THE BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK OF MARRIAGE | GENESIS 2:18-25

- The term **help meet** (v. 18, 20) is exclusive to the KJV (in modern translations).
  - While we often pronounce it "helpmeet" (as if one word), it is actually, "an help, meet for him."
  - The word **meet** is "that which corresponds and is opposite to." It is not a *helpmate*, but a **help meet** for man.
  - In 1611, the adjective **meet** meant "having the right shape or size."[1] A poem of that era said,

    The mountain sheep are sweeter / But the valley sheep are fatter;
    We therefore deem'd it meter / To carry off the latter[2]

- The Young's Literal translates as "an helper--as his counterpart."
- Unfortunately, many modern translations remove this "counterpart" aspect of the word.
  - "a helper comparable to him" (NKJV)
  - "a helper suitable for him (NASB)
  - "a helper who is just right for him" (NLT)
- The Hebrew expression כְּנֶגְדּוֹ (*kénegdo*) literally means "according to the opposite of him." ...Translations that render the phrase simply "partner" [cf. NEB, NRSV], while not totally inaccurate, do not reflect the nuance of correspondence and/or suitability. The man's form and nature are matched by the woman's as she reflects him and complements him.[3]
- The word **help** does not imply menial servitude. It is often used of God (Ps. 115:9, 121:2, and many others).
- In verse 24, the word **Therefore** is "as a result" of the truth of verse 23, **shall a man leave**...**and cleave**.
  - This is clearly God's commentary on marriage and the family-based plan of society.
  - These words were affirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19:5, with the famous words, **what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder**.
  - The foundational basis of society is a marriage between one man and one woman.

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[1] https://www.etymonline.com/word/meet
[2] Thomas Love Peacock, from "The War-song of Dinas Vawr"

THE HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK OF MARRIAGE

- Since the 1920s, it has been customary for preachers to say, "By the power vested in me by the State of _____, I now pronounce you husband and wife."
- Prior to the "Uniform Marriage and Marriage License Act" of 1923, marriage was exclusively a function of the church.
- Prior to the Revenue Act of 1913, marriage was not formally recognized in Federal law.
- In the past, marriage was almost solely in the hands of religious institutions (church, synagogue, etc.). As the state began to take over marriage has largely lost its religious aspect and become a civil ceremony.
- Most agree that it is possible (and legal) to get married without state approval. State approval is largely related to taxation and government related aide benefits and payments.
- The church allowed issues of taxation and finances to rob the church of its primary status in marriage, and in doing so lost its ability to define marriage.

THE SIMPLICITY OF MARRIAGE

- Marriage is far more simple than we often make it, and when we make it simple, it works far better than when we complicate it.
- God's simple plan for marriage:
  - Wives submit to their husbands as unto the Lord (Eph. 5:22). How does a woman submit **unto the Lord**?
    - Voluntarily, as a response to His love and grace.
    - Totally, as an expression of her faith.
    - As a Berean, searching for the truth.
  - Husbands have a sacrificial love to their wives **as Christ loved the church** (Eph. 5:25).
  - Husbands **love** their wives and wives **reverence** their husbands (Eph. 5:33).

THE CONCLUSION OF MARRIAGE

- Marriage vows are given "till death do us part."
- While there are arguably Biblical grounds and means of divorce, society would be better off if the religious community was wholly in control of both marriage and divorce, as has been the case through history until modern times.

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[3] Biblical Studies Press, *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible* (Biblical Studies Press, 2005).