



Does God View Women as the (Social/Political) Equals of Men?

Description



(Note: weâ€™re not talking about a womanâ€™s

ontological value â€“ that is, their intrinsic value as human beings. This article is only about the role of women in society and marriage.)

In this fifth article in our marriage series, weâ€™ll focus on the Old Testament, having focused on the New Testament in the [previous article](#). If you havenâ€™t already, I would **highly** recommend backing up and reading this marriage series from the beginning, because this fifth article will once again lean on previous articles.

Please start with the intro article [How Crucial are Women to a Biblical Household? Very!](#), because it presents a good, balanced overview and context for one important thing weâ€™ll talk about in this article â€“ then move on to [the first article in the marriage series](#).

A Note on the Old Testament

Far too many Christians believe the Old Testament is passÃ©, having little to no bearing on the life of â€œNew Testamentâ€ Christians. However, that idea directly contradicts Scripture:

Romans 15:4

For **whatever** was written in earlier times **was written for our instruction**, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the **Scriptures** we might have hope.

Not **some**, not even **most**, but **whatever** was written in the earlier Scriptures was written for our instruction. And while we don't have to obey certain aspects of the Old Testament law, it certainly is instructive. It gives us God's perspective on many things which aren't mentioned in the New Testament.

Remember that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Don't dismiss an argument from the Old Testament simply because it's from the Old Testament.

Evidence That God Doesn't View Women as the (Social/Political) Equals of Men

First, I would **HIGHLY** recommend you read the third article in the series, [The Why of Submission in Marriage](#), before you go any further. (or better yet, as I already mentioned [start from the beginning of this series](#)) There's some context there that will help this article make **far** more sense for readers.

Husband = Master/Owner

There are two words in Hebrew you could use to say a man was a husband. The first is **ish**, pronounced **eesh** which simply means **man**. A wife could say **my man**, and it would be understood that she meant her husband.

The second Hebrew word that meant Husband is **baal**, not to be confused with the pagan god **Baal**, which doesn't have the apostrophe in most modern Bibles. The Hebrew word **baal** (not the pagan god) literally means **Owner/master/husband**.

Strong's Concordance:

Definition: owner, lord

NAS Exhaustive Concordance:

Definition:
owner, lord

Brown-Driver-Briggs (Lexicon)

I. **baal** 166 **noun masculine: owner, lord**

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance:

From baal; **a master; hence, a husband, or (figuratively) owner**

Those definitions are consistent with its usage too. For example, here are two passages *in the same chapter* where the Hebrew word baal is used.

Exodus 21:28-29

28 If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten; but **the owner (baal) of the ox** shall go unpunished.

29 If, however, an ox was previously in the habit of goring and **its owner (baal)** has been warned, yet he does not confine it and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and **its owner (baal)** also shall be put to death

Exodus 21:22

â€œIf men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the womanâ€™s **husband (baal)** may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide

The meaning seems clear, especially when thereâ€™s another way to say husband. **Iâ€™d like to point out that itâ€™s God issuing the law here; not a man.** God couldâ€™ve chosen the other way to say husband (â€œthe womanâ€™s manâ€), but He didnâ€™t.

And thatâ€™s not the only time He didnâ€™t.

Letâ€™s look at Proverbs 31: (*I wonâ€™t quote the whole thing as most people are familiar with it, merely the verses that use our English word â€˜husbandâ€™*)

Proverbs 31:10-11, 23, 28-29

10 An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.

11 The heart of **her husband (baal)** trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain.

â€

23 **Her husband (baal)** is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.

â€

28 Her children rise up and bless her; **Her husband (baal)** also, and he praises her, saying:

29 â€œMany daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all.â€

How many times have you heard *that* part of Proverbs 31 taught? (*Iâ€™m guessing not much.*) The master/servant connotation of the Hebrew word is backed up by Peterâ€™s teaching later:

1 Peter 3:1

In the same way, you **wives**, be submissive to your own **husbands** so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives

Notice Peter starts with *in the same way*. The natural question is *in the same way as what?* If you look at the prior verses youâ€™ll see:

1 Peter 2:18-20

18 Servants, be submissive to your **masters** with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.

Here we see the husband/wife relationship is compared to the master/servant, and this is commanded by God Himself.

Further, the master/servant connotation is made clear by another related word *baal* in the verb form and the meaning is quite illuminating:

baal verb: **marry, rule over** (compare Arabic = *own, possess, especially a wife or concubine*; Ethiopic *to be rich*, Assyrian *baal*, rule COT^{Gloss}, Aramaic *take possession of wife or concubine*)

(a *concubine* was a wife who is also a slave *Biblically, they were married*)

Hereâ€™s one place where both verb and noun forms of *baal* are used:

Deuteronomy 22:22

If a man is found lying with a woman **married** (*baal: passive verb*) to a **husband** (*baal, noun*), then both of them shall die *the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.*

An active verb means the subject is doing the action, a passive verb means the action *is being done to* the subject. So *baal* as an active verb means to marry or to own; as a passive verb, it means to *be married* (or *given in marriage* as weâ€™ll soon see), or to be owned. Realizing that *baal* as a noun means owner/master, we get this:

Deuteronomy 22:22 (NKJV)

“If a man is found lying with a woman ~~married to a husband~~ **owned by a master/owner**, then both of them shall die—the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.

The above is a perfectly valid translation, as you can see from the word definitions. In God’s mind, there’s little to no difference between being a husband and a master/owner. For a woman, there’s little to no difference between being married and being owned.

But won’t that end?

There is a verse that shows a (possible) future change in this relationship (at least between God and man). Christian feminists (a contradiction in terms) occasionally use this single passage to try and override everything else the Bible says:

Hosea 2:16-18

16 It will come about **in that day**, declares the LORD,
That you will call Me Ishi (*my man meaning husband*.)
And will no longer call Me Baali. (*my baal meaning master/owner/husband*.)

17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, (a clever bit of wordplay here, with the Pagan God Baal contrasted with the Hebrew word for husband/master)
So that they will be mentioned by their names no more.

18 **In that day** I will also make a covenant for them
With the beasts of the field,
The birds of the sky
And the creeping things of the ground.
And **I will abolish the bow, the sword and war from the land**,
And will make them lie down in safety.

First, this verse is about the relationship between God and His people, and He will never cease being our Lord and Master because He is God and we are not. While the relationship might become closer (*my man instead of my master*), ultimately He is God and we are not. Therefore, He will never cease to be our Lord and Master.

We see this in the New Testament when God calls us “friends”. Just because He calls us that doesn’t mean He ceases to be our Lord and Master, it simply means we are closer than before.

You could apply that logic to marriage.

Further, when war is abolished from the land, then *maybe* the master/servant relationship in marriage will change (*maybe*). However, we know that *that day* hasn’t arrived yet because there’s still war in this world. And until *that day* comes, God has decreed a different arrangement.

The 10th Commandment

Exodus 20:17

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet **your neighbor's wife** or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey **or anything that belongs to your neighbor.**

The mastery "or at least ownership" component here is fairly clear. Some translations read "anything else that belongs to your neighbor", which makes it even more clear.

Again, this is God Himself speaking, not a human.

A father/husband can annul their daughter's/wife's vows

That's exactly what God "not man, but God" gave fathers the right to do with their unmarried daughters' vows.

Numbers 30:3-5

3 "Also if a woman makes a vow to the LORD, and binds herself by an obligation in her father's house in her youth,

4 and **her father hears her vow** and her obligation by which she has bound herself, **and her father says nothing to her, then all her vows shall stand** and every obligation by which she has bound herself shall stand.

5 "But **if her father should forbid her** on the day he hears of it, **none of her vows or her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand**; and the LORD will forgive her because her father had forbidden her.

The exact same power was given to husbands over their wives! by God Himself.

Numbers 30:6-8, 13

6 "However, if she should marry while under her vows or the rash statement of her lips by which she has bound herself,

7 and **her husband hears of it and says nothing to her** on the day he hears it, **then her vows shall stand** and her obligations by which she has bound herself shall stand.

8 *But if on the day her husband hears of it, he forbids her, then he shall annul her vow* which she is under and the rash statement of her lips by which she has bound herself; and the LORD will forgive her.

!

13 *Every vow* and every binding oath to humble herself, *her husband may confirm it or her husband may annul it.*

What if that were the case in America today? Imagine if a husband could annul any contract or vow his wife made; how would society change? **Apparently, God thought that was a good idea.**

Also, this isn't the ceremonial part of the law that Jesus abolished when He died! but neither do we necessarily have to obey it. The ceremonial law chiefly concerned sacrifice, the temple, and ritual cleanness/uncleanness.

God also set down moral law (*example: thou shall not murder*), and cultural/civil law (*what we've been discussing*). The moral law has never changed and the cultural law is very illuminating. I don't advocate following the Mosaic Law (*I've read Galatians 3*) but the cultural law that God set forth does give us some insight into how God thinks a society should be run.

For example, God thinks it's a good idea if a father/husband can annul their daughter's/wife's vows. (*I have an explanation for why in the first article of this series, titled: [How getting Marriage Wrong Destroyed Every Great Civilization in World History](#)*)

Pay the Father for seducing a virgin daughter?

In Exodus 22, God lists various rules relating to private property rights. In verses 1-15 He deals with things like stealing and property damage. Then comes this little command (*directly from God Himself*).

Exodus 22:16-17 (ESV)

16 *If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price for her and make her his wife.*

17 *If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the bride-price for virgins.*

One thing before we continue: this law was for the protection of the virgin. In those days, it was nearly impossible for a woman to get a husband unless she was a virgin. This law protected a woman who had sinned (*by intentionally having sex outside of marriage*) by making sure she could still have a husband. A woman without a husband was destitute, so every woman needed one.

Anyway!

Fathers Decide who daughters marry

Please also notice that “according to God’s command” the woman has no say whatsoever in this whole process (*other than allowing herself to be seduced/ cases of rape are dealt with elsewhere in the law*).

Most importantly: notice God gave the father the final say in who his daughter marries.

According to God’s command, neither the daughter nor the mother has any say, only the girl’s father does. I’m sure they could try to convince the father, but the final decision rests with the father alone according to God’s command. God doesn’t even give the daughter a choice in the matter.

(We’ll see why this system is very likely to result in the daughter being happy in [the 7th article of this series](#). See [the first article in this marriage series](#) for more about why a daughter choosing is a horrible idea. Further, the 7th article will also explain what women actually choose when it comes to men. It turns out that women are biologically programmed to pick “bad boys” who will be terrible husbands. Perhaps that’s why God didn’t let them pick)

This is both echoed and explicitly stated in the New Testament as well. The echo is here:

1 Corinthians 7:36-38

36 But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward **his virgin daughter**, if she is past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, **he does not sin; let her marry**

37 But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will, and has decided this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well.

38 **So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do better.**

(Note: many modern translations drop certain words, add others, and mistranslate still others to change the meaning to be about an engaged couple, most notably the NIV, NLT, and ESV. Unfortunately, the NASB ’95 and NKJV are the only modern translations that get it right. Please see [my article on Bible translations](#) for more information on this verse.)

Many would say that this verse was only included because Rome was patriarchal, and fathers had this authority only in that time and culture. That’s not hard to disprove, but would take some time/space and this article is quite long already. (Besides, we already disproved it in [the 4th article in this series](#).)

Suffice it to say that God “writing through Paul” was still very much in favor of fathers choosing husbands for their daughters. It’s been this way for most of human history and ironically is far more likely to make the woman happy. Yes, that’s counter-intuitive to our modern culture, but we’ll go through it in detail in [the 7th article in this marriage series](#).

Itâ€™s fascinating.

But thereâ€™s another verse where this is arguably clearer (*in Greek*)

The other verse in the New Testament where this is explicitly stated isnâ€™t obvious because itâ€™s translated incorrectly. Iâ€™m sure youâ€™ve noticed how often thatâ€™s the case on this topic.

sigh

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you know **how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,**

5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

6 and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you.

The word â€œpossessâ€ in verse 4 is the Greek word â€œκταομαιâ€ ([ktaomai](#)), which means:

Strongâ€™s Concordance:

Definition: to acquire

Usage: (a) I acquire, win, get, **purchase, buy**, (b) I possess, win mastery over.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance:

Definition: to acquire

Thayerâ€™s Greek Lexicon:

κταομαι, κταομαι, κταομαι; future κταομαι (Luke 21:19 L Tr WH); 1 aorist κταομαι; (from Homer down); the Sept. for xξÖ, x Ö, x; **to acquire, get or procure a thing for oneself** (cf. Winerâ€™s Grammar, 260 (244)); (**perfect κταομαι, to possess** (cf. Winerâ€™s Grammar, 274 (257) note); **not found in the N. T.**):

The final red sentence specifies that the word â€œκταομαιâ€ (*ktaomai*) **only** means â€œto possessâ€ in the perfect tense, and then says â€œnot found in the N. T.â€ So while the word can mean â€œto possessâ€ as essentially all Bibles translate it, it only means â€œto possessâ€ in the perfect tense. However, itâ€™s not used in the perfect tense anywhere in the New Testament.

Or as one commentary of this verse says:

(Note: *â€œA.V.â€* = Authorized Version = King James Bible.)

The exhortation now turns to business relations. *â€œI cannot mean possess, as A.V. That would require the perfect tense. It means procure, acquire. Often buy,* as Acts 17:28; *lxx,* Genesis 33:19; Genesis 39:1; Genesis 47:19; Genesis 49:30; Joshua 24:33; absolutely, Ezekiel 7:12, Ezekiel 7:13.

[Source.](#)

For further proof it means *â€œto obtain/acquire by purchaseâ€*, weâ€™ll look at another place this word is used. Itâ€™s used only 7 times in the New Testament, and you can see all of them [here](#). However, weâ€™ll only look at one other passage because, in this passage, this word is in the same form as in 1 Thessalonians 4:4.

In 1 Thess 4:4, *â€œktasthaiâ€* (*ktasthai*) is inflected as a present tense infinitive verb in the middle/passive voice, and that specific form is *â€œktasthaiâ€* (*â€œktasthaiâ€*). Itâ€™s in the **same** form in the following verse, Acts 8:20. Weâ€™ll back up two verses to get the context, and feel free to double-check this using an interlinear Bible: [1 Thess 4:4 interlinear](#), and [Acts 8:20 interlinear](#).

Acts 8:18-20

18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostlesâ€™ hands, he offered them money,

19 saying, *â€œGive this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.â€*

20 But Peter said to him, *â€œMay your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain (*ktasthai*) the gift of God with money!*

Hereâ€™s how a few other translations render it:

- **NIV:** *â€œbecause you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!â€*
- **NLT:** *â€œfor thinking Godâ€™s gift can be bought!â€*
- **ESV:** *â€œbecause you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!â€*
- **KJV:** *â€œbecause thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.*
- **NKJV:** *â€œbecause you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!â€*

It means *â€œobtain/acquireâ€*, with the strong implication of purchasing. Even in the exact form of *â€œktasthaiâ€* (*ktasthai*) used in Acts 8:20 and 1 Thess 4:4, it still means *â€œto obtain/acquire by purchaseâ€*.

Acts 8:20 makes that crystal clear.

So then, why do so many translations translate it as "possess" if it means "to acquire/obtain by purchase"? Because if you translate it accurately as meaning "to obtain/acquire by purchase", then things get **very** counter-cultural. We'll get there in a second.

First, we'll look at another word in verse 4 to get more context.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you know how to ~~possess~~ purchase his own **vessel** in sanctification and honor,

The Greek word translated "vessel" is the Greek word *σκευός* (*skeuos*) and it's perfectly translated. What's notable is where *else* it's used and especially *how* it's used.

1 Peter 3:7

Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the **wife**, as to the **weaker vessel** (*skeuos*), and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

The Greek word *σκευός* (*skeuos*) is also used outside the Bible to refer to wives. It's not the most common usage, but it's not rare either.

Starting to make sense?

We'll look at one more Greek word to make it even clearer. The word translated "own" is the Greek word *ἑαυτοῦ* (*heautou*) and it means "himself" (*or herself, themselves, etc. depending on gender and if it's plural*). However, because of differing grammar rules, it can be (*and is*) accurately translated "own" (*as in his own*) in many places.

However, the actual meaning is still "himself".

Now, putting all that together we get a verse that should look something like this:

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6 (modified)

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you know how to **purchase** a vessel for himself in sanctification and honor,

Notice:

Paul starts by talking about abstaining from sexual immorality, and then says the way for a man to do that is to purchase a vessel for himself. Could Paul mean a weaker vessel? i.e. a **wife?**

Maybe?

This is the opinion of a slew of commentators and fits the Greek word definitions much better. Just one commentary (*of many*) says this of the verse.

Expositor's Greek Testament:

ἵνα ἀποκτήσῃ ἑαυτόν, (lit. to purchase a vessel) = wife; the rendering "body" (cf. Barn. vii. 3) conflicts with the normal meaning of ἀποκτήσῃ (to get, to acquire, of marriage, LXX. Ruth 4:10; Sir. 36:29, Xen., Symp., ii. 10).

The commentary lists three places where the word *ktaomai* is used for marriage and means to obtain by purchase. That is, there are three places where the word is used specifically in reference to obtaining a wife by purchasing her. Once in Ruth in the Septuagint (*often abbreviated LXX*), once in the deuterocanonical book of Sirach, and once outside the Bible.

That's pretty strong evidence. But it gets stronger.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6 (*modified*)

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you know how to purchase a vessel for himself in sanctification and honor,

5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

6 and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you.

If verse 4 means to possess his own vessel, then why verse 6? What does his brother have to do with possessing your own vessel? How could you defraud your brother by possessing what's already yours?

It makes no sense!

..unless this passage is actually about a man getting a vessel/wife for himself by purchasing her, then it makes perfect sense. You are to deal honorably with a Christian brother when you purchase his daughter to become your wife.

That's what this passage is saying.

And it says more too:

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 (modified)

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you know how to purchase a vessel for himself in sanctification and honor,

5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

6 and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you.

7 For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.

8 So, **he who rejects this is not rejecting man, but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.**

Verse 8 is pretty clear.

I understand completely if you don't like this. I kind of hated it when I first discovered this while going through the NT in Greek. However, God made it pretty clear that we shouldn't reject this teaching. He said that rejecting it was tantamount to rejecting Him. That's obviously a dangerous thing to do.

Very dangerous.

That's four places – 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6, Exodus 22:16-17, 1 Corinthians 7:36-38, and Numbers chapter 30 (covered in detail in a moment) – which explicitly say that women don't choose their husbands; someone else does. Three of those four verses make it clear it's the father, while 1 Thessalonians 4:6 – merely – strongly hints at the father.

Notice too, there's no period between the start of verse 3 and the end of verse 6. The whole thing is one continuous thought. **Therefore, the will of God for how each man is to seek a wife is to purchase her from her father.**

That's what the verse says.

Jesus bought the church, just as husbands are supposed to buy wives

Remember that marriage is the picture of Christ and His church. So if God's will is that husbands buy their wives, then we know that Christ did the same thing!

Acts 20:28

28 Be on guard for yourselves and for **all the flock**, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, **to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own**

blood.

As we just saw, it's God's will that husbands purchase their wives. To be consistent, He made sure that Jesus purchased His own bride (*the church*). While this is arguably the clearest verse saying this, there are so many more.

1 Corinthians 6:20

For you have been **bought** with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 7:23

You were **bought** with a price; do not become slaves of men.

Virtually every verse that has the words ransom/ransomed, redeem/redeemed, redemption, etc. are all "purchase words", indicating paying a price to buy something, or to buy back something. For example:

Ephesians 1:7

In Him we have **redemption** through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

The Greek word translated "redemption" is ἀπολύτρωσις ([apolutrōsis](#)), and it means:

629 ἀπολύτρωσις (from 575 /ἀπό, "from" and 3084 /λύω, "redeem") "properly, *redemption* "literally, **buying back from, re-purchasing** (winning back) what was previously *forfeited (lost)*."

Jesus purchased his bride (*the church*), with His own blood. That was the "bride-price" that He paid to acquire the His bride, which is the church; Jesus paid a "bride-price" for us.

Remember that marriage is the picture of Christ and His church.

Therefore, of course, men are supposed to purchase their brides, just as Christ purchased His.

The symbolism is obvious. It's so blatant it's almost impossible to miss, and even harder to deny. It's all over the scriptures too, as so many verses that talk about our salvation talk about this ransoming/redemption, which always indicates a payment made.

Always.

Another example:

1 Peter 1:18-19

18 knowing that **you were ransomed** from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, **not with perishable things such as silver or gold,**

19 **but with the precious blood of Christ,** like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Jesus bought His bride, and the Scriptures make it clear that men are supposed to acquire their brides in the same fashion. God clearly says that men are supposed to buy their wives from their fathers, as we just saw. The Bible is very consistent about this too, as weâ€™ll see in the next section.

Marrying and Given in Marriage

A corollary of what we just saw is revealed by the Bibleâ€™s language regarding marriage. Virtually every place that marriage is discussed, one of two phrases is used. Itâ€™s typically either, â€œgive our daughters in marriage to themâ€ or â€œtake their daughters in marriage for usâ€œ. Jesus also uses the similar phrase â€œmarrying and given in marriage.â€

Matthew 24:38 (*Jesus speaking*)

38 For as **in those days before the flood** they were eating and drinking, **marrying and giving in marriage,** until the day that Noah entered the ark

Notice too, this phrasing of â€œgiving daughtersâ€ and â€œtaking daughtersâ€ in marriage is used throughout the Old Testament.

Genesis 34:9

9 â€œIntermarry with us; **give your daughters to us** and **take our daughters for yourselves.**

Deuteronomy 7:3 (*Deuteronomy 6:1 reveals this is Moses giving Godâ€™s commands to Israel before entering the promised land*)

3 Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not **give your daughters to their sons,** nor shall you **take their daughters for your sons.**

Jeremiah 29:6 (*about the captivity in Babylon*)

6 Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and **give your daughters to husbands**, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease.

The phrasing is consistent from before the flood, right on up to Jesus's day.

- Daughters don't marry; they are given in marriage by their fathers
- Sons do marry; they do it by taking a wife (who has been given in marriage to him)

The language is clear; sons marry while daughters are given in marriage (*by their fathers*). According to God's command (*to the Israelites*), this is the way it's supposed to be.

And this custom survives up until this very day.

To this very day, the father gives away the bride at a wedding.

Remember that according to God's command in Numbers 30, a father could nullify his daughter's vows!

including marriage vows?

Consider: if a father could annul his daughter's vows on the day he hears of it, (*like we've already discussed*) then wouldn't that include marriage vows?

If not, why not?

Look at it again.

Numbers 30:3-5

3 Also **if a woman makes a vow** to the LORD, and **binds herself by an obligation** in her father's house in her youth,

4 and her father hears her vow and her obligation by which she has bound herself, and **her father says nothing to her, then all her vows shall stand** and every obligation by which she has bound herself shall stand.

5 But **if her father should forbid her** on the day he hears of it, **none of her vows or her obligations** by which she has bound herself **shall stand**; and the LORD will forgive her because her father had forbidden her.

The only way out of this is saying this verse applies only to vows to the LORD; but that's a somewhat dubious claim. Didn't God ordain marriage? When you enter into marriage, aren't you vowing to keep what God has decreed? Therefore, wouldn't marriage be considered a vow to the LORD (*as well as your spouse*)?

Further, verse 5 says that if the father forbids it, *“none of her vows”* shall stand. I see no reason to exclude marriage vows from that statement.

Additionally, this perfectly explains why daughters are always described as being “given in marriage”.

If the father doesn’t “give” his daughter in the marriage, he can annul the daughter’s vows and thus dissolve the marriage. And as we’ve already seen, fathers had the right to deny marriage to their daughters even when the daughter sleeps with a man out of wedlock.

No, we don’t have to obey the Mosaic Law.

However, Jesus only abolished the ceremonial law (*regarding sacrifices, circumcision, feasts, ritual cleanliness, etc*). God’s moral law has never changed. God’s cultural law “ while we don’t necessarily have to follow it “ gives great insight into how God Himself thinks a culture should be run.

Further, the New Testament “ especially 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6 “ makes it clear that “obtaining a wife by purchasing her” is God’s will. (*Jesus purchased his bride also*.) Every translation agrees that verse 4 starts “that each of you know how to”.

The only question is “know how to” do what?

Paul then answers that question: to know how to get a wife by purchasing her from her father in holiness and honor, and not defrauding your Christian brother (her father) in the matter while doing so.

This is what God inspired Paul to write.

Women aren’t supposed to choose their husbands; their fathers are.

(*Note: as already stated, [the 7th article in this marriage series](#) will explain how God wired women to virtually guarantee that they will end up happier under this system. Yes it’s counter-intuitive, but God is smart; He knew what He was doing.*)

As a side note, the “purchasing” aspect is the difference between “betrothal” and “being engaged”. In a betrothal, the husband had already purchased his wife from her father so she was legally his; he just hadn’t married her yet. This is why betrothal required a divorce to break; because the woman had been purchased from her father. By contrast, modern engagement is little more than a promise which is easily broken.

Adultery = Crime against the Husband?

I don’t have conclusive proof of this. However, it came up so often in my research that I would be negligent if I didn’t mention it. To be clear, I’m not stating it as a fact or my belief. I’m merely mentioning it for the sake of completeness.

First, the definition of adultery.

Below is the [definition of adultery from Easton's Bible Dictionary](#), which I spend a lot of time proving in my article [What Jesus meant by Adultery in Matthew Chapters 5 & 19](#).

conjugal infidelity. An adulterer was a man who had illicit intercourse with a married or a betrothed woman, and such a woman was an adulteress. Intercourse between a married man and an unmarried woman was fornication. Adultery was regarded as a great social wrong, as well as a great sin.

I need to be 100% clear on this point: if a married man sleeps with an unmarried woman, the sin committed (*though extremely serious*) is **not** adultery. A man could only commit adultery if he slept with a married/betrothed woman. If a married man slept with an unmarried woman that was fornication – a serious sin – but **not** the specific sin of adultery.

(Again, check out my article on [What Jesus meant by Adultery in Matthew Chapters 5 & 19](#) for proof of this. And just to be clear, [the Bible calls all sex outside of marriage a serious sin](#).)

Anyway!

Many sources say that adultery wasn't a sin against the wife; it was a sin against the husband's – property/sexual rights regarding his wife.

(I don't have proof of this and only mention it for completeness.)

Most of the sources I read while researching this article argued that adultery constituted a crime against the husband's property/reproductive rights over his wife, not against the woman herself.

According to [My Jewish Learning](#):

Indeed, legislative concerns about women's sexual activity primarily have to do with relations between men. A man is executed for having intercourse with another's wife (Leviticus 20:10), because he has committed a crime of theft against a man; but a man who seduces or rapes a virgin pays a brideprice to her father and marries her (Deuteronomy 22:28). This is not a crime in the same sense at all, not because of a dissimilarity in what the man did but because of the difference in who – owned – the right to the woman's sexuality.

To be clear, the arguments are cultural, not scriptural.

Again, I only mention this for completeness because it came up so often in my research.

There is no concrete scriptural proof for this idea, other than possibly Psalm 51:4. There, David says he sinned only against God in the matter of Uriah/Bathsheba. The theory goes that while David sinned against Uriah, he was dead when David wrote Psalm 51. David said he sinned against God alone, which would exclude Bathsheba who was still alive (*and outlived King David*). Therefore, the crime was against her husband (*and God*), not Bathsheba herself.

Itâ€™s not a strong argument, but thatâ€™s the case they make.

Again, I only mention this for completeness because it came up so often in my research.

Husbands could divorce wives; wives couldnâ€™t divorce their husbands

In the Old Testament, God provides a specific legal framework for men to divorce their wives.

Deuteronomy 24:1

1 â€œWhen a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes **because he has found some indecency in her**, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts *it* in her hand and sends her out from his houseâ€

God said a man could divorce his wife if he â€œfound some indecency in herâ€. The word translated â€œindecencyâ€ is the Hebrew word â€œxÖ¶x”Ö°x•Ö,x”â€ ([ervah](#)) which implies some type of sexual misconduct or possibly lewd exposure. (*The exact nature of the sin is debated, but it stops short of adultery because adultery was punished by death.*)

If a husband â€œfound some indecencyâ€ in his wife, he could divorce her by:

1. Writing a bill of divorce
2. Putting the bill of divorce in her hand (*in Rabbinic tradition, this had to be done in front of witnesses*)
3. Sending her away from his house

A fairly simple process, but it required some type of sexual misconduct on the wifeâ€™s part before the husband could divorce her.

However, there is no similar provision in the Old Testament for wives to divorce their husbands.

That is, thereâ€™s no place where a wife could get a divorce because her husband wasnâ€™t favored in her eyes.

None whatsoever.

I donâ€™t think thatâ€™s accidental or that God forgot.

(*Wives could get a divorce if their husbands didnâ€™t provide for them; see Exodus 21:10-11*)

In the New Testament, Paul tells wives not to divorce their husbands. But we must remember that 1st-century Rome was VERY different than Israel in the Old Testament. Women were the full legal and cultural equals of men in 1st-century Rome (see prior article: [The Bible on Authority and Submission in Marriage](#)). That was Roman culture though, and they were a very immoral society.

Plus “ as we saw in the article on [the “why” of submission in marriage](#) “ God created women to ensure men wouldn’t be alone. Allowing women to divorce their husbands means they are leaving them alone, which runs contrary to the purpose of their creation.

And if that wasn’t bad enough!

If you’ve read [the first article in this marriage series](#), you’ll remember that women file for divorce *far* more than men. You’ll also remember that societies are destroyed by fatherless homes, which are caused by divorce and out-of-wedlock births, and those things *always* follow from women becoming the social/political equals of men. Women being the social/political equals of men is a prerequisite for women being able to divorce their husbands.

However, God didn’t decree that arrangement.

Quite the opposite.

God gave husbands/fathers the authority to annul their wives/daughters’ vows, which includes marriage vows. As we’ve already seen, under God’s system women were required to obey their husbands like servants obey their masters.

Any other arrangement *requires* women becoming the social/political equals of men, which eventually causes fatherless homes to rot a society from the inside out.

Further “ as we saw [in the previous article in this series](#) “ women have a “moral obligation” to be under male authority (*1 Cor 11:9-10, when properly translated*). Giving them the ability to divorce their husbands allows them to shirk their moral obligation to be under male authority.

That’s a bad idea.

(I should add that the Israelites allowed a woman to get a divorce if her husband wouldn’t provide for her, wouldn’t have sex with her, or seriously abused her)

Woman/Daughter’s Status Determined by Husband/Father

In Leviticus 22:1-9, God lays out who may eat the “holy gifts”, i.e. the portions of the sacrifices that God allowed the priests to eat. Basically, priests who are sick or unclean can’t eat of them until they are clean. That’s followed by this instruction.

Leviticus 22:10

10 “No layman, however, is to eat the holy gift; a sojourner with the priest or a hired man shall not eat of the holy gift.

Again, only the priests (*and their families as other verses make clear*) who are ceremonially clean may eat of it. That’s directly followed by laws concerning slaves.

Leviticus 22:11

11 **“But if a priest buys a slave as his property** with his money, **that one may eat of it**, and those who are born in his house may eat of his food.

Notice, only those who **“belong”** to the priest **“ i.e. family members and slaves “** are allowed to eat of it. Now, please notice the instruction regarding the daughters of priests.

Leviticus 22:12-13

12 **“If a priest’s daughter is married to a layman, she shall not eat of the offering of the gifts.**

13 **“But if a priest’s daughter becomes a widow or divorced**, and has no child **and returns to her father’s house as in her youth**, she shall eat of her father’s food; but no layman shall eat of it.

Notice, the daughter has no status *by herself*. Her status is **not** determined by her lineage, but by the man she belongs to. If she belongs to a non-priest husband, she can’t eat of the offering. If she belongs to a priest husband, she can eat. If she returns to her father’s house as in her youth after being widowed or divorced, then she can eat.

My point is that **“ by God’s command “** a woman had no status by herself. Her status was determined by the family she belonged to. In this case, **“belong”** is more literal than our English word might normally suggest.

*(This is why a woman **“ but not a man “** changes her last name when she gets married. It seems that **“ according to God “** her status is not determined by herself, but rather by the man/family she **“belongs”** to. Changing her last name indicates this change.)*

Circumcision marked men, but no mark on women

This is similar to the point directly above, indicating a woman’s status wasn’t determined by herself; it was determined by the man she **“belonged”** to. Circumcision was the mark that God commanded to identify the Jews as His people. If you were circumcised, you could belong to God; if not, you couldn’t.

However, you can’t circumcise a woman

She simply lacks the required anatomy to get circumcised.

Therefore, there’s literally no way to mark women as being **“God’s people”** in the Old Testament. It simply wasn’t physically possible.

Again, could this be because a woman belonged to her father or husband's house? Therefore, a woman's status was determined by her baal? (*owner/master/husband; not to be confused with the pagan god*)

Census Numbers = Males Only

This point is further reinforced by the times when God requires Israel to take a census. Every time there is a census taken in the Old Testament by God's command, only the men are counted. The women are never counted, just the men.

Numbers 3:14-15

14 Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying,

15 "Number the sons of Levi by their fathers' households, by their families; every male from a month old and upward you shall number."

Numbers 26:1-2

1 Then it came about after the plague, that the LORD spoke to Moses and to Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying,

2 "Take a census of all the congregation of the sons of Israel from twenty years old and upward, by their fathers' households, whoever is able to go out to war in Israel."

It seems in God's eyes, the women didn't merit counting. Again, this likely is because they belonged to their father or husband's house and were therefore counted with them.

Men counted, Women assumed

The Bible displays this pattern consistently. That is, men are counted and women are assumed to be included with their husbands or fathers. For example:

- In Genesis 2:24 it says "a man shall leave his father and his mother", but what of the woman? She leaves her parents much more in that culture, yet the woman is never mentioned.
- In Genesis 3:23-24, God drove "him" (*Adam*) out of the Garden in verse 23, and "the man" out in verse 24. But what of Eve? Again, assuming she is being driven out with her husband.
- In Genesis 4:17 we read: "Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived". No mention is made of the wife's origins.

- In every Biblical genealogy, women being mentioned is rare. Only the men are counted, the women are assumed.
- In Genesis 32:22 we read that Jacob *“arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok.”* However, Jacob has at least 12 children at that point, the 12th being Dinah whose birth was mentioned in 30:21. We must assume she went with them, but she isn't mentioned.
- God is often called the *“God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”*, but what about Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, and Rachel?
- In both Matthew 14:21, and 15:28, Jesus feeds thousands of people and they count the number of those who ate. Both times, the number is the number of men *“without counting women and children”*.
- In Revelation 14:4, we read about the 144,000 who *“have not defiled themselves with women”*, which obviously refers to men.

I could go on, but I think you get the point. This doesn't change in the New Testament either. There are **many** more examples but they fit better under the next heading.

The Bible (*Almost Always*) Talks TO Men, but ABOUT Women

In light of the last few items, there's something else that's important to realize. This will sound insane to many people, but it's true, which I'll prove momentarily:

The Bible (*almost*) never talks to women; it almost always talks to men (and occasionally about women).

That is, the Bible almost always uses the second person *“you”* when speaking to men, but the third person *“they”* when speaking about women. That is, the Bible talks to men directly, but talks to women indirectly almost all the time. The few times women are directly addressed are notable because of their rarity.

and this is on purpose.

(I explain the reason for this in my article: [How Crucial are Women to a Biblical Household? Very!](#). Hint: addressing the Bible to men is about keeping a proper *“chain of command”* intact. While the Bible wasn't written to women, it was written for women; just like the epistles weren't written to modern Christians, but were written for modern Christians.)

I must remind you that God inspired the Bible. He wrote it.

If God didn't write the Bible, we could ignore it like any other book. If God did write the Bible, then God Himself intentionally addressed it almost exclusively to men. God doesn't do things by accident, therefore we must assume He had a reason for doing it.

Here's one very clear example, but there are many, many more.

Jeremiah 44:24-25

24 Then Jeremiah said to all the people, including all the women, *“Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah who are in the land of Egypt,*

25 thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, as follows: *“As for you and your wives, you have spoken with your mouths and fulfilled it with your hands, saying, ‘We will certainly perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn sacrifices to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her.’ Go ahead and confirm your vows, and certainly perform your vows!”*

Even while speaking to the women, God (*through Jeremiah*) addresses only the men. The women are there but not addressed directly even though God was speaking to them. Instead, God addressed the men directly and the women indirectly.

This is normal in the Bible.

This is the way that God Himself talks. You don't have to like it, but it is how He speaks. Here are some more examples, and these are but a small fraction of them.

- The 10th commandment reads *“You shall not covet your neighbor's wife”*, which is addressed to men.
- In Leviticus 18, God gives a long list of sexual practices which are forbidden. He begins each verse with *“you shall not”*. The *“you”* there is explicitly referring to men, which is clear from reading it. It's made even more explicit in verse 23: *“Also you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it; it is a perversion”*. The one command is given to men *“you shall not”*, but the other command is given about women *“nor shall any woman”*.
- Psalm 128 is clearly speaking to men in verse 1 when it says: *“How blessed is everyone who fears the LORD,”* because verse 3 opens with *“Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house”*. Notice, *“everyone”* means *“every man”*, not *“every person”*.
- In Deuteronomy 29:2 it says: *“And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them”*. In verse 11 it says *“your little ones, your wives”*. Again, *“all Israel”* either means every last man and woman, in which case this is only addressed to men even though women are present. Or *“all Israel”* means just the men. Either way, only men are being spoken to.
- In Acts 1:16, Peter begins speaking by addressing *“men, brothers”*, and the word for *“men”* there means adult males only, excluding women. (*note: many translations obscure this fact; look at [Acts 1:16 in an interlinear](#) to see it.*) This is despite the fact that the women were specifically mentioned as being present in verse 14.
- In Luke 18:29-30, Jesus says *“There is no one (masculine noun) who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the Kingdom who won't get a return in the age to come. However, not only does Jesus use a masculine form for *“no one”*, but He only mentions a wife, not a husband. He's speaking to men, not to women.*
- In Luke 15, Jesus tells a few parables of the same kind. In the first, He opens it with *“What man among you”*, but in the second, he opens with *“Or what woman”*. Notice, *“no among you”*; again He's speaking to men, but about women.

- In 1 Corinthians 16:3, Paul commands that they “act like men”. This makes no sense if he was also addressing women.
- In 1 John 2:12-14, John writes to little children, young men, and fathers. What about young women and mothers?

I could go on for a long time, but this article is already long. Further, masculine words are more common than you might imagine.

For example, every time you see the phrases “he who ___” and/or “those who ___”, the odds are 99%+ that it’s a masculine phrase. Specifically, it’s an article + participle phrase where the article/participle match in gender, case, and number. When you see either of those, the Bible is talking to/about men. (For more information on this, please read my article: [What’s the Best Bible Translation? And More Importantly, Why?](#) specifically under the heading “3rd Person Verbs, The Definite Article, and Gender”.)

In the New Testament, when you see “those who ___”, where the ___ is a verb, it should almost always be translated “the men/males who ___”.

That accurately reflects the Greek gender.

That means the vast majority of the New Testament is addressed directly to men.

Not women.

Not both.

Men.

(Again, see my article: [How Crucial are Women to a Biblical Household? Very!](#) to understand why)

Further, Greek adjectives are often used in a substantive way, meaning they can indicate gender. For example, in 1 Corinthians 14:26-32 where Paul proscribes how the church assembly should operate, all of the words used that could indicate gender are masculine, not feminine. That means all the prophets, teachers, interpreters, etc. are assumed to be men. This is further verified by verses 34-38, where the women are instructed to be silent (as we saw in [the previous article](#)).

Again, the Bible was written to men, not women

Getting this confused makes certain passages impossible to understand properly. Just look at [my article on what Jesus meant by “adultery” in Matthew chapters 5 and 19](#). Thinking this applies to women also would lead to wildly inaccurate conclusions.

In the few places where the New Testament does directly instruct women, it tells them to submit to their husbands.

This makes perfect sense.

If the wife is supposed to obey her husband as she obeys God, then she should be taking her cues from her husband, who takes them from Christ, who takes them from the Father (1 Cor 11:3).

To be sure, women can learn from the Bible. I'm not suggesting that women shouldn't read the Bible. (*That would be absurd.*) Women absolutely should read the Bible. However, **both** men and women need to realize that the Bible was written for men, not women, and understand it in that way.

Sin and Nature Passed Through Men, Not Women

Romans 5:12

Therefore, just as **through one man sin entered into the world**, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned

1 Corinthians 15:22

For **as in Adam all die**, so also in Christ all will be made alive

I've always found this interesting because Eve ate the fruit first, but sin came through Adam. But there's yet another verse that's often completely overlooked that touches on this too.

Genesis 5:3

3 When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, **he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image**, and named him Seth.

Notice, Adam's son was in **Adam's** image and likeness, **not Eve's**. Seth inherited his father's nature, not his mother's nature. (*Obviously, Eve's DNA was part of Seth's genetic makeup. However, on a very fundamental and genetic level, Seth took on the nature of his father; not his mother. We'll get to the genetic component in a moment.*)

Genesis says the son took on the **image and likeness** of the father, leaving out the mother. Romans says that sin entered through Adam, even though Eve sinned first. Therefore, it seems the nature of the child (*the image and likeness*) is determined by the father, not the mother.

This makes a lot of sense if you think about Jesus.

I'm sure Mary was a righteous woman. Out of all the women in world history, God picked her to carry His Son, so she must have been special! but she still sinned. Therefore, **if** sin came through the woman or through both parents Jesus might've had a sin problem. Sin passing through the male makes a **lot** of sense in this conundrum.

It actually solves it.

Seeds and Fields

Further, the way sex is portrayed in the Bible makes sense with this understanding too. In the Bible, a man's semen/sperm is called "seed". For example:

Leviticus 15:16

Now if a man has a seminal emission, he shall bathe all his body in water and be unclean until evening.

The word translated "seminal" is the Hebrew word זֶרַע (zera), which means a "seed you sow", often with the connotation of a descendant. The Greek word for "seed" (like the kind you sow in a field) is σπέρμα (sperma), which is the root of our English word "sperm". Even to this day, "seed" is still a slang term for a man's semen/sperm, though it's less common as we've shifted away from an agrarian society.

If a man's contribution is "seed", then the woman is analogous to the "field" in which the seed is planted. (Even today, "plowing her field" is a vulgar term for having sex with a woman.) Clearly the field contributes a lot to the seed. Good, fertile soil is essential for growing the seed.

However, anyone who's planted something knows **it's the seed "not the field" that determines what crops grow.**

(Biology supports this idea in humans, and we'll get to that in a second.)

Please think about that.

In a metaphorical sense, a man "plants" his "seed" in the "field" of a woman through sex. She grows his "seed" in her womb, and the resulting child shares his father's nature (at least as far as sin is concerned, and apparently his image and likeness too).

We know a child gets DNA from both parents, and both parents influence the child. Likewise, the field and seed both contribute greatly to the plant's development. But regardless of how great the field's contribution (and it's a massive contribution), the "identity" of the plant is still determined by the seed, not the field. Likewise, scripturally speaking the child's nature (image and likeness) is passed through the man; not the woman.

(There's an interesting argument there for a child belonging more to the father than the mother. But that's a topic for another day.)

Biology Actually Supports This Idea! Sort Of

Believe it or not, children get more of who they are (genetically) from their father than from their mother. According to a [familyeducation.com article](https://www.familyeducation.com/article):

Many of us think everything is 50/50, with each parent giving an equal amount of physical traits and genetic traits to their child. But, that's not the way things work. The truth is things are a bit unfairly swayed to the dad's side. **You are 60% more likely to have traits that are active from your dad** simply because nature has a natural preference to express those genes. That's what it means to have strong genes.

This is due to complex epigenetics or the way your DNA is expressed. Epigenetics plays a role, of course, in your eye color and the way you look physically, but it also impacts your health and wellness. For example, a parent's genes and the strength of those genes can influence the severity of a health condition in your child.

(Note: this article has been edited since I first quoted it, so I updated the quote above. The previous version also contained this sentence: "You can think of it like this: think about the trait of a severe health condition, if you inherit it from your mom, it's likely to show up in a less severe version that it would if you had inherited it from your dad.")

God designed it so that: "Nature has a natural preference to express those genes"; i.e. the father's genes.

Isn't that interesting?

As the article says, this is because of [epigenetics](#). So while a child does inherit 50% of their DNA from each parent, each 50% won't have equal influence. Epigenetics is what goes on on top of genetics and decides which genes express themselves (*are used*), and which genes don't express themselves (*are ignored*).

Epigenetics tells your body which genes to use and which to ignore.

And epigenetics favor the father, not the mother.

So while the child's DNA might be composed of 50% dad and 50% mom, the father's genes express themselves more, meaning the child "in effect" gets more from dad than mom. Here's an article with a list of [20 traits children are more likely to inherit from their father](#). While most of these can come from the mother, they are more likely to be inherited from the father.

An interesting fact!

Gender is always determined by the father.

Women have XX chromosomes, men have XY Chromosomes. Therefore, the woman always passes an X chromosome to her child because she can't pass what she doesn't have; a Y chromosome. Whereas, the father can pass either an X or a Y chromosome. Which one he passes determines the gender of the child.

It's always interesting when science confirms what the Bible says. Adam did indeed have a son in his image, according to his likeness; genetically speaking. ðŸ™,

(Note: [epigenetics also drastically influence behavior](#). Yes, a tendency toward a behavior can be transmitted from parent to child. So not only do kids tend to look more like the father, they tend to act more like him too.)

The Second Sin Committed in the Bible

Everyone knows the first sin was Eve eating from the tree. However, I've never heard anyone talk about the **second sin** committed in the Bible, which was Adam's first sin. (You know, the one that doomed us all to struggle with sin because "as we just saw" sin is passed through the male)

Let's see what God said it was:

Genesis 3:17

17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have **listened** to the voice of your wife, **and have eaten from the tree** about which I commanded you, saying, "You shall not eat from it"; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life.

I suppose you *could* read this as only one sin, but that's not what it says. You'd need to twist the verse to make that interpretation.

Suppose a father tells his underage daughter "because you snuck out of your room and went clubbing with your friends, you're grounded." You would understand that sneaking out of the room was a punishable offense. Not as serious as going into a club underage perhaps, but still an offense, a sin.

It's the same with Adam. God seems clear that Adam committed two sins:

1. "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife"

AND

2. "have eaten from the tree"

This is even more clear if you understand the definition of the original word translated "listen". It's the Hebrew word שָׁמַע (shema), which primarily means to "hear". However, it also means to "listen" in the sense of "obeying what is heard". There **is no specific Hebrew word for "obey" and "shema" was used for that purpose**, as the video below explains perfectly. (only 3:26 long)

So, shema is the Hebrew word used for "obey".

That means Adam's first sin was obeying (listening to) the voice of his wife.

Now, I don't think it's bad or wrong to take your wife's counsel or advice. That's **not** what I'm saying at all. Proverbs 31:11 says of a good wife that "The heart of her husband trusts in her". And in verse 26 it says "she opens her mouth in wisdom". But considering advice from someone is very different than obeying them.

Adam obeyed the voice of his wife, and God called *that* a sin. It was Adam's first sin, and therefore the sin that condemned the entire world to struggle with sin.

Think about that for a moment.

Really think about it.

- The sin that condemned mankind wasn't Adam eating the fruit in violation of God's command.
- The sin that condemned mankind was Adam obeying his wife in violation of God's created order.

Wouldn't the world be different with that perspective? How many "she's the boss" jokes would you hear if Christians understood this?

Women are required to obey men (wives obey husbands; daughters obey fathers), but husbands obeying their wives is a sin.

That doesn't sound like God is in favor of women being the social/political equals of men.

Conclusion

Given all the above "especially that last point" God doesn't appear to view women as the social/political equals of men. This is even more clear if you've read the previous article in this series, [The Bible on Authority and Submission in Marriage](#).

There's a reason for this, which I explain in detail in my article, [How Getting Marriage Wrong Destroyed Every Great Civilization in World History](#). It will also make more sense if you read my article on [The Why of Submission in Marriage](#). God designed the world to work in a very specific way. When we cooperate with His plan, things turn out well.

When we don't, not so well.

I realize these ideas aren't popular, and they certainly aren't politically correct. However, Peter and Paul instructing Christian women to submit to their husbands in egalitarian 1st-century Rome wasn't politically correct either.

Truth often isn't popular.

That doesn't make it less true.

In [the next \(6th\) article in this series](#), weâ€™ll examine what the Bible says about the role of women in society. Itâ€™s much broader â€” and more freeing â€” than you might think, but has a clear, primary focus.

[The 7th article is about what men and women REALLY want in each other](#). It will explain why a father choosing his daughterâ€™s husband is not only what is best for the woman, but itâ€™s also what will make her happiest. The 7th article will also provide some context for the 8th article, which will cover the role of men in society and marriage.

Marriage Series Index:

- a. [How Crucial are Women to a Biblical Household? Very!](#) (*This article was written later, but serves as an excellent, balanced intro to gender roles in marriage. I **highly** recommend reading this article before the others.*)
1. [How Getting Marriage 'Wrong' Destroyed Every Great Civilization in World History](#)
2. [Gender Differences and the Biology of leadership](#)
3. [The â€œWhyâ€ Behind God Telling Wives to Submit to their Husbands in Marriage](#)
 - a. [Does 1 Corinthians 11 Require Women To Wear "Head Coverings"](#)
4. [The Bible on Authority & Submission in Marriage](#)
5. [Does God View Women as the \(Social/Political\) Equals of Men?](#)
6. [Biblically, Whatâ€™s the Role of Women in Society and Marriage?](#)
7. [Gender and Attraction: What Men vs Women REALLY Want](#)
8. [Biblically, Whatâ€™s the Role of Men in Society and Marriage? \(still writing it...\)](#)
9. [Is Polygamy \(Polygyny\) Biblical? Does God Allow it?](#)
10. Follow up articles coming...
 - o Appendix A: [Biblical Reasons for Divorce, When Remarriage is Allowed, and How Adultery Figures In](#)