



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.10.1

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF introduces the book *Sarah's Children*.

If you are a man, do not be put off by the subject matter of this book. Although it was written for women who aspire to godliness, the message of this book is very important for Christian men to understand.

Half of the people in this world are female. As a man, you will have many interactions with women. Some of you have wives and daughters. A Christian man needs to know the call God has placed upon a woman's life as surely as the woman needs to know the call God has placed upon the man.

This book makes no at-

tempt to be politically correct, nor does the message conform to the societal views of this hour. The book seeks only to present a Scriptural view of God's creation of woman, and the call He has placed upon their lives.

Many Christians err in seeking to make the word of God fit with the values of the world they live in, or with their own desire. This is one reason that many are "always learning, but never coming to a knowledge of the truth."

As Christians we are to walk as aliens and strangers in this world. We should appear as a peculiar people when viewed alongside the world. This is part of being "salt" and "light" in a world that desperately needs both.

For those women who read this book, let me assure you that God has an exceedingly high calling for your life. Christ was surrounded by many devoted women who greatly helped Him in His earthly ministry. We even read that it was women who supported Him from their own private means, while no similar word is given of men supporting him (Luke 8:2-3).

It was women to whom Christ first appeared after His resurrection, even before showing Himself to the apostles (Matthew 28:1-10). To these women He entrusted the message to tell His disciples to meet Him in Galilee.

Christ is still seeking godly women today.

Food for Thought

"The Christian life is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ lived two thousand years ago, lived now by Him in you!"

W. Ian Thomas

"The knowledge of Christ's love for us should cause us to love Him in such a way that it is demonstrated in our attitude, conduct, and commitment to serve God. Spiritual maturity is marked by spiritual knowledge being put into action."

Edward Bedore

Scripture Memory

I John 4:20

If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

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"Like a lily among the thorns,
So is my darling among the maidens."

Song of Songs 2:2

Introduction

We live in a most exciting day. Yahweh is preparing a Bride for His Son. He is washing her with the Word. He is removing every stain, wrinkle and blemish. He is clothing her in robes of righteousness, and one day soon He will call her forth to reveal her beauty to the world.

Yahweh has given us many earthly examples of spiritual truth. When Yahshua walked this earth He often spoke in parables, relating the realities of the Kingdom of God to things that were naturally observable to his audience. The Kingdom was compared to a mustard tree, to a vineyard, to a field of wheat. The members of the Kingdom were compared to servants in a great house, to virgins both wise and foolish, to a prodigal returning home.

As Yahweh prepares a Bride for His Son, He has similarly given us natural examples to reveal this spiritual process that is occurring. There is no clearer revelation of this preparatory bridal work than to look at what is transpiring in the lives of women today who were created to be the brides of men.

At first glance, one might wonder how women today could possibly be a picture of the Bride that is being prepared for Christ. Modesty is largely rejected today, having given place to sexual allure and sensuality. A quiet spirit has been replaced with ceaseless activity, clamor, and an effusion of words. Gentleness has been substi-

tuted for abrasiveness, forcefulness, an "in your face" attitude, and a demand that personal rights be honored. The clarion call of the woman's movement today is "We will submit to no one! We are equal to all, and we demand recognition!" The woman's movement seeks to convince all that there is no difference between man and woman.

Absent from the majority of women today is any trace of the humility that is pleasing to God. Gone is an understanding of Yahweh's original intent in creating Eve to be a helper and completion for Adam. Instead, the majority of women want to be like Adam. They want a world where there is Adam and Adam, not Adam and Eve. Even in the church, this trend is seen in women. There are women in the church who are pressing to be recognized as equals to men in every way. They want the same authority as men. They want the same roles as men. They essentially want to be like men.

Yet out of this confusion and conflict there is a remnant of women who are coming forth in this day and they are finding Yahweh's purpose for their lives. They are coming out from a place of conformity to the world and they are being conformed to the image Yahweh has chosen for them. These stand as lights in a dark world, and it is in these that we can see the beauty of the Bride of Christ reflected.

It is an awesome sight to observe the women that are being transformed in this hour. The change begins within as the heart is softened by the Spirit's working. In their innermost being there is a keen desire to be found pleasing to God. The opinions of mankind do not weigh as heavily with them as does the witness of the Spirit of Yahweh. In humility they begin to adorn themselves with a quiet and gentle spirit. Even their external adornment changes. Many are rediscovering the marvelous testimony of headcovering. They are likewise covering themselves with mod-

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esty, seeking to convey an image of purity and righteousness, rather than desiring to attract attention through sexual allure. These women do stand out as lilies among the thorns.

Recently, my wife Tony was speaking with another sister in Christ. This sister was out with her husband, and as they came to the door of some establishment a woman approached the door. This woman was adorned in modest apparel and she was wearing a headcovering. Her appearance was in great contrast to that of most women in the affluent area in which they lived. By reason of her very appearance there was something that seemed pure and holy about her. The woman who related this story said her husband opened the door for this woman, and her husband's very manner and expression changed as if he were looking at someone who was holy. Although, this woman assured my wife that her husband loves her very much, she had never seen him look at her in that same way, and she desired that he should do so.

This writing is not focused specifically on how women should dress, but is it not true that a woman who is godly should stand out in the midst of a perverse, sensual, and wicked nation that is materially and physically obsessed? If people don't notice anything different in the appearance of a woman who aspires to be godly, then perhaps the woman has unknowingly conformed herself to the ways of the world.

In the past year my wife has begun wearing modest dresses and practicing headcovering. She has never before experienced the reaction she now gets in public. Men will hold doors for her, and she sees men purposely staring at her in public places. Yet their stares are not the stares of lust that many women attract by wearing immodest clothing. The stares are from men who see something pure in the midst of a perverse society.

Even men who do not know Christ are drawn to the image of one who is adorned modestly and with humility. My wife has corresponded with a number of other women who are making the same life changes as they seek to be conformed to God's desire for them, and they are giving amazing reports about how they frequently encounter unusual and positive reactions from men young and old who are blessed just by seeing them adorn themselves modestly and humbly.

Some women have objected that adorning themselves in this scriptural way strikes them as vanity in that it draws attention to the woman. Yet what woman that goes clothes shopping does not consider how she will appear to others? Why choose to put on the fashions of the world that accentuate the sexuality of womanhood, when as Christians we are to demonstrate heavenly virtues to the world?

Yes, women who dress modestly and with humility will stand out and attract attention, but should not light stand out in the midst of darkness? Should not people be attracted to the light? A city set on a hill cannot be hid. We are not called to be invisible, we are to attract others attention that they might ask us the reason of the hope that is in us (I Peter 3:15). The Christian man or woman should stand out and be noticed, but what people are attracted to in us should be godly, not physical or carnal.

How many women would not truly like men to look upon them as someone who is holy, someone whom men regard with righteous admiration? However, due to the cultural resistance, the necessity of humility, and the need to crucify one's flesh, many women have opted instead to gain man's admiration through physical and carnal means. Yet the former admiration is holy and pure, the latter is sensual and defiled and it will eventually lead to the woman being treated in a manner devoid of all respect. Ironically, the ex-

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cuse most women give for rejecting Yahweh's plan for their life is that they want respect and they feel that the Biblical teaching on womanhood, submission, humility, and a quiet and gentle spirit, would rob them of this respect. They fear becoming a doormat to men.

It is a paradox in the Kingdom of God that the path to respect is a path of humility. One must die to their soulish desires and crucify their flesh with its pride, but the one who humbles him/herself will be exalted. Many seek respect with pride intact, but protecting one's pride is the pathway to debasement in the Kingdom. We are told that "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6, I Peter 5:5). If we humble ourselves under His hand, in due time He will exalt us. These things are a paradox, and many have failed to gain godly respect and admiration because they have rejected the path of humility.

Again, some would argue that we are not to be concerned about the opinions of others at all. This assertion does not bear up under the scrutiny of scripture, however. The scriptures reveal that the early saints had a very high reputation with those they dwelt among. They also reveal that such a reputation was desirable.

Acts 5:13-14

But none of the rest dared to associate with them; however, *the people held them in high esteem*. And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number...

NASU

I Timothy 3:7

And he [an overseer] must have a good reputation with those out-

side the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

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There are numerous scriptures that speak of the necessity of maintaining a good reputation. If people speak ill of us, they should do so without any justification that they might in time be put to shame for speaking evil of what is good.

A marvelous thing is occurring in the hour in which we live. A remnant of women are hearing and heeding the call to come out of the ways and patterns of the world and of a worldly church and to adorn themselves with that which is highly valued in God's sight. They are putting on the imperishable qualities that never decay and will never be out of fashion in the Kingdom of God.

There is an exceedingly high calling for women. This book will explore this calling. It will seek to portray faithfully an image that originates in the mind of Christ. This image is not popular today, nor is it likely to find approval with the majority of women in or out of the church. But there is a remnant who will heed the call and who will recognize the voice of their loving Shepherd. It is for these that this book is written.

The path and calling spoken of here will present great challenges. Certainly there are obstacles and objections that must be overcome. Fears will have to be faced and conquered. A life of faith will have to be embraced, but the prize before the woman who overcomes self, Satan, and the world is beyond comparing with the temporary, light afflictions to be encountered. Those who prevail will be worthy to be called "Sarah's children."

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"Many daughters have done nobly,

But you excel them all."

Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,

But a woman who fears Yahweh, she shall be
praised.

Proverbs 31:29-30

The High Calling of Womanhood

Do you long to fulfill Yahweh's purpose for you? Do you want His will to be fulfilled in your life more than anything else? If you were told that only one out of a hundred thousand women fear Yahweh and seek to be found pleasing to Him in all aspects of their lives; if you were advised that His will would lead you to walk differently, speak differently, dress differently, and in very profound ways to simply live differently than all the women in the society around you, as well as the vast majority in the church, would you yet desire to obey?

To put a desire to please Yahweh above every other desire is to fear Him. Such a life will eventually lead to praise. The praise referred to will not be the hollow acclaim of a fallen world that is passing away. It will be the praise that originates in the mind of God and is everlasting. What better praise is there than the praise of the Creator who formed us? Yahshua heard the voice from heaven proclaim, "Behold, this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." This is the manner of praise of which we speak.

What is it that elicits the praise of Yahweh upon men and women? Is it not obedience? And what is obedience? Is it not conformity to the revealed mind of the Father?

Yahshua said He was always beholding the Fa-

ther and He only did the things He saw the Father doing. He said He only spoke the words the Father gave Him to speak. He declared that He never did anything that had its origin outside of the Father's will.

John 8:28-29

So Yahshua said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."

The world has many definitions for success. People who have great talents are viewed as successful. People who make lots of money, who make a name for themselves, or who excel in some field of endeavor are seen as successful. In the Kingdom of God there is only one definition of success. It is knowing the will of the Father and doing it. This alone will elicit His praises.

It follows, therefore, that the woman who desires to be successful in the Kingdom of God must know what the will of the Father is for her. Having come to an understanding of the Father's will she must then seek to be conformed to that will. As a woman, you can know for certain that the Father does have a specific desire and calling for your life.

Yahweh had a specific purpose in mind when He created all of His works. Nothing was created without a design and predetermined purpose that was fully formed in the mind of God. Yahweh had a specific design for the angels, and there are different ranks of angels. Among the heavenly beings there are archangels, seraphim, and cherubim. There are also many fantastic

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heavenly creatures that we find described in the pages of scripture. Some have multiple heads and many wings. Some speak with a voice that causes the pillars of the temple in heaven to shake. Yahweh has a purpose for each being.

Yet not all beings have been content with Yahweh's purpose for them. In Ezekiel we find the description of a magnificent created being. Its description is breathtaking.

Ezekiel 28:12-18

"You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you."

What an awesome being is described here! The seal upon this covering cherub was "perfection." Think of what this means. There was no defect anywhere. All was excellent and holy and pure. There was nothing to mar the appearance in any way. One could search for a lifetime and never find anything amiss.

Furthermore, this angelic being is described as "full of wisdom". One translation renders this as

"the sum of wisdom." What marvelous breadth of mind the Father placed within. Not even Solomon was described in this way.

The description continues that this being was "perfect in beauty." How can we even fathom what this description means. We have nothing on this earth to compare. How many people have been captivated by a beautiful sunset over the ocean, or the appearance of dew on the flowers of the morning? The Father has placed many wondrous and beautiful sights in creation, yet the creation suffers the consequences of sin. This angel was so breathtakingly beautiful that we would have trouble turning our gaze away from such a sight.

The garments with which this cherub was adorned were also appropriately magnificent. The purest gold was used and he was arrayed with the most precious of gemstones, themselves flawless and full of beauty.

Yahweh excelled in the fashioning of this magnificent being. He vested this covering cherub with characteristics that were part of His own nature. He gave it perfection, wisdom, and beauty. He also had an appointed purpose for this being to fulfill. We are told that this was the "anointed cherub who covers". Some have suggested that this cherub stood in the presence of Yahweh and covered His glory. Yahweh says, "I placed you there", speaking of His predetermined will for this being.

Yet we know that the being that is described is the same as the one we now know as Satan, the adversary. He was among the greatest angelic beings ever created, and his role before Yahweh was lofty and magnificent. What glory was his, and what responsibility? Whatever it means to be the anointed cherub that covers, we can be assured that the calling was equal to the being selected to fulfill it. To be in the very presence of

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Yahweh would be a calling that far exceeds the worth of any being of creation.

How then did Lucifer, the light bearer, begin to find dissatisfaction with his position and calling? Ezekiel continues the story with these words:

Ezekiel 28:17

"Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor."

The apostle Paul makes reference to the transgression of Satan when speaking to Timothy. When giving instructions for the appointment of ministers Paul states that they should not be a new convert, "lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil" (I Timothy 3:6, NKJV). At some point this anointed cherub took his eyes off the real source of all beauty, wisdom and perfection, which is Yahweh, and he began to gaze upon himself. He saw the magnificence of his own creation, his great beauty and splendor, and he began to find fault with his place in Yahweh's order. He thought that he should walk in a greater purpose, a higher calling, and have more honor. Isaiah speaks of it in this way:

Isaiah 14:12-14

"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

What a tragedy befell this glorious being. By seeking to ascend to a place above that assigned to him, he fell to the very depths. Instead of receiving the praise of Yahweh, he became the adversary of God and torment awaits him.

Why did this have to happen? Was not the predetermined plan of Yahweh good enough for this being, that he should consider it lowly and unworthy of his person? Verse 11 of this same chapter of Isaiah tells us, "Your pomp and the music of your harps have been brought down to Sheol." Some have interpreted this to mean that one of the duties of this covering cherub involved music, and he led the creation in worship of Yahweh. Could there be any higher calling than to be Yahweh's hand appointed worship leader? Great and awesome were God's design and purpose for this cherub.

Lucifer did fall, however. He did corrupt his wisdom and he abandoned the role assigned to him by his Creator. Such was his beauty, wisdom and great splendor that one third of the angelic beings joined with him in his rebellion. These other beings considered his perfection and flawless beauty, his splendorous adornment, his breadth of mind, and they were carried away with his deceit. They too corrupted their wisdom and they worshiped the creation rather than the Creator.

What we all need to see in this is that through the corrupting of wisdom even the very highest calling can begin to lose its luster. There was possibly no higher calling in heaven, yet it became a detestable thing to Lucifer. It became a thing despised and loathed.

Lucifer's calling was not lowly in any way. If we were to step into the arenas that this angelic being walked in we would be immediately undone by the glory of it all. We would fall down as dead men and women and cry out "Woe is me. I am

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undone, for I am unclean and unworthy." Like a homeless derelict that is suddenly brought into the greatest mansion on earth, filled with rich tapestries, parquet floors, marble columns, gilded ornaments, and many costly and rare furnishings, we would see the filth of our own array and say "I am not worthy to be here."

This cherub's calling was so far beyond anything imaginable upon this earth that any comparison is feeble at best. Yet he began to view the glory of his appointment as a thing that was detestable.

It is my hope that you will now be able to receive my next statements. Satan has brought his deception to earth and he has caused women to revile the predetermined role and calling that Yahweh has chosen for their lives. Yahweh has a high and glorious calling for women, yet most women despise it. They view it as lowly and contemptible. They feel it is degrading and that it is beneath them.

Is God's calling and role that He has predetermined by His own counsel actually beneath the dignity of women? Do you suppose that Yahweh simply wants women to suffer in endless misery and to lack fulfillment? No! It is a high and glorious calling that has been granted to women, yet few see it as such. Satan has worked hard to deceive women everywhere. Look at the message of the following verses.

Revelation 12:9

And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

I John 5:19

We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

Satan deceives the whole world, and the whole world lies in his power which is rooted in deception. What deception do you suppose he would like to cover the world with? His own corrupted wisdom told him that Yahweh's calling, role, and purpose for his life were detestable. It is this same error he would seek to duplicate among mankind. AND HE HAS DONE SO.

Satan has deceived women everywhere concerning their position, role, and calling. In Genesis it is revealed that woman was created for man. Paul reiterates this in his epistle to the church in Corinth.

I Corinthians 11:7-9

For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake.

Yes woman was taken from man. As man was created to be the image and glory of God, so woman was made to be the glory of man. Woman was created to be the helper of man.

Genesis 2:18

Then Yahweh God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."

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Many women look at the Biblical instructions regarding womanhood and they see them as being part of an outdated patriarchal society. They see no reason why men should be leaders in the home, in the church, in government, or any of the other forums of life. The woman's movement asserts that there is no difference between man and woman, that a woman is to be seen as an equal to man in all areas of life. In this is an echo of Lucifer's transgression, "I will ascend..., I will ascend..., I will ascend..."

Satan has worked tirelessly to destroy the order of creation that Yahweh has set in place by His own counsel and forethought. He rejected Yahweh's will for his life, now he seeks to cause all others to join in his rebellion. At some point Lucifer began looking at himself and thinking that he deserved better. He began to despise his calling. Now as Satan the adversary he uses the same corrupted wisdom on men and women.

Women have their minds buffeted with thoughts of, "Why should I submit myself to man? They are just common, rude, lowly, self-centered creatures that are no better than women." In every possible way Satan seeks to lower the image of man in the eyes of women. The lower man appears, the more unreasonable it seems for a woman to walk in submission and humility before man, and the more reasonable it seems that she has every right to seek to ascend above this role to a higher calling.

Satan's attacks have not just been to deceive women, however. He has been greatly effective in getting man to see himself as nothing more than an advanced ape. The man who sees himself as little more than a beast will act little better than a beast. By external observation there would seem to be little to distinguish man and to cause any to think highly of him. Men waste themselves in drunkenness, carousing, fornicating, lying, thievery, selfishness, ignorance, slothfulness, and envy. The news is full of stories of men acting as

mere brute beasts, killing and abusing one another.

Yes, the whole world does lie in the power of the evil one. His power is deception and he has deceived the whole world and now the world is living out of a deceived mindset. By looking at the world through our human senses it seems unreasonable to conclude that women should submit to man in any form, but we are not of this world and we are not to judge by appearances.

Though man has been deceived to see himself as an advanced beast, this is not his identity at all. Man did not evolve from a common ancestor of the lower primates, he was created to be the image and glory of God.

Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him...

John 10:33-36

The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." Yahshua answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, "I SAID, YOU ARE GODS'? If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him, whom the Fa-

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ther sanctified and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming,' because I said, "I am the Son of God'?"

Satan has done such a masterful job of deceiving the world that even those men who have received the word of God consider it blasphemy to declare that they are as gods. Yet the scriptures declare that it is true. Yahweh's very intent in creating man was to make a being in His own likeness and image. What an awesome thought. Not even Lucifer, the covering cherub, was said to have been created in Yahweh's image and likeness, after His glory.

Furthermore, we are told that as men we will judge angels.

I Corinthians 6:3

Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life?

Such is Yahweh's high purpose in His design and calling of man that we are told that all of creation is waiting for the sons of God to be revealed.

Romans 8:19-22

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

Man is a glorious and wonderful creation of Yahweh. He was created to bear the image of the divine. He was created to be the temple and dwelling place of the Holy Spirit of God. Furthermore, we are told that redeemed and regenerate man is as Christ is in this world.

I John 4:17

By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

Man need not wait until he goes to heaven one day to be conformed to the image of Christ. The elect and chosen ones of God are as Christ is even now in this world. We are groaning in anticipation of this mortal body being put off and immortality being put on, of this corruptible flesh being removed and the incorruptible being put on. We don't know what our appearance will be like, but we know we shall be like the Son of God for we shall see Him just as He is (I John 3:2).

There are many scriptures that reveal the majesty of man's creation. The image has been marred through sin and deceit, but Yahweh has never changed His plan. He said, "Let us create man in Our image, after Our likeness" and one day all of creation will see man revealed in the very image and likeness of God. Yahshua, when disputing with the Pharisees, quoted from the Psalm that says,

Psalms 82:6

I said, "You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High."

Oh how Satan hates for men and women to understand these truths. Satan's desire is to debase man that he might continue to rule over him.

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How he fears man coming to an understanding of his Creator's design for mankind.

If women view man as some creature that is little better than a beast, then Satan is able to cause them to readily agree that it would be debasing and detestable for woman to submit to man. It would be little better than living your life to take care of a dog or some other animal. But when woman realizes that Yahweh did a marvelous thing in creating man and that He fashioned man in the very image and glory of His own person, then things appear much differently.

Does it not sound somewhat blasphemous to our ears when we hear a man proclaim, "I am a god and a son of the Most High God"? Yet this is the very thing Yahshua testified of man when he quoted from the Psalms. Does it not seem a bit presumptuous for man to say, "I am as Christ in this world?" Yet this is the apostle John's testimony.

Why does it strike our ears as blasphemy to stand and boldly declare "I am created in the image and glory of God?" It is because the whole world lies in the power of the evil one and he has diminished the knowledge of who we are through his deceit.

What if Yahweh God decided by His own counsel to create a magnificent being called man that would share His very nature and character, likeness and glory? What if he decided to place His own Spirit within these beings and to through these beings to eventually put every enemy under His feet and to share His very throne with them? What if these beings were so designed that they could walk as the very friends of God and He could have fellowship with them? What marvelous creatures they must be!

Can you begin to see the warfare that has gone

on in this area? Satan has sought to cause women to view their calling as a helper to man to be a lowly and detestable calling, even as he abandoned his role and purpose due to the same error. Yet their calling is high and lofty. A woman is purposed to be the helper, companion, lover, and friend of the only beings created in the image of God. This is a high and excellent calling and it is not to be despised.

I am convinced that one of the things a woman is called to in her role of a helper to man is to help him recover the understanding of who he was created to be. When a woman treats her husband with reverence and respect she is affirming him and magnifying his own understanding of his high calling. When women fail to respect men they act as a drag and a weight upon the man. By failing to respect man, man is encouraged even more to not respect himself and he sinks lower and lower.

A part of the high calling of women in this day and hour is to help men to regain the understanding that they were created in the image and likeness and glory of God. This will ultimately prove to be to the woman's benefit. When a man sees himself as created in the image of God, he will begin to act more godly. He will treat his wife with love, compassion, mercy, and understanding. His behavior in all ways will become more elevated. When man begins to see that he is in the image of God and not a mere beast, he will also begin to see that his wife is much more than a physical body to be lusted after or despised.

Man needs a helper. It was Yahweh's own declaration that it was not good for man to be alone. There has been no day when his need has been greater. May many daughters of Sarah come forth to elevate their husbands, to lift them up in the midst of a world that seeks to diminish them. May they by their very behavior, by their conver-

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sation and respectful demeanor, remind their men that they were created in the image of God and theirs is an exceedingly high calling.

Such is Yahweh's purpose and will for women. May none despise it.

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And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."

Luke 9:23-24

Dying to Live

One might wonder, "If Yahweh's plan for women is so high and lofty, why do so many women despise it and fall short of His will?" The answer is revealed in the scripture above. The plan and desire of God for men and women involves dying to self. This is described as denying self and losing our life. It is compared to the image of one taking up a cross and following in the footsteps of Christ.

I don't know anyone who has had death by crucifixion described to them who would say that it sounded pleasant or desirable. To follow the path Yahweh has for us, everyone must come to the same place to which Yahshua came. We must all look at the course set before us and count the cost. A true and accurate assessment of what Yahweh is calling us to will most likely lead us to the same confession as Christ, "Father, if there be any other way, please let this cup pass from me."

We know that Yahshua followed up this plea with the words, "Nevertheless, not My will, but Thy will be done." This is not the case with the multitude of men and women. Even among the saints of God, it is a remnant who will choose the path the Father has for them when they see the suffering and self denial that it requires.

Of necessity, the saint must have a heavenly vi-

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sion in order to choose to walk in Yahweh's will for them on earth. We must see the joy set before us so that we too can despise the shame of our allotted path.

Hebrews 12:1-2

Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Yahshua, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

A woman must see the joy set before her, a joy that is not of this present age, but of the age to come. A woman must so desire to hear the words of Christ, "Well done, good and faithful daughter, enter into the joy of your Lord", that she will walk anywhere, and in any way, that He determines for her while on earth.

Not very many men or women have such a heavenly perspective. Most live their lives never perceiving anything but the natural world around them. Therefore, they want to receive joy, and happiness, and blessing now, and they seek to satisfy every human desire while they live here on earth. Much of the church sees Yahweh as a type of heavenly Santa Claus who exists to satisfy their every craving, to rescue them from every difficulty, to remove every hardship, and to make their way pleasant and enjoyable. Yet the invitation of Christ is "Come and suffer."

I Peter 5:10

After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

Reading this, you may think, "Is this really what I signed up for when I received Yahshua as my Savior and Lord?" Indeed, it is! Paul expressed it in this way:

Colossians 1:24

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

This does not mean that we have to walk around experiencing misery and heartache every moment. It does not mean we will not know profound joy at times, or that we will be robbed of peace in our lives. What is indicated is that a death must take place within our beings if we are to enter into the true life of Christ. Peter gives us this further insight.

I Peter 4:1-2

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

Our suffering comes about as we choose the will of God over the lusts of our own flesh. Certainly for a woman to willingly choose to submit herself to man requires a dying to the flesh. The flesh does not want to submit to anyone, not even to God. Many women have agonized over the will of God for them, and in the end they have chosen another course that would not require their flesh to die. Yet there is no other path that will lead to a release of the life of Christ within. The hard shell of the outer person must be broken open in

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order for the life of Christ within to be revealed.

Romans 8:5-6

For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace...

Galatians 6:8

For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

The message revealed throughout all of scripture is that when we seek to live according to the fallen nature of man, death will result. It is only in dying to self and the flesh that we enter into life. "There is a way that seems right unto a man, but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12, 16:25).

Let us make this very practical. The scriptures reveal that woman was created for man, not man for woman (I Corinthians 11:9). The scriptures reveal that a woman should not teach a man, nor in any way seek to be an authority over man for this would be to usurp the position of man even as Satan tried to usurp authority that was not his (I Timothy 2:12). The scriptures state that a woman should not correct her husband even when he is being disobedient to the word of God (I Peter 3:1, 2). The scriptures reveal that it is the will of God for a woman to submit to her husband and to maintain a quiet and gentle spirit before man (I Peter 3:3-5, Titus 2:3-5). The scriptures even reveal that it is the will of Yahweh for a woman to treat her own husband as her lord (I Peter 3:6).

As an indication of how very difficult these things are for a woman to walk in, consider how many times you have heard a sermon, read a book or article, or had a conversation with someone, and the aim of the communication was to convince you that these scriptures do not mean what they say. To walk in any of these things requires a dying to self, and crucifixion is not pleasant. Because of this, most women simply prefer to deny what the scriptures state and to put a false interpretation upon them. Did you struggle within yourself as you read these things that are recorded in scripture? Did you think, "But you don't know my husband, or my father?"

It is often the case when we see something difficult and unpleasant to the flesh revealed in scripture that we refuse to receive the clear meaning of the words. For example, we call Yahshua "Lord" all the time. We know what this implies. When we call Yahshua Lord we are saying that He is supreme over us. We are acknowledging that His will takes precedence over our will. We know our response to Him is to be one of obedience. Yahshua also indicated that this was the meaning of being called Lord.

Luke 6:46

"Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"

Why then do many women read the following scripture and interpret it altogether differently?

I Peter 3:5-6

For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being fright-

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ened by any fear.

I do not know how Peter could have expressed himself any plainer. Objections to the teaching of scripture relating to a woman's calling really are not based upon the scriptures being hard to understand, for in fact they are very plain. The objections arise because the revealed will of God is difficult. In fact, it is murderous, for it requires a death to walk in His will, and that death is our own. It requires taking up our cross and losing our very life. How incredibly difficult it is. But if it were not difficult, why would Yahshua urge us to count the cost before we proclaim we will follow Him?

Luke 14:27-33

"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all he possesses."

Giving up all we possess is the cost of discipleship. Are we willing to lay down everything of

our life and say, "Here I am Lord. My life is not my own. Use me as You desire?" Have we fully reckoned that when we proclaimed Yahshua to be our Lord that we were acknowledging that our life is not our own for we have been bought with a price? We no longer have any rights. We are bondservants, willing slaves, of Yahshua the Messiah.

Sadly, many saints have had their indoctrination into Christianity based upon something other than a total surrender to Yahshua. Many have had Christianity pitched to them like it was some enticing product that would satisfy every desire and bring them instant happiness. The presentation has been largely aimed at appealing to one's selfishness when true discipleship does just the opposite.

How many times have you heard Christianity presented with the opening words, "God has a wonderful plan for your life?" Yes, the plan is wonderful in the end, but if discipleship and death to self is not mentioned, if the person is not cautioned to count the cost of their commitment, then they will find out soon enough that the plan of God does not seem so wonderful at all. In fact, they will discover that it requires a crucifixion and a willingness to lose one's own life. Many will declare that such a wholesale surrender to the will of God is not what they signed up for, and they will begin to reinterpret the scriptures in such a way that death is not required.

Sadly, the whole organized, traditional church has so failed to count the cost of discipleship that there is now nearly universal denial of the true meaning of any scripture that would lead the saints to have to embrace a personal death. Women are taught that the writers of scripture were merely reflecting the patriarchal mindset of their society and that it is no longer necessary for woman to submit to man. Such concepts are re-

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garded as outdated and unnecessary.

If one were to examine what is taught about women's roles in the church today they would discover that no death is required. Women are taught that they are equal to men in every way. Women are taught that they can pastor churches, even though this violates the scriptural admonition that women are not to teach men nor to usurp authority over them. Women are taught that their households are a democracy and that all decisions should be made by both husband and wife and that it is wrong for a man to make a decision unless his wife is in agreement. This violates the very order of God who revealed, "that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ" (I Corinthians 11:3).

In all of these things that the church teaches today, an accommodation has been made that releases the woman from the place of having to die to her own life. She is encouraged instead to protect her life and stand up for her rights. This alone should be evidence that this is not Yahweh's way. His way is the way of humility and dying to self. He seeks to produce in us His own meek and gentle spirit, but due to Adam's fateful choice we must all go through death to enter into life.

For both men and women, Yahweh requires this humility and death process. Man must acknowledge Christ as his head and this means that the man can have no head of his own. He must die to his own desires and will. He must take up his cross, dying to self, that the life of Christ might be released in him.

A woman is called to have man as her head. She does not have Christ directly as her head. Man stands in the position of head for woman. This goes back to the order of creation. Man was created for God, but woman was created for man.

This is a difficult thing to get people in our generation to understand. It does not mean that women cannot enjoy a personal relationship with Christ. Indeed they can. It is quite arguable that there was no one around Yahshua that had a more intimate and rewarding relationship with Him than Mary Magdalene. She always chose the better portion, and the Lord said it would not be taken from her.

In Yahweh's order of creation, however, He has set man to be the head of woman, and as we have seen in scripture, the godly woman will reverence her husband as her lord. In the law of God a woman was not permitted to walk out her relationship to God without considering her relationship to man first. For example, a woman could not make an oath to Yahweh, or bind herself to some type of commitment to Him unless her father or husband agreed. We find this expressed in the following scripture.

Numbers 30:2-16

"If a man makes a vow to Yahweh, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth. Also if a woman makes a vow to Yahweh, and binds herself by an obligation in her father's house in her youth, 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. "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 Yahweh will forgive her because her father had forbidden her. However, if she

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should marry while under her vows or the rash statement of her lips by which she has bound herself, 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. 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 Yahweh will forgive her. But the vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, everything by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her. However, if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound herself by an obligation with an oath, and her husband heard it, but said nothing to her and did not forbid her, then all her vows shall stand and every obligation by which she bound herself shall stand. But if her husband indeed annuls them on the day he hears them, then whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows or concerning the obligation of herself shall not stand; her husband has annulled them, and Yahweh will forgive her. Every vow and every binding oath to humble herself, her husband may confirm it or her husband may annul it. But if her husband indeed says nothing to her from day to day, then he confirms all her vows or all her obligations which are on her; he has confirmed them, because he said nothing to her on the day he heard them. But if he indeed annuls them after he has heard them, then he shall bear her guilt." These are the statutes which Yahweh commanded Moses, as between a man and his wife, and as between

a father and his daughter, while she is in her youth in her father's house.

Much can be gleaned from this passage, but lest some should say this is Old Testament and it does not apply to the saint today, let me first include Paul's words on this subject.

I Corinthians 14:34

The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says.

Paul states that women are to subject themselves to men, just as the Law also states. The preceding passage from the book of Numbers is one of the scriptures in the Law to which the apostle refers. So let us examine what is said.

A man has God as his head. Therefore if a man makes an oath or a binding obligation to God he must keep it. There is none other who can annul it. Not even the High Priest had the authority to annul such an oath, for man relates directly to God and he needs no intermediary. In the New Testament we find this expressed in the phrase "Christ is the head of man."

A woman, however, is under the authority of man. She was created for man and Yahweh has established that she should not violate her relationship to man as she relates to His own person. Therefore, she could not make an oath to Yahweh without considering the will of her father, if she were young and unmarried. Similarly she had to consider the will of her husband if she were married. If her father or husband heard the vow that she made to Yahweh and they were not pleased with the vow, they could forbid it and the

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vow would not stand.

In this an incredible thing is revealed. Because of man's position as the head of woman, he could intervene in the relationship of the woman with God. Yahweh said that this was His will and His designated order for "these are the statutes which Yahweh commanded Moses" and which the apostle Paul declared to still be in effect.

Does it not require great humility for a woman to acknowledge these things today? In the day of Moses a woman had no alternative but to recognize these things. The very government of Israel declared these things to be true and they were enforced. Today, a woman has no such outward coercion. In fact, the society and governments of today declare just the opposite of the mind of Yahweh. It is widely declared today that a woman is independent of man. She is encouraged to usurp the authority of man.

A woman need not agree with the teachings of scripture today. She can cast off the authority of man and find the full support of the majority of Christian churches behind her while doing so. Acknowledging Yahweh's design for woman is totally voluntary today. There is no coercion. Consequently, there are few women who do acknowledge what is plainly revealed in scripture.

This situation is of the Lord. He desires that we respond with humility and that we take up our cross of our own free will. He loves a cheerful giver, not one who is compelled. Paul gives us this insight.

Romans 12:1

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is

your spiritual service of worship.

We began this chapter with the words of Yahshua where His true disciples are encouraged to take up their cross, deny themselves, give up their lives, and follow Him. This is of necessity something that arises from a willing heart. A person cannot be compelled to do these things. The Father wants a free will offering, not a mandatory offering.

In the Temple ordinances a person could bring a free will offering to the temple and present it to Yahweh. This is something that was not required, it arose as a spontaneous offering from the soul of a man or woman. The free will offering was mixed with incense and burned with fire and the fragrance of the offering arose as a sweet aroma in the nostrils of God. (See Leviticus chapter 2 for more information on this.)

A mandatory offering was one that was demanded and required by the Law. Because it did not arise of a free will, it did not hold the same pleasure to God. For this reason the mandatory offerings were not to be mixed with incense when they were burned. They did not bring pleasure to God.

In the same way, we are asked to present ourselves freely as an offering to God. This means we choose to be obedient to His revealed will for our lives even when it requires a death to our flesh. For a woman today to freely choose to conform herself to Yahweh's revealed will for her requires such a free will offering. There is no government agency that would require this of her. There is rarely ever a church leader or teacher who would even proclaim to her the truth in this day. To follow after God's will in these matters a woman must do so freely, but when she does her offering arises as a fragrant aroma in the nostrils of God.

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It is Yahweh's will that a woman who aspires to godliness today would adorn herself with a gentle and quiet spirit. It is His will that she reverence her husband, submitting to his will and treating him as her lord, even as Sarah did unto Abraham. It is Yahweh's will that a woman quietly receive instruction from her husband and that she not correct her husband when he is disobedient to the word of God. Instead she is to entrust herself to the One who judges righteously and she is to allow Him to plead her case and deliver her in times of distress.

To live this way requires dying, but it brings forth life. The pride of the flesh wants to deny that these things are so. The flesh seeks another path and a multitude are walking this other path, but it is the way that ends in death. This false path seems right to many men and women, but there is nothing in it that pleases the Father. May we all have the grace to choose the narrow way that leads to life.

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PARABLES PRECEPT— What's In A Word?



Many words in the Bible are spoken frequently by people without understanding what the words really mean. It is good to make a point of understanding the words of the Bible.

For example, the word “Holy” is

a very common word found in the Bible. We even refer to the Bible itself as Holy. What does this word mean?

Some people in defining this word emphasize different aspects of the word. In one sense the word “holy” means *set-apart*. Yahweh called the descendants of Abraham holy, for they were chosen out from all the nations of the earth to be a people set-apart unto Him. They were to be a peculiar people, devoted to the God who chose them.

In another sense, the word “holy” means *clean*. We can often discern this meaning as we see those things that are contrasted with the word holy.

Leviticus 10:10

Make a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean...

The phrases “the holy and the profane” and “the unclean and the clean” are parallel phrases. The words profane and unclean are related to one another as are the words holy and clean.

The concepts of being set-apart and clean are related. Those things set-apart unto God were to be kept clean. When speaking of man, those who are chosen to be God’s people are to keep themselves free of the pollution of the world. A holy people is a pure people.