

Shalom brothers,

I'd like to take the time to respond to the various objections one hears from fellow Believers to *Elohim's* (God's) role for the woman in the home (**1 Tim 5:14, Titus 2:4-5**). When I say from "fellow Believers" by the way, I mean from the majority of them at least in our part of the world, which is very sad. I won't try to respond to all of them, but I will respond to a few, some of which I believe are very weak, others which are legitimate and naturally raise the fact that exceptions are sometimes necessary, though they never make the rule, or the role, go away. Let us begin.

### Alleged Scriptural Exceptions

One of the commonest ways to claim the Lord's instructions do not apply to us, is to point to alleged scriptural exceptions and say – see, women can work outside of the home; we don't have to obey *Elohim* anymore on this. Now, I hope you already know, without getting into great detail, that this is a weak argument from the start. Even if the alleged exception is a real one, perhaps there is a good reason for it happening. Perhaps it is truly necessary. Yet this is not what is going on in the modern *Kahol* (Church). What is going on is a complete disobedience to God's instructions for women. It isn't a carving out of a special exception. It is a moving of the mark itself, and a moving of the mark into an ungodly area, in which work outside the home becomes the norm and typically the ideal. Moving the mark, we must never do.

Typically, feminists will point to a figure such as Priscilla (who is travelling outside the home with her husband) or Lydia (who is called a seller of purple) and claim that because these women do something outside the house, we can then ignore God's plain instructions. I don't have to tell you that this does nothing to change God's instructions. Who says that a married woman can never travel with her husband? Who says that a woman can never do an activity which earns money? No one I have heard of. Therefore to a degree it amounts to a straw man argument to bring up these cases.

It's also possible that one or more of them are cases of accommodation. It's hardly as if the New Covenant community set up its way of life overnight. New people were coming in all the time as well. Leaders may have had a certain amount of accommodation to those things before

the community and ways were fully established. You would likely see similar things today by missionaries anywhere in the world. Some practices you accommodate to, even though eventually you will change them. Either way, it is hard to see that either Priscila or Lydia are true exceptions to the rule, though Lydia could perchance be a case of accommodation. *Adonai Elohim* (the Lord God) instructs our women to be keepers of the home. That is the mark we must aim for.

### She has left the house

Another tactic re-interpreters of the Bible will use, is to radically reinterpret **Proverbs 31:10-31**, which speaks of the godly homemaker, and paint her as something of a career woman. This argument also falls flat if we really want to examine it. Number one, she is obviously a homemaker, as much of the work described would take hours and hours to do at home, and much of the outside work involves getting things for the home itself. But what feminists will do to try and deceive people from the *Davar Elohim* (word of God), is point to the passage in which she takes her goods to sell them on the market, and claim this refutes her homemaking role. And gee, if a homemaker were defined as a woman who never walked out of the home or a woman who could never do an activity for money, they might have a point. But they do not. Homemakers DO go outside of the home for important things. It is also possible for homemakers, between caring for the children and all the work of the house, to run a home business and sell their wares, as this woman apparently does. Thus, there is no refutation here for the plain instructions for women in the New Covenant. And that should not surprise us. There is no refutation for the *Davar Elohim*.

### Culture Schmulture

A lot of people, when they finally realize there is no actual refutation for the instructions of *Elohim*, is to rest back on the claim that they are mere culture. Once they have made this claim, they then casually observe that we can ignore them today, since who really needs mere culture. It's a clever argument, yes, but again a poor one. Now before I show it to be poor from scripture, I'd first like to point out the presumptuous nature of the claim itself – it is a claim which rests on very major presumptions, and ones for which there is little evidence: The first presumption is the very claim that the teachings are mere culture. I mean, who says? Scripture does not say they are mere culture. And who's to say that practices embedded in culture are value neutral anyway? That's a presumption itself. Some things in culture are certainly good, and in a way which transcends the culture. Others are not. But the claim the

woman's role in the home is mere culture rests itself on mere presumptions -- that the teachings really are culture, and that the culture really is value neutral and can and should change with the times. A final presumption in the feminist argument is that culture from the past must be poorer than that of today or largely irrelevant to us, when in fact **it is observable that many things from the past are as good as or better than today**, and sometimes are equally relevant. We should not be condescending towards the past. The claim that what we have today is better than the past is a claim which must be defended. The feminist argument presumes it is truth from the start.

The major scriptural problem with claiming the woman's role as mere culture is that biblical gender roles are multiple times supported with language which shows them to be far deeper. For example, the woman's submissive role in the *Kahal*, in **1 Timothy 2:11-12** is immediately backed by a reference to *Bereshit* (Genesis) in the subsequent verses. Furthermore, the instructions regarding the woman's submission seen in **1 Corinthians 14:34** is supported only three verses later as being "commandments of the Lord."

Now regarding the role as homemakers specifically, the homemaker instruction from **Titus 2:5** is flanked by other commonly accepted norms and universals such as being discreet, chaste and loving their own children and husbands. It is also stated in parallel with instructions to men containing such norms as being sober-minded, and having integrity and incorruptibility. This is heavy weight that we should view homemaking as a godly norm for women, especially in conjunction with everything else we've seen. Those are several verses in which gender roles are treated as much deeper than culture. So why should we believe they are skin deep? If anyone claims God's roles for men and women are irrelevant to us then, the *Davar Elohim* refutes them strongly.

## Necessity

I will also take a moment to go over one of the more legitimate concerns about the godly woman's work at home. The most obvious, is that there are times of true financial necessity when a woman must work, and even work full time. That's fine. No one refutes that. However, one important point for those who essentially look for that excuse everywhere is that for it to be a legitimate reason, it must be necessity. The woman's work at home is immensely valuable, dignified, and a part of her spiritual life. So we brethren should be willing to go through some financial sacrifice to attain it, and plan our future for it. If a godly woman obeying *Elohim* makes

life somewhat tighter financially, so be it. We sometimes have to make sacrifices for what is godly.

If I lost my job, for example, the first choice would not be for my wife to immediately go work outside the home. The first choice would be that I look for a new job. If work were impossible, we would also look at the possibility of getting help from friends or family to save money, as well as the possibility of part-time work for her. There is the further possibility of full time work, but which allowed her to remain close to the children and the home. See, all of those possibilities are on the table BEFORE we'd ever look at full-time paid labor out of the home. Why? Because a wife's work in the home is a valuable, dignified and a rich part of her spiritual life. That is a spiritual life that fills up the whole home by the way, and is shared with me and our children and anyone entering the home. How dare we treat it as expendable.

### Finally

So obviously there are real potential exceptions out there for the Lord's instructions for women, but we must not go out looking for them. The mark is the word of God. We should shoot for that mark. One thing I'd just say to all those people, especially those women, who try and justify the career path for women, is that their perspective has become confused. Their value system has become out of balance. Over and over again, it sounds like the career has had attached to it **great value and dignity**, while the woman's work at home has had attached to it **disdain and low value**. Please examine your own perspective and see if that's affecting your thought. Because when we get our weighting system correct, when we see the value and importance and godliness in the Proverbs 31 woman, suddenly things start to right themselves. We see the destruction and ungodliness of women leaving their home and families. We see the true strength, beauty and spirituality of the wife who cares for the very heart of her family and her children. Suddenly it's not so difficult to work out after all.

After reading all I have presented, I hope you can see the objections to a woman's homemaking role simply do not add up. There do exist exceptions, but as a whole they do not move the mark. My Bible entitles Proverbs 31 as "The Virtuous Wife." Others might entitle it differently. Either way, the wife's work at home is as rich and beautiful and godly as the words of this special passage remind us. And at the end of the day, beyond the richness of the words, another

powerful truth is present -- the homemaker is simply obeying Almighty God. That may be one of the least popular things to do, but it is a source of life for all of us.

Blessings to you, brothers.

Tom