**Delight in the Wife of your Youth**

In this week’s Torah reading, 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 remains. In doing so, he purchases the burial place that will one day be his own and all of our people’s patriarchs. Scripture has a lot to say about husbands and wives, and if you have been reading carefully in Genesis surely you have observed Abraham and Sarah modeling marriage for us.

True marriage begins with oneness of spirit: “Can two walk together unless they meet by appointment?” (Amos 3:3) Evidently, Abraham and Sarah were together in nearly every situation (right or wrong) as we have noticed in the Torah. It is also clear from Scripture that one of God’s purposes for marriage is companionship. Companionship is personified in the phrase one flesh. “This is why a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife; and they become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). In the Brit Chadasha, Scripture tells us a human being (all human flesh) is spirit, soul and body: “Now may the God of shalom Himself make you completely holy; and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept complete, blameless at the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah” (1 Thes. 5:23)

God 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 that Scripture uses the words “my sister, my bride” and “my sister, my darling, my love, my dove, my perfect one…” (Song of Songs 4:9, 10, 12; 5:1, 2).

A key concept in the definition of marriage as designed by God is the notion of A One Man Woman and A One Woman Man. (e.g., “…the husband of one wife…” {1 Tim. 3:2} and “…The wife of one husband…” {1 Timothy 2:9-10}). What does this concept mean? To all of you that are unmarried it means, among other things that “you (both men and women) are responsible to keep yourself pure for the one whom you will marry!” Here are guidelines: (1) No Immodest Appearance: “Likewise, women are to adorn themselves in appropriate clothing with modesty and sound judgment—not in seductive hairstyles and gold or pearls or costly clothing, but what is suitable for women claiming godliness, through good deeds” (1 Tim. 2:9-10). “Adonai Elohim made Adam and his wife tunics of skin and He clothed them” (Gen. 3:21). So if Adonai 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? (2) No Moral Impurity: “Finally then, brothers and sisters, we ask you and appeal in the Lord Yeshua to abstain from sexual immorality, to know each of you, how to gain control over his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like pagans who do not know God…” God did not call us to impurity but in holiness” (1 Thes. 4:1-8). (3) No Lustful Thoughts: “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, whatever is praiseworthy—think about such things…” (Phil. 4:8) and (4) No Unnatural Affection: “They traded the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” For this reason God gave them up to shameful passions. Even their women exchanged natural relations for what is against nature. Likewise the men abandoned natural relations with women and were burning with passion toward one another—men committing shameful acts with other men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error”…”Or don’t you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don’t be deceived! The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, those who practice homosexuality, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, slanderers, swindlers—all of these will inherit the kingdom of God. That is what some of you were—but you were washed, you were made holy, you were set right in the name of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah & by the Ruach of our God (Ro. 1:25-27; Lev. 18:22-23; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

God’s design of marriage is 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 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 God intended for marriage oneness. If they enjoy the best physical and psychological oneness, they still will have a relationship that falls short of what God intended.

On the other hand, if a couple comes together in 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 Lord, they come closer to each other’s spirit. For this reason, it is essential that each partner maintain an intimate fellowship and closeness with the Lord. The principle in effect is the synergism of each one developing strong spiritual power. “I pray that from His glorious riches He would grant you to be strengthened in your inner being with power through His Ruach” (Eph. 3:16). “In the same way, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way. Though they are weaker partners, honor them as equal heirs of the grace of life. In this way, your prayers will not be hindered” (1 Peter 3:7).

The spirit of a marriage is deepened through the Word and Prayer: “to make her holy, having cleansed her by immersion (mikveh) in the word” (Ephesians 5:26). In this way the couple is: “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33). For Adonai has stated that “…No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly” (Psalm 84:12b).

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: “For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it—just as Messiah also does His community” (Ephesians 5:29). Therefore, (1) oneness is promoted by a servant’s spirit – working to make the partner successful; (2) oneness is deepened by helping one another identify and develop spiritual gifts; (3) completeness is rewarded when major decisions are not made until both partners are in One Spirit; and (4) the ultimate expression of oneness is when a couple can say that the other partner is their “best friend.”

The apostle Paul stated in 2 Cor. 6:14 “Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.” The same principle applies in marriage. Do you really think that if either partner chooses to shy away from God 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? Then get close to God!

**Delight in the Wife of your Youth**

For those of us that are married, today’s Word is delight. Delight has two main Hebrew words associated with it. The first is oneg. We are firstly to delight in the Lord (Ps. 37:4) & delight in His Shabbat (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 Torah of Adonai, and on His Torah he meditates day and night” (Psalm 1:2). When we delight this way in the Lord and His ways, he will then delight in us: “Does Adonai delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of Adonai? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to pay heed than the fat of rams” (1 Sam 15:22). He will also order our steps: “From Adonai a man’s steps are made firm, when He delights in his way” (Psalm 37:23). We will experience His loving hand upon us: “For Adonai loves those He reproves, even as a father, the son in whom he delights” (Prov. 3:12) and we will become Hephzibah and Beulah: “No longer will you be termed...”
“Forsaken”, no longer your land termed “Desolate”. Instead you will be called, “My Delight is in Her” and your land, “Married”. For Adonai delights in you, and your land will be married” (Isa. 62:4). He will also send us the messenger of His covenant: “Behold, I am sending My messenger and he will clear the way before Me” (Mal. 3:1).

Today, if you hear His Voice, then “May your fountain be blessed and may you delight in the wife of your 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: “Whoever finds a wife finds good, and receives favor from Adonai” (Prov. 18:22) and that “House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from Adonai” (Prov. 19:14).