

The Meaning of “I Do”

Genesis 2:21-25

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A. God’s Design (vs. 21-22):

1. Lord God caused - Without asking Adam (God has all authority and power to do anything), the Lord who made a covenant with Adam and God who sovereignly directs His agenda, without asking Adam’s permission. He permanently decided to add to Adam, Eve.

a) The first time the name Adam shows up is in 2:20. Before this, he is referred to as man. His name shows up in the naming of the animals.

2. Lord God caused - The Lord desires to have a relationship with us, but He also has an agenda for our lives that He is going to direct. Our relationship with Him does not allow us to persuade Him to change how He plans for the relationship to function.

a) God put man in the garden after making him, but he made the woman in the garden and brought her to the man. Her purpose is for the man (vs. 18; she is his helper – 1 Timothy 3:4; 5:14).

3. Lord God caused - Adam's relationship with the Lord and willingness to surrender to God's will avails him to allow God to be Lord of his life. Marriage is forever better when God leads it (Ephesians 5:25-32).

4. A deep sleep to fall – Adam's life finds a new direction when placed under God's total control. It is not how Adam felt or what his opinion is all about. A life surrendered and directed by God is best for marriage. The man becomes Christ in the home (Ephesians 5:25-26).

a) In verse 21, God is not asking man to approve anything He is doing. He caused man to sleep.

b) Adam was never mentioned as sleeping until God caused him to sleep.

5. He took - God is constantly, with no plan presented to Adam, directing how everything takes place.

6. He took - Before Adam can be taken to become a husband, he was first made a male (Genesis 1:26), he was called a man once time came to put him in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:7-9), and when he surrendered to cultivate the Garden of Eden he was then ready to be a husband.

7. He took his rib - The woman's design will directly correlate to the man's life, and He will always be the giver. He provides, he delivers the sperm for the making of the child, he protects (rib covers the lung), and as God directs his life, he leads (1 Corinthians 11:3).

8. He took his rib - The woman correlates as a helper, a mother giving birth to their children, as a nurturer of the child while the man tends the Garden.

a) 'God breathed into man' – and He took a rib from His side. How the woman complements her husband by doing what God tells her to do sustains this breath – When Eve didn't, mankind dies (a foolish woman can tear down a house; Proverbs 14:1. This is why she is the keeper (1 Tim. 5:10, 14).

9. He closed up the wound in that place – The Lord God did not leave the man wounded.

10. Lord God caused - The Lord God is repeated, again emphasizing who is directing everything. He is not interested in gaining Adam's permission in order to execute His agenda.

11. Lord God fashioned - While the man was still asleep yet fully restored, the woman was literally meticulously designed by God. Please note this is after everything was put in place. She was designed to complement everything God had set in place for man to accomplish under the Lord God's complete direction. Again, God set the agenda so everyone is structured to get it done.

a) The woman is made with the same abilities as a man but with a different purpose

b) Man (generic) is made in the image of God (1:26).

c) God made man's origination from the dust (2:7) and the woman from man's side.

12. The rib – The rib was taken from the man's side to be placed in the woman's body, demonstrating that the Lord God intended for the woman to complement the man's body so that they are dependent on each other (1 Corinthians 11:8-13) and are equal to each other (1 Peter 3:7).

a) It is God's will that it should be so. Since the woman was formed from man's side, she is bound to him and obligated to be a help to him. He is obligated to give her the full protection and devoted shielding of his arm. The two beings make up the completed whole, the crown of creation. The author of Genesis declares that God builded (*bānâ*) the rib which he had taken from man into a woman. The hand that had molded clay into the material for the body of man took part of the living body of man and built it into the woman.^[1]

13. He had taken – By saying 'He had taken' emphasizes the Lord's authority, and power to complete the surgery, to keep Adam alive while he is in a deep sleep, and to design Eve and bring her to life. What is being communicated is that without God, there is no marriage. God has to be the designer of both lives for a union to last. Maybe this is why Paul says Christ and the church make for a marriage made in heaven (Ephesians 5:25-26). God must maintain control of our lives because we allow Him to lead and direct our lives freely.

14. Brought her to the man – The word brought is typically used attached to bringing a sacrifice into the Lord's sanctuary. Marriage is a sanctuary unto the Lord God. This is possibly why the writer of Hebrews uses the word defiled when speaking of the marriage bed (Hebrews 11:3).

15. Brought her to the man – Eve was given a husband; she was not told to fall in love first and then see if she wanted to marry Adam. When God shapes who the husband is and who his wife is, His nature, which is love, becomes who they are. The way the verb is written, this union is forever.

B. Establishes Purpose (vs. 23-24):

1. Said – Not until the Lord puts everything in place that Adam has the opportunity to speak. When Adam was provided with the opportunity, he, who was only exposed to animals, would not spot speaking. There is a sense of excitement here.
2. Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh – Adam’s first response was that Eve was exactly like him in ability and capability to do anything he could do. They were physically and spiritually the same. This fulfills what God said in chapter 1:27; *“God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”*
3. Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh – When Adam said flesh of my flesh Adam made public that he was intimate with Eve (1 Corinthians 6:16), and that means they must now cleave (Matthew 19:4-6). This is why unless there is adultery, divorce is impossible.
4. Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh – When Adam said she is “flesh of my flesh,” he also made clear that when God brought them to each other, He directed them towards sexual intimacy, which, as stated above, is a holy sanctuary to God (Hebrews 11:3).
5. Called – “She shall be called” means that Adam is seeking to provide us with the specific message he has learned from God and from his own intimate experience as direction for all mankind.
6. Woman – By calling Eve “woman” here, Adam is asserting that she is ‘manish’ – *ishshah* is for woman, and ‘ish’ means man. She is like a man.
7. Taken out of man – Adam said “Woman” to communicate compatibility.
8. For this reason – When a man no longer submits to his parents’ direction or authority is when he takes on a wife. This man is now completely under God’s authority (1 Corinthians 11:3).

a) Adam appears as a creature formed after the image of God—showing his *knowledge* by giving names to the animals, his *righteousness* by his approval of the marriage relation, and his *holiness* by his principles and feelings, and finding gratification in the service and enjoyment of God.

9. Leave father and mother – This is a very straightforward statement meaning the parents must be put aside or even abandoned if that is what it takes to fulfill the Lord God's direction for marriage. Similar to being a disciple of Christ (Luke 14:26-27).

a) Though this process establishes a new home distinct from the parent's home, it does not sever all ties with the extended family (the clan). In the biblical period, extended families were quite close and interdependent. ^[2]

10. Joined to his wife – The word joins, or cleave, means sexual intimacy, being loyal and devoted to 'his wife.' Leaving father and mother is directly correlated to being loyal and devoted to one's wife. The devotion by using 'wife' means that she is the only person the man is intimate with.

a) The words be joined speak of both a physical embrace and more general aspects of marital bonding. In marriage, man and woman are a "we," not just a "me and you."

b) One flesh suggests both a physical and sexual bonding and a lifelong relationship. There are still two people, but together they are as one (Eph. 5:31). The term speaks of unity with diversity (Heb. *.ehad*) rather than absolute unity (as Heb. *yahîd*)

c) There were only two limitations to their relationship: physical (the universe in which they lived) and moral (the forbidden tree). --- God planned that the marriage bond should be forever indissoluble

d) Cleave (*dābaq*) means to “glue himself to” his wife (his own wife). The word for “wife” is singular. The man, who is stronger, is the one who is to cleave. The wife will be held when the husband exerts the kind of loving power described in this verse. Love is strong and enduring. “What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” This is an old statement, but it is truly God’s Word for all our hearts today and always.

11. Become one flesh – Sexual intimacy is implicitly and explicitly emphasized in this text because God made it clear to Adam that this is what seals the marriage, keeps the marriage union pleasing to God (1 Corinthians 7:1-7), and it is what determines its end (Matthew 19:9). This is why Satan has perverted sex. Satan knows that this can erode everything.

a) The term speaks of unity with diversity (Heb. *.ehad*) rather than absolute unity (as Heb. *yahîd*). This term (Heb. *.ehad*) is the same term used in the famed *Shema*, the creed of Israel, where it is commonly translated as “the LORD is one (Deut. 6:4; compare Eph. 5:31). In the NT, Jesus refers to this text (Gen. 2:24) as the foundation of the biblical view of marriage (Matt. 19:5; 1 Cor. 6:16).^[3]

C. Creates Oneness (v. 25):

1. Were naked – God made them and allowed Adam and Eve to remain fully exposed to each other, and God never intended for them not to continue this way.

a) Nakedness (v. 25) suggests that they were at ease with one another without any fear of exploitation or potential for evil. Such fellowship was shattered later in the Fall

and is retained only in a measure in marriage when a couple begins to feel at ease with each other. Here the nakedness, though literal, also suggests sinlessness.^[4]

2. Were naked – God expects the husband and wife to remain vulnerable and open with each other.

a) Nakedness elsewhere in the OT often indicates a defenseless or miserable condition, but that scarcely seems to fit this context. It is directly associated with sexual intercourse in Lev. 18 (23 times); 20:18, 19; 1 Sam. 20:30; Ezek. 16:36; 23:18, so its implication here may well be that the ideal relationship between husband and wife—including intercourse—involves no barriers of any kind, no self-consciousness, but complete and unhindered giving and enjoying of one another.^[5]

3. Not Ashamed – Adam and Eve were naked, but it was not disgraceful to the Lord God or each other. This highlights moral excellence as well as the innocence you see in two small children of the opposite sex taking a shower together, playing with each other, having lots of laughs and fun.

a) They were comfortable in their physical bodies, in their sexuality, in their relationship, and in their work—with no wrongdoing. The wording of vv. 24, 25 suggests the couple experienced sexual relations in the garden as a part of their God-intended experience. At 4:1, we first read of procreation, not necessarily the couple's first sexual experience together.^[6]

4. Not Ashamed – Not here means absolutely not. There was such a high level of moral excellence, and they were now husband and wife (all that has been explained above that this means), so there was no reason for them to cover up their nakedness.

5. This verse highlights why the marriage bed is holy, a place that is a sanctuary to God (Hebrews 13:4).

^[1]Pfeiffer, Charles F.: *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary : Old Testament*. Chicago : Moody Press, 1962, S. Ge 2:22

^[2]Radmacher, Earl D. ; Allen, Ronald Barclay ; House, H. Wayne: *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary*. Nashville : T. Nelson Publishers, 1999, S. Ge 2:24

^[3]Radmacher, Earl D. ; Allen, Ronald Barclay ; House, H. Wayne: *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary*. Nashville : T. Nelson Publishers, 1999, S. Ge 2:24

^[4]Walvoord, John F. ; Zuck, Roy B. ; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1983-c1985, S. 1:31

^[5]Gowan, Donald E.: *From Eden to Babel : A Commentary on the Book of Genesis 1-11*. Grand Rapids, Mich. : W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1988 (International Theological Commentary), S. 50

^[6]Radmacher, Earl D. ; Allen, Ronald Barclay ; House, H. Wayne: *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary*. Nashville : T. Nelson Publishers, 1999, S. Ge 2:25