

Just before I say – "I do!"

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I pray that whoever reads this will take vows and marriage serious before they are united with their loved and other halves to become full. Amen.

Covenant - (promise, pledge, vow, swear, solemn oath, secure, obligation)

an obligation means "due," that which is owing

Beautiful wedding experiences always send a shiver down my spine. As a young girl I prayed with an exceeding and passionate longing for someone with a spiritual soul and mind to marry me.

Inspirational are the vows the promise to one another, but a poor man's word returns always empty unless there is no way to express their work as a true unit and souls unite as one. Let no one deceive you with empty words. Just as a crown rises above the head and yet connects with it as well, so let YHVH binds together the spiritual and the physical, theory with reality. The gift of sacred marriage is one of YHVH's greatest blessings.

A sacred marriage comes about when two souls are guided through their love for each other, to join their hearts, minds, bodies and daily lives together into a new entity that is greater than either individual alone. A sacred marriage bond creates a synergy and a blessing that radiates outward to the world, and that can be seen and felt tangibly as the presence of light and love. Sacred marriage requires an ongoing commitment from each participant, to love fully each day and never cease to trust and depend on YHVH. Your relationship must release ego attachments and negativity that would cloud communication and create disharmony within your marriage.

This kind of commitment is in essence a spiritual one, which brings the soul into alignment with YHVH's love and divine purpose for the soul. A sacred marriage is a blessing and a gift, which models the way home, to a place and time when all of humanity lives in sacred relationships with each other and with all of life.

YHVH our Father is a good example of what a husband is to his wife. Whenever YHVH made a Covenant, He delivered what He promised and never gone back on His Word. YHVH being the head of His house proved to be the provider, protector, loving, caring, trustworthy and upright in image.

In the beginning of Creation YHVH made man out of dust according to His image. He saw that man (Adam) was lonely. **Genesis 2:18** *Then the LORD YHVH said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."*

YHVH did not only consider man, but He made him a **helper fit** for him. I would like to pause on this before we move on.

Later in the New Testament we learn that another Helper "the Holy Spirit" was send from the Father "to be with us forever" which is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father who will bear witness about Yeshua.

*Now the birth of Yeshua Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. **Matthew 1:18***

*for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. **Luke 1:15***

How does YHVH feel about the Holy Spirit?

*And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. **Matthew 12:32***

*but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— **Mark 3:29***

This clearly indicates the love respect and honor of YHVH for the Holy Spirit.

"The apostle Paul compared the relationship between husband and wife to that between Christ and the church. Marriage is a decision of two individuals to share the same type of pure, Christian love described by Paul."

"This kind of love enriches each part of life and marriage enriches love. Two lives, shared with this kind of love, can hold more fulfillment and happiness than either life alone."

1 Corinthians 13:4-8, *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. Love never fails....*

It is so important in our life to make sure we include YHVH into our decisions before and when we choose our lifelong marriage partner.

Looking at the traditional Wedding Vow, we enter into a solemn oath and promise. This is a serious commitment. In just a few minutes, you commit yourself to a covenant made in front of YHVH and witnesses which binds you until death.

The following 2 vows are similar promises made by the giving of the hand in marriage.

1. I, (name), take you (name), to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish; from this day forward until death do us part. Standing here in the presence of YHVH, the Guardian of the home, ready to enter into the bond of wedlock, answer in the fear of YHVH, and in the hearing of those assembled: "Do you, _____, of your own free will and consent take _____ to be your wife/husband and do you promise to love, honor and cherish her/him throughout life?"
Groom/bride say, "I do."
2. Rabbi (addressing the groom): "Do you _____, take _____ to be your lawful wedded wife, to love, to honor and to cherish?"
Groom says, "I do."
Rabbi (to the bride): "Do you, _____, take _____, to be your lawful wedded husband to love, to honor and to cherish?"
Bride says, "I do."
Rabbi, to the groom: "Do you, _____, put this ring upon the finger of your bride and say to her, 'Be thou consecrated to me, as my wife, by this ring, according to the Law of Moses and of Israel?'"
Then the Rabbi asks the bride to repeat: "May this ring I receive from thee be a token of my having become thy wife according to the Law of Moses and of Israel."
In a double ring ceremony, the bride says this: "This ring is a symbol that thou art my husband in accordance with the Law of Moses and Israel."
The Rabbi might say these question-and-answer vows: "O YHVH, supremely blessed, supreme in might and glory, guide and bless this groom and bride."

First, the wife must be in subjection to her husband *Ephesians 5:22, 23*. This does not mean she is her husband's slave. It does not mean she has no rights in her home. It means she understands that YHVH has given the husband the responsibility to lead the home and that she will follow her husband's leadership. She will respect her husband as her husband cares for her and provides her the things they need in the home.

Second, she will reverence her husband *Ephesians 5:33*. This means she will honor her husband. She will not talk or act in a way that will bring her husband shame.

1 Peter 3:1-2 we read *Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct.*

Titus 2:4 - 5 gives the responsibilities of a Christian wife by telling what young wives should be taught. A Christian wife is serious in caring for her home. She loves her husband and her children. She is careful in her (discreet) lifestyle and keeps herself (chaste) pure. Her first responsibility is to care for her home properly. She obeys her husband. Women who act like this bring respect to YHVH and YHVH's word as well as their husbands.

Do not let your adorning be external —the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear — but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in YHVH's sight is very precious. For this is how the holy women who hoped in YHVH used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening. 1 Peter 3:3-6

We can wear the most beautiful clothing, jewelry and do up our hair, but it is not the external beauty that counts. The internal beauty of the heart exceeds by far its worth. Any woman that depends on external beauty depends on the flesh to do the works of gaining favor for her husband. Any man choosing a woman for her beauty only desire flesh more than internal beauty.

It is by far more value to have a spiritual love and connection. The effect of spiritual love supersedes by far the love of the flesh. It is through spirit that two souls become one and connect with the inner being where love conquers all.

A good wife can make a home a place of joy and happiness. A bad wife can make a home a place of misery and sorrow. Happy is the man who has a good wife, for he and his children shall surely be blessed.

For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. 1 Corinthians 7:14

A wife can be in subjection to a husband only if the husband is a true, faithful leader and provider for his home. If a husband is a poor leader and a lazy man, he can make it impossible for his wife to be in subjection. If a husband does nothing deserving of respect and honor, he can make it impossible for her to show him respect and honor. Yet, even if a Christian wife has a bad husband, she will not abuse him. She must still try to be a proper wife because she loves YHVH even if she cannot respect her husband.

The Example of Christ. *We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the YHVH of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Yeshua, that together you may with one voice glorify the YHVH and Father of our Lord Yeshua Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of YHVH. Romans 15*

These words are so beautiful and should encourage any wife to a life of faithfulness and total devotion, that she may be a crown to her husband and be valued far above rubies. The wife that will honor and reverence her husband and seek to please him will find a joy in her own heart.

"An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones." Proverbs 12:4

An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. Proverbs 31:10-12

"Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her." Proverbs 31:28

A true and happy home is one of the most sacred of places. No man is fit to be a husband who is not a good man. He need not be great, or rich, or brilliant, or clever, but he must be good, or he is not worthy to take a gentle, trusting woman's tender life into his keeping. Of course he must love his wife; without love there is no real marriage, and ceremony and ring and vows and prayer are only empty formalities. He must love his wife and be always her lover.

What duty does the wife have in a Christian home?

The arts of housekeeping have many important factors to make a home of happiness. In the deep sense a happy home are the stars the wife canopy over her head, the glowing candle light in the night and the fire of love in her heart. The word she speaks is soft and tender as those of a noble woman and it stretches far around her. She creates a place of warmth and her home is better than houses with ceilings of cedar, or paintings of the best masters. She shines the harboring light for those who are homeless. Her spirit gives the home its atmosphere. Her hands fashion its beauty. Her heart makes its love. She cares for her family and never withholds a kind word. She never considers any price too great to pay, to be the sunshine, the joy, the blessing, the inspiration of her home. A true woman's heart craves gentleness. It is hurt by bitter words, by coldness, by impatience, by harsh criticisms, by neglect, by the withholding of the expressions of affection. Love craves its daily bread of tenderness. Love always serves, or it is not love at all. The greatest in Christ's kingdom are those who serve the

most unselfishly. Husband and wife vie with each other in loving and serving. They mutually bear each other's burdens. The husband is the head, but he never says so; never reminds his wife of it; never claims authority; and defers to her in everything.

Christ is the true wife's kingdom. G-d's word is like honey on her lips. She touches life outside in many ways. Very largely does the wife hold in her hands, as a sacred trust, the happiness and the highest good of the hearts that nestle there. The best husband - the truest, the noblest, the gentlest, the richest hearted, cannot make his home happy if his wife be not, in every reasonable sense, a helpmate to him. No two lives brought into this close relation can blend into one without biblical discipline. "Marriage is the beautiful unfolding of being together for many years spend together in Christ." No true wife will ever quarrel with the divine law that makes the husband the head of the household, if she has a husband who loves her up to the measure of the divine requirements for husbands - "Even as Christ also loved the Church." Such love never demands obedience, never demands anything; it seeks not to be served, but to serve. Serving the Lord our YHVH opens the door to a glorious relationship.

Side by side they will stand, two wedded lovers, each a part of the other, each incomplete, a mere fragment without the other, but strong in their happy union in love. Yeshua is the covering and seal in each Christian marriage.

Special Vows

BRIDEGROOM:

"Today I choose to unite myself to YHVH and to you as my wife. I confirm that YHVH gave you to me as my bride. My wish is to be a good husband to you, the kind that Yeshua Christ wants me to be. I pledge to unite myself to you as long as we live, to love you, to be your loyal friend and partner. I will be slow to see your mistakes and quick to see your good qualities. I will be your servant. I truly love you and therefore pledge myself to be yours forever. I reject the possibility of divorce as an escape when things get rough or if I'm unhappy and bind myself to you and to YHVH through all conflict and problems knowing that YHVH's power will overcome and will help us to work through these times. By the grace and power of YHVH, my daily living will confirm my covenant with you."

BRIDE:

"Today I choose to unite myself to YHVH and to you as my husband. I confirm that YHVH gave you to me as my bridegroom. It is my wish to be a good wife, the kind that Yeshua Christ wants me to be. I pledge to unite myself to you, to love you and to be your uninhibited lover, to provide for your needs and to be your loyal partner and friend. I will be patient with your shortcomings and be quick to appreciate your successes and not to criticize. I will support you with my prayers and love. I will be your servant. I truly love you and therefore pledge myself to you forever. I reject the possibility of divorce as an escape when things get rough or if I'm unhappy and bind myself to you and to YHVH through all conflict and problems knowing that YHVH's power will overcome and will help us to work through these times. By the grace and power of YHVH, my daily living will confirm my covenant with you"

"Happy is the home when YHVH is there,
And love fills every breast;
When one their wish, and one their prayer,
And one their heavenly rest.

Happy the home where Yeshua' Name is heard
and every word is sweet to every ear;
Where children early lisp His fame,
And parents hold Him dear.

Happy the home where prayer is heard,
And praise is used to rise;
Where parents love the sacred Word
That makes us truly wise.

Lord, let us in our homes agree,
This blessed peace to gain;
Until our hearts in love to Thee,
And love to all will reign."

Almighty YHVH, who saw that it was not good for man to live alone and who established marriage for the happiness and well-being of men and women, we thank thee for thy gift of love in marriage, and we rejoice on each occasion, when two souls come before the altar to be joined in this sacred ceremony, to make meaningful promises to each other. Bless each husband and clothe him with strength as he fights the battles for bread. Make him wise to weight the values of life. Give him a sound sense of judgments. Keep him honest and forthright in character in a way that will make his wife proud of him. And may she find in him that inner strength for which the heart of every woman longs. Bless each wife with an inner passion of love. Give to her an understanding, the faith that will make her a righteous wife. Keep her alert to every opportunity to bring good cheer to those she loves. Grant that she may have the joy that comes from doing daily tasks well and with a caring heart. Give to her that inner beauty of spirit that never fails. Bless them, as together they seek to find their place in the world. Give them tasks to do that will challenge them. Give to them enough tears to keep them tender, enough failure to keep their hands clenched in thine, enough success that they will be sure that they walk with thee. And when, at last, one must lay the other in the arms of You YHVH, may they be found then, as now, still thanking thee for each other. Amen