

The Weaker Vessel

Vatiten gam-l'ishah `imah vayo'kal

She also gave to her husband with her and he ate. (Gen 3:6)



The question of why Adam ate the fruit in the garden is one of the great questions of scripture. The Devar Elohim (Word of God) tells us why Chava (Eve) ate and even gives us a description of the conversation with the serpent, and some very telling comments that Chava makes. But why Adam? It is a perpetual question and has inspired many fascinating hypotheses. It's right up there with other great biblical

queries, like what did Ham really do to Noah, what does it mean to blaspheme the Holy Spirit and why on earth should we make friends "by unrighteous mammon" in Luke 16? Why did Adam eat the fruit? Chava was deceived. But **why Adam?**

One hypothesis is that he did not trust God to make him another help mate. He loved Chava and didn't want to lose her. If he'd trusted in God, he would have known surely God would have provided him another wife. Instead he followed his heart rather than God. One Jewish source asks if Adam was fully responsible, since we do not know for sure he was there immediately with Chava (scripture hints that he was but doesn't tell us for sure). Yet Jewish literature answers the query saying that he certainly was responsible. For even if he was not there immediately with her, he certainly knew the rules, and should have known to ask if the fruit was "kosher." It may have been negligence to eat it then. But negligence is still a sin.

Whatever way we choose to examine this opaque situation, one thing is for certain, Adam ate the fruit. Adam went along with his woman's disobedience. If he were indeed there at the time when Chava was being tempted, and we don't know, then we are not told that he did anything to stop it. It could have been sinful negligence. It could have been lack of trust in Elohim. It

could have been something else. Chava ate the fruit and she gave it to her husband with her and he ate.

Perhaps Chava's deception and Adam's sin is why the rest of scripture gives us the roles and instructions it gives to men and women. To some extent that explanation has been accepted for long ages, although today many are fearful to say it. You will hear it less today. People are afraid. But I will tell you this, I believe the Bible creates a salvation vessel in miniature in the union of the woman and the man, a godly covering headed by man in the covenant marriage. When scripture tells us the husband should dwell with his wife "with understanding, giving honor to the wife as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life" I do not minimize its importance nor write it off as not applying to us moderns. For the woman is the weaker vessel. **She needs the man's special protection.**



I realize that is new for some of you. It is even objectionable to many. An enormous number of Christians have been told that scripture means the woman is only the "weaker vessel" in that she has less body strength. But if you have been told this you have been lied to. The woman is the weaker vessel in her heart as well. She is weaker in her grasp on truth. She is weaker in her will. Most relevantly here, she is weaker in her grasp of divine truth.



These things of course, if they are true, don't immediately change anything as far as our instructions between man and woman. The man is still the head because the Lord God said so. However, what the above does, is help us understand why, as well as reinforce that the man must really protect his wife. After all, he is not just protecting her from violent marauders. That would be ridiculous. True, the man may have stronger body strength, but a quick bullet to the head, or a large number of marauders will change that situation in an instant. The man does NOT just protect the woman physically. He ALSO protects her morally and spiritually. He protects her entire being. Her purity. Her sanctity. All of these things are a rich part of the husband's love and care for his wife. Just as the savior nurtures our whole being in our life in Him, so does the husband guide his wife's being. **Nurture her.** Not a mere part. But **her whole being.**

What kind of nurturing and protection does the woman need? The kind I will mention first is the kind I believe is most important – the spiritual kind. The man leads the household prayers. He leads the household liturgy. He leads the service to God. He also keeps out impure spiritual influences and corruptions. One of the most common and pervasive corruptions that he can watch for and keep out from his home is the modern demand that women ignore scriptural gender roles. This creeps in sometimes heavily in most denominations. It is especially prevalent in the aberrant Pentecostal/Charismatic movement, where allegedly Christian women have been ignoring gender roles from the get-go in the early 20th century. It was practically founded on women preachers and women congregational heads. If you want to have biblical order in your home, if you want to have biblical order in your community, protect your wife and other loved ones from this aberrant movement. It cares little for what the Devar Elohim says.



And really beloved, what is more **godly** -- your wife doing what God instructs, or your wife NOT doing what God instructs? What is more **holy**? More **feminine** for that matter? Does the godly woman work in the home, submit to her husband, help the poor, raise up the children that God brings the family? Or does she do virtually the opposite? Does she reject her fertility, act independently from her husband, preach above men and claim headship in the Church? In the Pentecostal movement you can add to that list rolling around on the floor and shrieking, but even without that last addition, which do you think is more godly, more holy, more feminine? Please use you mind and soul in answering that question. And please use scripture.



Another important form of leadership and protection is moral purity. A husband should be prepared to keep his wife from impure influences. Men should seek purity as well, but for women purity is even more essential. **Women can be especially harmed by moral corruption.** The dangers for them are even greater. One of the simplest ways to seek purity and holiness (other than putting the television immediately in the garbage can) is to dress in the godly and modest way. A husband who seeks purity for his whole household will set a standard for what

his wife wears, and will keep her to it. How it is considered holy for the bulk of Christian men to let their wives go around town half naked I do not know. There is really nothing pure about seeing another man's wife in this state. I for one don't really need to see your wife's bosom. I truly don't. And I don't know who else does, except yourself and maybe small children in need of breast milk. I don't need to see your wife's legs either.

Protecting your wife from impure influences also requires men decide on a filter for worldly influence. Just as you wouldn't want your wife or family to drink tainted water or tainted food, just as you'd take action if there was a danger of that happening, so should you not wish your wife to have **tainted moral influences** and so should you take action. Is it pure for your wife, for example, to be absorbing into her brain images of half-dressed women? Is it pure for her to be absorbing story after story about people with godless values? Is it pure for her to be absorbing influences where people who behave in a godless way are honored and treated as worthy, glamorous, beautiful or hip? I don't believe so and I don't seriously believe any pious reader would. Therefore part of the man's role is putting the filter on the godless media. On the images. On the stories. He should keep the influences being biblical ones, and only rarely allow

in the secular. Even when we do allow it in, we do it specifically with an eye to how it may be pushing its false worldview. We can also do it with an eye to see something redeemable in it. Either way, secular media is not the norm in our homes. Unless, men, you really want those pagan images burned into your wife's mind. Those people held up in her head as honorable. Those desires as desirable. Men must put the filter on the water tap. If they don't, the woman's soul is most vulnerable. Yes it is.

Setting these standards of holiness, standards of dress as I have mentioned above and other similar standards, isn't just a way to seek purity for the household, it isn't just a way to protect the wife. It is also a good way to exercise the wonderful order that God has given you in marriage. It exercises the headship role and the submissive role which God has given, and helps to keep it in shape. It keeps the man **regularly watching over his wife**. He is the concerned and protecting Adam, making up for his previous silence. It keeps the woman regularly checking with her husband and seeking to conform to his leadership. She is dutiful and submissive Chava (Eve) **listening attentively to her mate above her**. Drop these exercises entirely, for an independent marriage or a mere friendship, and see what happens to headship. There is a very good chance it will fall apart. Born-again husbands need to exercise their leadership, their protection, their arms that they keep around their wives whom they love. Born-again women need to keep in practice with submitting themselves, submitting their sometimes prideful souls to their husbands. The bond of husband and wife is like an organism in itself and comes vibrantly to life and strength this way. I pity those who do not use it. We have all seen the disastrous results of that collapsed moral order around us. We should pity those who have lost it.



In fact the number of those who have lost it is so great that one frequently wonders – where do our children turn for an example? Obviously Mashiach is the only perfect example, but we ourselves are **ambassadors for Him**, we are emissaries for Him. Where can children find and example from the **emissaries of Mashiach**? Where can they turn to see a wife who is submitted to her husband? One who is a keeper of the hearth and home? One who submits in the church? One who is a helper of the poor? One who is holy and modest? It seems in most situations children will see the opposite of what God instructs. They will see wives who are independent,

who work outside of the home, who disrespect their husbands, who are at least to a degree sex objects and who desire to lead in church. Where then is the biblical example? What then is different about the “Christian” home? You would think our problems in marriage would be centered on the drug addicts, the criminals and the insane, but perfectly ordinary believers are also providing the bulk of our destructive disobedience. These are instead the people who must be examples for our children.

I am not too modest to say that I consider my own wife an example of godly standards. I do not boast of myself to say that. I do not even boast of my wife, although I do want to honor her as the godly woman she is. Ultimately I only boast of God, because her ability to be an example comes from principles and practices given by God. He has given us this gift, and it was nothing unique to her or unique to me. It was simply the instructions in His holy Word. We seek to follow them, and I believe my wife is an



example for children and adults in the community. She has a submissive spirit, **a loving and kind spirit**, and works in the home and raises the children. As she has time around that, she also volunteers to serve in the Body of Messiah. She is a godly woman. I truly pray for more women to live up to that standard. It may seem like an ideal at first, but with God the ideal is reachable. God is perfect after all.



I am also not too modest to say one of the ways we reached this ideal was by my leading in the Devar Elohim (Word of God). I sought from the beginning, even before marriage to establish the Devar Elohim as the foundation for our marriage. Over time, I became less slack than I was to begin with, and set some real specific standards. We follow scriptural roles in the home, and where lines need to be drawn

which are not drawn in scripture I draw them. I draw them with standards of modest dress. I draw them with filtering modern media influences. I seek holiness in my words and actions, and I also hold my wife to that. Where I see she needs correction, I correct her. This biblical way of doing things was no great task, beloved. There was some work involved sure, but it did not

seem like great labor and has been mostly full of love, intimacy and joy. I worked harder climbing a 4,000 foot mountain once. And boy did that kill my knees. Establishing a godly marriage, with a born-again Adam and a born-again Chava was much easier by comparison. This is because of the **word of the living God**. This is because of grace. Anyone with grace can do it.

1 בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:
2 וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֵהוֹ וְבָהוּ וְחָשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם
וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם: 3 וַיֹּאמֶר
אֱלֹהִים יְהי אוֹר וַיְהי־אוֹר: 4 וַיֹּרָא אֱלֹהִים
אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאוֹר וּבֵין
הַחֹשֶׁךְ: 5 וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְאוֹר יוֹם וּלְחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא
לַיְלָה וַיְהי־עֶרֶב וַיְהי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד:

Genesis 1:1-5 in Hebrew

To ask all the other Adams out there, where are you when your wife needs protecting? Are you there when she turns to “romance” novels for escapism? Are you there when she turns to pornography? Are you there when she turns to shopping or clothing? Are you there when she tests the limits? Are you there when she leads her life step after step after step without checking with her leader? Are you there when she needs correction? Guidance in the word of God? Emotional support? All of these things are ways that you lead your wife, Adam. If you neglect them, she is very easy prey. She can fall quickly to the devil. She can eat of the fruit and give it to you and by that point will you even know what you are doing? I’m not certain you will.



There is one powerful thought I have about the first man Adam. I’m about the stop here, but I’ll just tell you first. This is only my perception, it’s not doctrine, but I want to share it with you anyway. I think that maybe Adam really did know how terrible it was for Chava to eat the fruit. I think maybe he knew just how terrible it was for HIM to eat it too. But in my mind, in a beautiful thought I have, Adam loved His wife so much he wanted to save her. If she was going to go into the fallen world and damnation, then he wanted the chance to drag her out of there. He was a type of Mashiach in this. A sacrifice. He allowed himself even to be cut off

from fellowship with God, whom he walked with in the garden in the cool of the day, he allowed the fellowship to be cut off, just as Mashiach did on the cross, and leapt down into the fallen world to save her. At least that is what I imagine beloved. That is a beautiful thought I have. What scripture tells us is different though. It only tells us that Adam ate of the fruit. And when his wife was being tempted by the devil, **he did absolutely nothing at all.**

