

Delight Thyself Also in Thy Wife

Now Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah (Gen. 23:1,2)

In this week's *Torah* portion, we get a hint of what our father Abraham thought of his wife Sarah. He must have deeply loved her and cared for her. Even in death, he wants to honor her. He insists in purchasing an expensive burial place for her. In doing so, he purchases the burial place that will one day be his own and our Jewish people's patriarchs. Scripture has a lot to say about husbands and wives, and if you have been reading carefully in *Bereshit* in the last few weeks, surely you have observed Abraham and Sarah modeling marriage for us.

True marriage begins with a oneness of spirit. "*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*" (Amos 3:3 KJV) Evidently, Abraham and Sarah were "together" in nearly every situation (right or wrong) as we have noticed in *Bereshit*. It is also clear from Scripture that one of *Elohim's* purposes for marriage is companionship. Companionship is personified in the phrase *one flesh*. "*For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.*" (Gen. 2:24 NASB) In the *B'rit Chadasha*, Scripture tells us a human being (all human flesh) is spirit, soul and body. "*May the G-d of shalom make you completely holy—may your entire spirit, soul and body be kept blameless for the coming of our L-rd Yeshua the Messiah.*" (1 Thes. 5:23 JNT)

Elohim instituted marriage, therefore, it is holy (*kadosh*) unto Him. Matrimony is the union between a man and a woman that are first brother and sister, second friends, and third lovers. The order is significant. We see in *Song of Songs (Shir HaShirim)*, that Scripture uses the words "*my sister, my spouse*" and "*my sister, my beloved, my love, my dove ...*" (*Shir HaShirim 4:9,10,12; 5:1,2*).

A One Man Woman and A One Woman Man

A key concept in the definition of marriage as designed by *Elohim* is the notion of *A One Man Woman and A One Woman Man*. (e.g., "...the husband on one wife..." 1 Tim. 3:2 and "...The wife of one man..." 1 Timothy 5:9). What does this concept mean? To all of you that are unmarried it means that "**you are responsible to keep yourself pure for the one whom you will marry.**"

- ✓ **No Immodest Appearance** "*Likewise, the women, when they pray, should be dressed modestly and sensibly in respectable attire...*" (1 Tim. 2:9) "*יְהוָה Elohim, made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.*" (Gen. 3:21) So if *יְהוָה Elohim* made clothes to cover nakedness, do you suppose it is OK for us to show off nakedness or to show off sensual bodily features?
- ✓ **No Moral Impurity** "*Therefore, brothers, just as you learned from us how you had to live in order to please G-d, and just as you are living this way now, we ask you - indeed, united with the L-rd Yeshua, we urge you - to keep doing so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you on the authority of the L-rd Yeshua. What G-d wants is that you be holy, that you keep away from sexual immorality, that each of you know how to manage his sexual impulses in a holy and honorable manner, without giving in to lustful desires, like the pagans who don't know G-d. No one should wrong his brother in this matter or take advantage of him, because the L-rd punishes all who do such things - as we have explained to you before at length. For G-d did not call us to live an unclean life but a holy one. Therefore, whoever rejects this teaching is rejecting not a man but G-d, indeed, the One who gives you the Ruach HaKodesh, which is his.*" (1 Thes. 4:1-8)
- ✓ **No Lustful Thoughts** "*In conclusion, brothers, focus your thoughts on what is true, noble, righteous, pure, lovable or admirable, on some virtue or on something praiseworthy.*" (Phil. 4:8)
- ✓ **No Unnatural Affection** "*They have exchanged the truth of G-d for falsehood, by worshipping and serving created things, rather than the Creator - praised be he for ever. Amen. This is why G-d has given them up to degrading*

passions; so that their women exchange natural sexual relations for unnatural; and likewise the men, giving up natural relations with the opposite sex, burn with passion for one another, men committing shameful acts with other men and receiving in their own persons the penalty appropriate to their perversion.” (Ro. 1:25-27). (Lev. 18:22-23 “You are not to go to bed with a man as with a woman; it is an abomination; You are not to have sexual relations with any kind of animal and thus become unclean with it; nor is any woman to present herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it; it is perversion.” and 1 Cor. 6:9-11 “Don't you know that unrighteous people will have no share in the Kingdom of G-d? Don't delude yourselves - people who engage in sex before marriage, who worship idols, who engage in sex after marriage with someone other than their spouse, who engage in active or passive homosexuality, who steal, who are greedy, who get drunk, who assail people with contemptuous language, who rob - none of them will share in the Kingdom of G-d. Some of you used to do these things. But you have cleansed yourselves, you have been set apart for G-d, you have come to be counted righteous through the power of the L-rd Yeshua the Messiah and the Spirit of our G-d”)

G-d's design of marriage is therefore a complete unity of man and wife, one complete embodiment consisting of spirit, soul and body. There must therefore be oneness (*echad*) of spirit, oneness of soul, and oneness of in the physical relationship. In order to achieve this *echad* on the physical level, each partner must recognize that the predominant factor of unity in the marriage comes first by *echad* of spirit and then by *echad* of soul.

If one were to describe the internal drive structure of a married couple, the spirit must be pictured as dominant, the soul in harmony with the spirit, and the physical under control. With these inner drive structures functioning in both the husband and wife, the spirit of the marriage will remain strong even if the soul and the body become incompatible.

If a couple achieves the best possible physical relationship, they will still experience only a small and distorted part of what G-d intended for marriage oneness. If they enjoy the best physical and psychological oneness, they still will have a relationship that falls short of what G-d intended.

On the other hand, if a couple comes together in a oneness of spirit, each partner is free to demonstrate love by giving to the other's needs. Even if for some medical reason they are not able to enjoy the physical aspects of marriage, they can still give to each other's needs.

How is the Spirit of a Marriage Enhanced?

As a couple comes closer to the L-rd, they come closer to each other other's spirit. For this reason, it is essential that each partner maintain an intimate fellowship and closeness with the L-rd. The principle in effect is the synergism of each one developing strong spiritual power. “*I pray that from the treasures of his glory he will empower you with inner strength by his Spirit.*” (Eph. 3:16) “*You husbands, likewise, conduct your married lives with understanding. Although your wife may be weaker physically, you should respect her as a fellow-heir of the gift of Life. If you don't, your prayers will be blocked.*” (1 Peter 3:7)

The spirit of a marriage is deepened through the Word and Prayer: “*That he might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word*” (Ephesians 5:26 KJV). In this way the couple is: “*But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*” (cf. Matthew 6:33) For Adonai has stated that “*...no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*” (Psalm 84:11b KJV)

The spirit of a marriage is damaged when either party feels used (or abused). The husband is to view his wife as an extension of himself and to protect her as he would protect himself: “*Why, no one ever hated his own flesh! On the contrary, he feeds it well and takes care of it, just as the Messiah does the Messianic Community.*” (see Ephesians 5:29)

- Oneness is promoted by a servant's spirit—working to make the partner successful
- Oneness is deepened by helping each other identify and develop spiritual gifts.
- Completeness is rewarded when major decisions are not made until both partners are in oneness of Spirit.
- The ultimate expression of oneness is when a couple can say that the other partner is their “*best friend*.”

Rav Sha'ul stated in 2 Cor. 6:14 “*Do not yoke yourselves together in a team with unbelievers. For how can righteousness and lawlessness be partners? What fellowship does light have with darkness?*” The same principle applies in marriage. Do you really think that if either partner chooses to shy away from G-d that the marriage will not suffer? Can your marriage really improve if either one of you chooses to become immoral, or to become sensual, or to become irresponsible, or to focus on material goods, or to become selfish, or to become bitter, or angry, or prideful? You know the answer in your own spirit, NO—NO WAY! The only way those of us that have been married for lengthy periods of time have grown together is by growing closer spiritually first and then the other two sides follow. Do you want to build up the spirit of your marriage—get close to G-d!

Delighting in the Wife of your Youth

For those of us that are married, the Word from the L-rd for today is delight. Delight has two main Hebrew words associated with it. The first is *oneg*. We are firstly to delight in the L-rd (Psalm 37:4) and delight in His Shabbat (Isa. 58:13-14)

Delight thyself also in the יְהוָה; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. (Ps 37:4)

If because of the Sabbath, you turn your foot from doing your own pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of יְהוָה honorable, and honor it, desisting from your own ways, from seeking your own pleasure and speaking your own word, then you will take delight in יְהוָה; and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of יְהוָה has spoken.” (Isa 58:13-14)

The second Hebrew word associated with delight is the word *chafets*. We are also to delight in the Torah of Adonai—“*But his delight is in the law of יְהוָה; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*” (Psalm 1:2) When we delight this way in the L-rd and His ways, he will then delight in us—“*And Samuel said, Hath the יְהוָה as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of יְהוָה? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*” (1 Sam 15:22) He will also order our steps—“*The steps of a good man are ordered by יְהוָה: and he delighteth in his way.*” (Psalm 37:23) We will experience His loving hand upon us—“*For whom יְהוָה loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth*” (Prov. 3:12) and we will become Hephzibah and Beulah—“*Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for יְהוָה delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.*” (Isa. 62:4) He will also send us the messenger of His covenant—“*Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and יְהוָה, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith יְהוָה of hosts*” (Mal. 3:1)

Today, if you hear His Voice, then “*Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.*” (Prov. 5:18) Do not wait for time to pass and celebrate your spouse after they pass away. So today, like our father Abraham did in *Chayei Sarah*, we will DELIGHT in our spouse. *Oneg* and *chafets* your spouse and celebrate the fact that: “*He who finds a wife finds a good thing And obtains favor from יְהוָה*” (Prov. 18:22) and that “*House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, But a prudent wife is from יְהוָה.*” (Prov. 19:14)