beat you with a baseball bat, ... Colossians 3:18a (distorted) |

OUR MISSION: DECIDE

- ✓ Adam and Eve understood all that they needed to know, for relating to each other properly.

Today, we have even more information.
- ✓ We have to decide how we are going to respond to what they were able to know (in addition to the various things that were revealed later, in the New Testament era).
 - ↳ If we decide to accept that what they knew (which was also known by the Jews, by saved Gentiles during the apostle's day, and by Christians *worldwide*, for nearly 2000 years), we may have to take time to "re-learn" what was once considered "common knowledge," but has, in the past few decades, been twisted and distorted beyond recognition.

There are certain male-female obligations mentioned by Paul, that people today don't like. So they *attack* them, claiming they are a matter related to *culture* – and since we don't live in that culture, we don't have to practice them. Yet the apostle Paul *never* appeals to *culture*. Instead, he appeals to *creation* and events that happened *prior* to culture.

Credits

SCRIPTURE

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