

# **Pillow Talk**

## **Hebrews 13:4**

### **Dr. Pierre Cannings**

#### **I. Honorable**

##### **a. Marriage**

- i. of socially recognized nuptials
- ii. The ideal marriage in OT society was a monogamous one, one man for one woman, one woman for one man. The creation narrative (Gen 2:24) makes this point with its call to the man to forsake his mother and father and cleave unto his wife (not wives). In fact, there is only one illustration of the violation of that pattern in primeval history, and that is Lamech (Gen 4:23). A number of laws have been cited ( 3: 281) as support for monogamous marriage: Exod 20:17; 21:5; Lev 18:8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 20; 20:10; 21:13; Num 5:12; Deut 5:21; 22:22. Wisdom Literature also provides copious texts in support of monogamy: Prov 12:4; 18:22; 19:13; 21:9; Eccl 9:9; Job 31:1, 9–12; Sir 26:1–4.
- iii. In 1 C. 7 Paul refers expressly to the saying of the κύριος in his radical rejection of divorce, or at any rate his prohibition of the remarriage of a divorced wife (10f.). Once a marriage is contracted, it must be carried out in full both physically and spiritually. Periods of withdrawal should be brief (3ff.; cf. 24, 27a and Col. 3:18 f.).
- iv. Marriage is to be highly prized, and (synonymously, or rather more specifically) married couples are to keep themselves exclusively for one another, or incur God's judgment
- v. τίμιος, here emphatic by position, is most commonly used in the Greek Bible of precious stones, either literally

##### **b. Honor - Good reputation, respect, purity, integrity**

- i. that is, each is to consider his fellow believer more worthy of esteem than himself (Rom 12:10).
- ii. Showing honor to others should affect one's entire lifestyle
- iii. Regard for marriage is an essential expression of the quality of love that binds the community together as brothers and sisters who share a common confession. As a community they must respect marriage as the gift of God and support those who share the marriage relationship with empathy and affection.
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- v. Respect for marriage has broad implications concerning sexual relationships, both for those who are married and for those who are not. The formulation ἡ κοίτη ἀμίαντος, “the marriage bed must be undefiled,” is a euphemism for preserving the sexual integrity of the marriage relationship
- vi. The word itself means to highly esteem and respect. This general statement about honoring marriage is followed by a more narrowed focus on the sanctity of the sexual relationship in marriage: “and the marriage bed kept pure.” This phrase refers to sexual intercourse within marriage, meaning husbands and wives should remain sexually faithful to one another and to their marriage vows. The Greek adjective translated “pure” conveys the meaning “undefiled,” “unpolluted,” “untainted.” It is in the emphatic position in its clause. One implication of this verse is that marriage should in no way be considered as spiritually inferior to celibacy. In fact, Paul warns the church about those who “forbid people to marry” in 1 Tim 4:3.

## II. Respectable

- a. Bed
- b. Undefiled - **pure** in relig. and moral sense
  - i. purity from sexual transgression
  - ii. pertaining to not being ritually defiled
  - iii. Respect for the life of the body is the corollary of an understanding of human sexuality as the gift of God. It is to be honored as an expression of our distinctiveness as persons. Sexual responsibility affirms the lordship of God the Creator over the sphere of bodily life. Consequently, regard for marriage and for the physical intimacy integral to marriage is an essential aspect of the pursuit of holiness to which the community has been called by God (12:14).
  - iv. Illicit sexual intercourse defiles the marriage bed; it profanes what God has made holy. (On the defiling of marriage by adultery, cf. Gen. 49:4;
  - v. The thought is thoroughly biblical and Jewish (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:20–23; Job 24:15–24; Prov 5:15–23; Sir 15:17–20; 23:18–20, 22–23a; Wis 3:16–19; 4:4–16). The descriptive term πόρνοι, “sexually immoral persons,” has reference to those who engage in sexual relationships outside of marriage (cf. Countryman, *Dirt*, 229, who suggests that πόρνοι here signifies men who use prostitutes;
  - vi. There may be an inclusive reference to others who are warned against lax views of sexual morality,

### III. Judgable

- a. Fornicator - **practices sexual immorality, fornicator separate from Adulterer**
  - i. As individuals are to steer clear of πορνεία so it is the apostle's supreme concern to keep the communities free from such sins, since toleration of the offender makes the whole church guilty and constitutes an eschatological threat, 1 C. 5:1 ff.; cf. Hb. 12:14–16.
  - ii. Paul warns against making light of the holy commandment of God in this field, God's mighty will for the salvation of men is ἁγιασμός, 1 Th. 4:3; cf. also Eph. 5:3–5. This includes sanctification of the body too and thus excludes any acceptance of fornication, 1 Th. 4:1–5. The Christian is a temple of the Holy Spirit, 1 C. 6:19. Hence he cannot do as he likes with himself. He may not give to a harlot the members which belong to Christ, 6:15f. A man shames his own body by fornication, 6:18.
  - iii. Sexual immorality is actually a rejection of the presence and goodness of God who created the human family in its maleness and femaleness. It is an expression of a selfishness blind to the emotional fragility that characterizes every person. The writer warns that those who place personal gratification above responsibility to God and to the community will encounter God himself as Judge (as in 12:23, 29). Implicit in the future tense of κρινεῖ, "[God] will judge," is an allusion to the final judgment that determines human destiny (cf. 6:2; 9:27; 10:25, 27, 29–31, 38–39; 12:23, 27, 29; 13:17).
  - iv. The term  *pornos*  in Greek does have a general meaning of a sexually immoral person and can refer to those who commit sexual sins in general, homosexual or heterosexual, outside of marriage. However, used in conjunction with  *moichos* , "adulterer,"  *pornos*  is probably best translated in its more restricted sense of "fornication," with reference to anyone who violates another's marriage by engaging in sexual relations with either partner in that marriage
- b. Adulterer - **one who is unfaithful to a spouse, adulterer**
  - i. that the apostolic message from the very outset made it clear to the churches that the full marital fidelity of both spouses is an unconditional divine command (1 C. 5:1 ff.; 6:9). Adultery is not just a matter of civil law (R. 7:3). It is to be judged in accordance with the holy will of God (1 Th. 4:3; 1 C. 6:18 f.). Women are fellow-heirs of the kingdom of God and are thus worthy of the same honour as men (1 Pt. 3:7).
  - ii. Marital fidelity is to be maintained intact (ἡ κοίτη ἁμίαντος, Hb. 13:4), even though there are no human witnesses. The omniscient God is the Judge of the adulterer
  - iii. It finds its true fulfilment only in the love of spouses who are joined together by God (R. 13:9). Impulsive and uncontrolled desire is sinful even in the lustful glance (2 Pt. 2:14).

- iv. adulterer,” refers to anyone who violates his or her own marriage vows by having sexual relations with someone other than their own spouse. The two nouns are used together by Paul in 1 Cor 6:9
- c. Judge
  - i. **to engage in a judicial process, *judge, decide, hale before a court, condemn*, also *hand over for judicial punishment***
  - ii. to judge someone as definitely guilty and thus subject to punishment—‘to condemn, to render a verdict of guilt

# Word Studies

Marriage- **the state of being married**, of socially recognized nuptials *marriage*<sup>1</sup>

**3. Monogamy/Polygamy.** The ideal marriage in OT society was a monogamous one, one man for one woman, one woman for one man. The creation narrative (Gen 2:24) makes this point with its call to the man to forsake his mother and father and cleave unto his wife (not wives). In fact, there is only one illustration of the violation of that pattern in primeval history, and that is Lamech (Gen 4:23). A number of laws have been cited (*ID<sup>2</sup>B* 3: 281) as support for monogamous marriage: Exod 20:17; 21:5; Lev 18:8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 20; 20:10; 21:13; Num 5:12; Deut 5:21; 22:22. Wisdom Literature also provides copious texts in support of monogamy: Prov 12:4; 18:22; 19:13; 21:9; Eccl 9:9; Job 31:1, 9–12; Sir 26:1–4. It would appear, however, that the main justification in using these verses to substantiate monogamy is the use of *’iššâ* in the singular. But a closer look at these verses raises serious questions about whether or not they provide credence for monogamy. For example, Exod 20:17 and Deut 5:21 list several things one is not to covet, and all the objects the individual is warned against coveting are in the singular. If it is possible for a man to have more than one manservant, maidservant, ox, or ass, he could have more than one wife. Or again, Lev 18:8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 20 all refer to uncovering the nakedness of somebody’s wife, again always in the singular. However, one should not suppose, for example, that a person has only one sister (e.g., 18:9) since “sister” appears in the singular as well. In fact, Lev 18:9 warns against uncovering the nakedness of one’s sister, who is further identified as “the daughter of your father or the daughter of your mother,” indicating that a man could have multiple wives, providing sons and daughters from different mothers.

Indeed, the OT is replete with illustrations of polygamous marriages. To be more precise, it tells of instances of polygyny (one husband, more than one wife), but no instance of polyandry (one wife, more than one husband). Apart from the two wives of Lamech already noted, we recall (1) Abraham with Sarah and his concubines Hagar and Keturah (Genesis 16; 25:1–2); (2) Jacob with Leah and Rachel (Gen 29:15–30); (3) Esau with three wives (Gen 26:34; 36:2; 28:9); (4) Gideon with his “many wives” (Judg 8:30); (5) Elkanah with Hannah and Peninnah (1 Sam 1:2); (6) David with seven named wives (1 Sam 18:17–30; 25:38–43; 2 Sam 3:2–5) and additional unnamed ones (2 Sam 5:13); (7) Solomon and his royal harem (1 Kgs 3:1; 11:3; Cant 6:8); and (8) Rehoboam with his eighteen wives (2 Chr 11:21). There is one law in the Deuteronomic code (Deut 21:15–17) which does allow for one man to be married simultaneously to two wives. And the only individual who is admonished in the same code not to multiply wives is the king (Deut 17:17). No such prohibition is directed to the king’s subjects.

Looking at these lists of polygamists, one is led to the conclusion that polygyny may have been limited to men who occupied leadership positions, who were well off, or who had some

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<sup>1</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 188.

<sup>2</sup>*IDB Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. G. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville, 1962

other claim to distinction. Indeed, de Vaux comments (*Ancls<sup>3</sup>r*, 25): “it is noteworthy that the books of Samuel and Kings, which cover the entire period of the monarchy, do not record a single case of bigamy among commoners (except that of Samuel’s father, 1 Sam 1:2, at the very beginning of the period).” However, the books of Samuel and Kings record little about any commoner, or the marriage of any commoner.

It is clear that in most of the above-cited instances polygyny was a major contributor to problems in the household. Witness the debacle between Hagar and Sarah, or Rachel’s envying of Leah’s fertility (Gen 30:1–2, 15), or the frustration of Esau’s parents (Gen 26:35), or the liquidation of Gideon’s seventy sons by Abimelech, his son by concubine (Judges 9), or Peninnah’s provocation of Hannah (1 Sam 1:6), or David’s in-house squabbling and treachery among half-brothers and half-sisters (2 Samuel 13, 1 Kings 1–2), or Solomon’s forfeiture of his empire (1 Kings 11).

Wherever the emphasis of marriage is placed on procreation or the sexual satisfaction of the man, more than likely polygyny will flourish. But one should not attribute all instances of polygyny to lust. In a society that is overwhelmingly seminomadic and agricultural, the maintenance of several wives would supply an abundant work force to tend flocks and work fields.<sup>4</sup>

Paul in 1 C. honours all the motifs introduced by Jesus. For him, too, the saying in Genesis concerning *henosis* denotes the metaphysical range of every sexual union (1 C. 6:16 f.). Yet the thought is not developed positively in an understanding of marriage. It is used polemically in an attack on πορνεία. Free love is sin against the body (6:18b).<sup>251</sup> In 1 C. 7 Paul refers expressly to the saying of the κύριος in his radical rejection of divorce, or at any rate his prohibition of the remarriage of a divorced wife (10f.).<sup>262</sup> Once a marriage is contracted, it must be carried out in full both physically and spiritually. Periods of withdrawal should be brief (3ff.; cf. 24, 27a and Col. 3:18 f.). The basis given by Paul is, however, somewhat pessimistic: διὰ ... τὰς πορνείας ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα ἔχεται ... ἵνα μὴ πειράζη ὑμᾶς ὁ σαταμᾶς διὰ τὴν ἀκρασίαν

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<sup>3</sup>*Anclsr* R. de Vaux, 1961. *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*. Trans. J. McHugh. London. Repr. New York, 1965

<sup>4</sup> Victor P. Hamilton, [“Marriage: Old Testament and Ancient Near East,”](#) ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 565.

<sup>251</sup> It is not an occasion for the κοιλία, which is a prey to corruptibility, but an offence against the body, which is given a new consecration by the πνεῦμα and assured of a new future by the fact of the resurrection (1 C. 6:14, 19). Sin against the body is thus an offence against the coming life and the ongoing work of divine creation.

<sup>262</sup> A new problem is whether marriage with an unbeliever should be dissolved. Paul’s answer is that the initiative should come only from the ἄπιστος (v. 15; cf. 1 Pt. 3:1 f.; for a different view cf. Jer. 8:2 ff.).

(v<sup>7</sup>. 2, 5).<sup>283</sup> If Jesus explained divorce as a necessary evil, Paul seems almost to see marriage in the same light. He thus presses even more strongly the fourfold reservation already encountered in Jesus. Marriage can be a hindrance to final dedication to God (v<sup>9</sup>. 5, 32ff.; cf. Lk. 14:20 → 651). Basically, it is not consonant with this καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος (1 C. 7:26, 28 f.); παράγει γὰρ τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου (v<sup>10</sup>. 31; cf. Mk. 12:25 → 651). Hence celibacy is the true demand of the hour διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην (1 C. 7:26, 29; cf. Lk. 17:27 → 651). To be sure, Paul has no use for ascetic experiments, and if they lead to tense situations resolute marriage<sup>2114</sup> is for him the lesser evil. Yet it is still an evil. A widow is free to remarry; μακαριωτέρα δὲ ἐστὶν ἂν οὕτως<sup>2125</sup> μείνῃ (39f., cf. 8; R. 7:2). Finally; he could wish that all γαμεῖν and γαμίζεῖν were at an end (1 C. 7:1, 7 f.)—ἀλλὰ ἕκαστος ἴδιον ἔχει χάρισμα ἐκ θεοῦ (v<sup>13</sup>. 7). He himself has the charisma of remaining unmarried for the sake of his unique situation and commission (cf. 1 C. 9:5, 12, 15 ff.).<sup>2146</sup> It may be seen that this is no accident but a demonstration. Paul is conscious of being one of the εὐνοῦχοι διὰ τὴν βασιλείαν (→ 651, on Mt. 19:12).<sup>2157</sup>

In later writings the battle for the inviolability of marriage is prominent. 1 Cl<sup>16</sup>. warns against the discord which can even shatter marriage: ζῆλος ἀπηλλοτρίωσεν γαμετὰς ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἡλλοίωσεν τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀδὰμ: τοῦτο νῦν ... σὰρξ ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς μου.<sup>2178</sup> Hb. 13:4 admonishes: τίμιος ὁ γάμος ἐν πᾶσιν, and Ign<sup>18</sup>. writes in the same vein to Polycarp (5, 1). Hence a Christian marriage should not be contracted without the blessing of the Church: πρέπει δὲ τοῖς γαμοῦσιν καὶ ταῖς γαμουμέναις μετὰ γνώμης

<sup>7</sup>v. verse.

<sup>823</sup> On a similar basis Akiba (b. San., 76a) advises the marriage of daughters at the right time. Cf. also Sir. 7:25: ἔκδου θυγατέρα; but cf. 1 C. 7:36 ff. for another aspect.

<sup>9</sup>v. verse.

<sup>10</sup>v. verse.

<sup>1124</sup> γαμίζεῖν act. in 1 C. 7:38 (twice) and Mt. 24:38; Lk. 20:35 γαμίζεσθαι (the later Byzant. have ἐγγαμίζω in all four instances). The meaning of γαμίζεῖν is consistent throughout the NT, i.e., “to marry” == γαμεῖν and γαμίσκειν. It seems likely that in 1 C. 7:36 ff. the reference is to mere co-habitation. On the linguistic and material problem, cf. Ltzm., *ad loc.*: A. Juncker, *Ethik des Paulus*, II (1919), 191 ff.

<sup>1225</sup> Note the οὕτως. If Paul were a widower, we should expect a ὡς κάγώ, as in 7:7f. There, however, the ἄγαμοι are to the fore, so that it is most likely that he himself was an ἄγαμος.

<sup>13</sup>v. verse.

<sup>1426</sup> On the debated issue whether Paul was a widower, cf. Joach. Jeremias, ZNW, 30 (1929), 321 ff. On the problem “Ehe und Charisma bei Paulus,” v. W. Michaelis, ZStTh, 5 (1928), 426 ff.; H. Preisker, *ibid.*, 6 (1928), 91 f.

<sup>1527</sup> Even the συμφέρει of Mt. 19:10 recurs in Paul in order to show the meaning and pre-eminence of celibacy: τοῦτο ... πρὸς ... σύμφορον λέγω (1 C. 7:35). It is a technical term for the orientation of ethics to the final goal of calling. Cf. Mt. 5:29 f.; 1 C. 6:12; 10:23; 10:33.

<sup>161</sup> Cl. Epistle of Clement

<sup>1728</sup> γαμετή, the wife, found only here in early Christian literature.

<sup>18</sup>Ign. Ignatius.

τοῦ ἐπισκόπου τὴν ἔνωσί ποιῆσθαι, ἵνα ὁ γάμος ᾗ κατὰ κύριον καὶ μὴ κατ' ἐπιθυμίαν. ἄγνεία should not be made a law; it becomes a curse if it puffs up the ascetic; εἴ τις δύναται ἐν ἄγνείᾳ μένειν εἰς τιμὴν τῆς σαρκὸς τοῦ κυρίου, ἔσται ἀκαυχησὶς μενέτω (Ign. Pol<sup>19</sup>, 5, 2). And while the thought of mere co-habitation becomes more prevalent (v<sup>20</sup>. Herm., 1, 1 and esp<sup>21</sup>. s<sup>22</sup>., 9, 11, 3), the Pastorals condemn the shunning of marriage and the questionable activities of young widows, laying down the principle: βούλομαι οὖν νεωτέρας γαμεῖν (1 Tm. 4:3; 5:11, 14). Here, too, of course, the principle of the lesser evil lurks in the background, namely, in the motive: μηδεμίαν ἀφορμὴν διδόναι τῷ ἀντικειμένῳ. The ideal is again that the widow should manage without a second marriage (5:5ff.). It is demanded of the bishop in particular that he should remain μᾶς γυναιχὸς ἀνὴρ (3:2). It is evident that the demands of Paul are increasingly restricted; they are now limited to bishops as the ecclesiastical successors of the apostles and charismatics.

Only in one passage in the early Christian treatment does the principle of celibacy find a place, namely, in the picture given in Revelation of those who followed the Lamb,<sup>2339</sup> of the 144,000 παρθένοι: οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ μετὰ γυναικῶν οὐκ ἐμολύνθησαν ... οὗτοι οἱ ἀκολουθοῦντες τῷ ἀρνίῳ ὅπου ἂν ὑπάγῃ. οὗτοι ἡγοράσθησαν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀπαρχὴ τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ ἀρνίῳ (Rev. 14:4). There is here no suggestion either of human impotence on the one side or of successful monkish achievement on the other. The reference is to the genuine heroism of those who are called for the sake of a unique situation and commission.

Yet early Christianity does not speak only of the difficulty of marriage in this *kairos*. It also speaks in strict and lofty terms of the inviolability of the marriage bond. Jesus in His saying concerning the heart (→ 650 on Mt. 5:27 f.) laid the new foundation for a positive understanding and ethos of marriage. The house tables<sup>3240</sup> of the N<sup>25</sup>T build on this foundation when they base the whole fellowship of marriage and the family on → ἀγάπη. ἀγάπη and not ἔρως creates marital fellowship. Again, the fellowship of the family is the organic centre of the actualisation of ἀγάπη, which sustains all fellowship. In the N<sup>26</sup>T, however, the ground and measure of all human ἀγάπη are to be found in the love of God. The Epistle to the Ephesians carries this thought further. The basis of all marital love is for the Christian the love of Christ for

<sup>19</sup>Ign. Pol. *Ignatius to Polycarp*.

<sup>20</sup>v. *vide*.

<sup>21</sup>esp. especially.

<sup>22</sup>s. *similitudines*.

<sup>2329</sup>ἀκολουθοῦντες in Rev. 14:4 as in Mt. 19:28: ἀκολουθήσαντες (→ n. 20 and 214). They form the central corps of the people of God, cf. ἀπαρχή (Rev. 14:4).

<sup>2430</sup>Col. 3:18 ff.; Eph. 5:22 ff.; 1 Pt. 2:18 ff.

<sup>25</sup>NT New Testament.

<sup>26</sup>NT New Testament.



His community.<sup>3271</sup> This gives marriage its place in the new world situation. The Christian ideal of marriage is thus brought into a wider theological context.<sup>28</sup>

Honor - Good reputation, respect, purity, integrity<sup>29</sup>

Christians are called upon to honor one another—that is, each is to consider his fellow believer more worthy of esteem than himself (Rom 12:10). This orientation receives impetus from the affirmation of 1 Peter 1:7, where Christians are said to possess honor. Showing honor to others should affect one's entire lifestyle. Husbands are to give honor to their wives by showing loving regard for them (1 Pt 3:7). Christian servants are expected to show honor to their masters so as to affirm the cause of Christ (1 Tm 6:1). Beyond the immediate community of the redeemed, too, honor must be appropriately displayed by all those who revere the teaching of Scripture (Rom 13:7; 1 Pt 2:17).<sup>30</sup>

Undeified - ***pure*** in relig<sup>31</sup>. and moral sense<sup>32</sup>

In the N<sup>33</sup>T it is used 1. in the narrower sense of purity from sexual transgression in Hb. 13:4. 2. More generally, it is used of the moral purity of true worship, Jm. 1:27 (along with καθαρός), of the perfect purity of the heavenly inheritance, 1 Pt. 1:4 (along with ἄφθαρτος and ἀμάραντος), of the perfect moral purity of the highpriest, Christ, Hb. 7:27<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>2731</sup> On Eph. 5 → 656.

<sup>28</sup> Ethelbert Stauffer, [“Γαμέω, Γάμος,”](#) ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 651–653.

<sup>29</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, [Tyndale Bible Dictionary](#), Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 611.

<sup>30</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, [Tyndale Bible Dictionary](#), Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 611.

<sup>31</sup> relig. **relig.** = religious

<sup>32</sup> William Arndt et al., [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 54.

<sup>33</sup> NT New Testament.

<sup>34</sup> Friedrich Hauck, [“Μιαίνω, Μίασμα, Μιασμός, Ἀμίαντος,”](#) ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 647.

pertaining to not being ritually defiled, with implications of accompanying moral defilement—‘undefiled, untainted’<sup>35</sup>

Fornicator- **one who practices sexual immorality, fornicator**<sup>36</sup> *separate from Adulterer (why)* one who engages in sexual immorality, whether a man or a woman, and in some contexts, distinguished from an adulterer or adulteress—‘a sexually immoral person’<sup>37</sup>

### III. Paul, Hebrews and James.

Whereas the question of πορνεία is seldom dealt with in the preaching of Jesus and the primitive community, it arises more frequently in Paul. As compared with the different judgment of the Greek world and ancient syncretism, the concrete directions of Paul bring to the attention of Gentile Christians the incompatibility of πορνεία and the kingdom of God.<sup>380</sup> No πόρνος has any part in this kingdom, 1 C. 6:9; Eph. 5:5. In 1 C. 6:9 the sexual vices (πόρνοι, μοιχοί, μαλακοί, ἀρσενικοῖται) are put next to the chief sin of idolatry.<sup>391</sup> The judgment which smote the Israelites, the fore-fathers of Christians (1 C. 10:1), in the wilderness when they fell victim to idolatry and lust, and thus tempted God, took place as an example (τυπικῶς), 10:8, 11. The situation of Christians is indeed much more serious, since they are at the end of the age, 10:11. In the shameful vices of unnatural sex relations, which spread like a plague in the Graeco-Roman world of his day, Paul sees the outworking of a severe judgment of God, R. 1:18 ff. → 582, 7 ff.

As individuals are to steer clear of πορνεία so it is the apostle’s supreme concern to keep the communities free from such sins, since toleration of the offender makes the whole church guilty and constitutes an eschatological threat, 1 C. 5:1 ff.; cf. Hb. 12:14–16. Thus Paul demands that the congregation expel the impenitent wrong-doer (1 C. 5:13) and break off all fellowship with those who live licentious lives (5:9).<sup>402</sup> 2 C. 12:19–21 expresses a concern lest the impenitence of those who have committed fornication should make necessary his intervention in the affairs of the community. The πορνεία of individual members makes the whole church

<sup>35</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, [\*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains\*](#) (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 536.

<sup>36</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 855.

<sup>37</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, [\*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains\*](#) (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 770.

<sup>380</sup> In the lists of vices in Pl. (R. 1:24–32; 13:13; 1 C. 5:10 f.; 6:9 f.; 2 C. 12:20 f.; Gl. 5:19–21; Col. 3:5, 8 f.; cf. also Eph. 4:25–31; 5:3 f.; 1 Tm. 1:9 f.; 2 Tm. 3:2–5) πορνεία occurs 8 times, ἀκαθαρσία 4 times, while in 5 instances he begins with πορνεία or sexual sins, cf. Juncker, 113–117 and Exc. “Lasterkataloge” in Ltzm. R. on 1:31.

<sup>391</sup> In this respect he follows Jewish exhortation in the Hell. age, → 588, 37 ff.; Wis. 14:12 ff.; Vögtle, *op. cit.* (→ n. 64), 98–100, 223.

<sup>402</sup> Pl. is alluding to a—possibly very sharply worded—letter preceding 1 C. and in 5:10 (οὐ πάντως [not gen.] τοῖς πόρνοις τοῦ κόσμου τούτου) he tries to protect it against misunderstanding or misrepresentation on the part of the Corinthians.

unclean and threatens the whole work of the apostle, which is to present pure communities to Christ, 2 C. 11:2. In contrast to the different views of the matter in the Greek world and especially in Gnosticism, Paul warns against making light of the holy commandment of God in this field, God's mighty will for the salvation of men is ἁγιασμός, 1 Th. 4:3; cf. also Eph. 5:3–5. This includes sanctification of the body too and thus excludes any acceptance of fornication, 1 Th. 4:1–5. The Christian is a temple of the Holy Spirit, 1 C. 6:19. Hence he cannot do as he likes with himself. He may not give to a harlot the members which belong to Christ, 6:15f. A man shames his own body by fornication, 6:18.<sup>8413</sup> He also brings shame on the body of Christ. Licentiousness is one of the expressions of the σάρξ, Gl. 5:19. It is totally opposed to the work of the Holy Spirit, Gl. 5:22. It belongs to what is earthly (Col. 3:5), whereas Christians should seek what is above (Col. 3:1–3). Paul again and again mentions πορνεία alongside (→ n. 8<sup>420</sup>) ἀκαθαρσία, 2 C. 12:21; Gl. 5:19; Col. 3:5; cf. also Eph. 5:3, 5.<sup>8434</sup> He realises that not every one has the gift of continence, 1 C. 7:7. As a protection against the evil of fornication the man who does not have it should take the divinely prescribed way of a lawful marriage, 1 C. 7:2. Severe though Paul's condemnation of fornication may be, there is no doubt that for him it is forgiven through Christ like all other sins (καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἤτε· ἀλλὰ ... κτλ. 1 C. 6:11). Along the same lines as Paul Hb. ascribes the salvation of Rahab the harlot to her faith (11:31), though Jm. (2:25) takes another view and thinks she is justified by her works.<sup>44</sup>

Adulterers - **one who is unfaithful to a spouse, adulterer**, in the sing<sup>45</sup>. the referent is male, but in generic contexts females may be included;<sup>46</sup>

The apostolic preaching presupposes the holy seriousness of Jesus in the assessment of adultery. Christian determination was the more significant at this point in view of the degeneration of sexual morality in the Hellenistic world, which regarded offences in this

<sup>4183</sup> Cf. H. Jacoby, *Nt.liche Ethik* (1899), 349; on the Stoic idea that a man dishonours himself by adultery and ἀκολασία cf. Muson., p. 65, 2 ff.; Joh. W. 1 K., *ad loc.*; → 583, 27 ff.

<sup>4280</sup> In the lists of vices in Pl. (R. 1:24–32; 13:13; 1 C. 5:10 f.; 6:9 f.; 2 C. 12:20 f.; Gl. 5:19–21; Col. 3:5, 8 f.; cf. also Eph. 4:25–31; 5:3 f.; 1 Tm. 1:9 f.; 2 Tm. 3:2–5) πορνεία occurs 8 times, ἀκαθαρσία 4 times, while in 5 instances he begins with πορνεία or sexual sins, cf. Juncker, 113–117 and Exc. “Lasterkataloge” in Ltzm. R. on 1:31.

<sup>4384</sup> This, too, is a Jewish view (→ 585, 28 ff.) but it was a completely new way of looking at things for Greeks.

<sup>44</sup> Friedrich Hauck and Seigfried Schulz, [“Πόρνη, Πόρνος, Πορνεία, Πορνεύω, Ἐκπορνεύω,”](#) ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 593–594.

<sup>45</sup> sing. **sing.** = singular

<sup>46</sup> William Arndt et al., [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 657.

sphere as quite natural (1 C. 5:2) and accepted quasi-marital relations as no less ethically possible than marriage (→ 732). By contrast, it was most significant, both religiously and culturally, that the apostolic message from the very outset made it clear to the churches that the full marital fidelity of both spouses is an unconditional divine command (1 C. 5:1 ff.; 6:9). Adultery is not just a matter of civil law (R. 7:3). It is to be judged in accordance with the holy will of God (1 Th. 4:3; 1 C. 6:18 f.). Women are fellow-heirs of the kingdom of God and are thus worthy of the same honour as men (1 Pt. 3:7). According to the absolute judgment of Paul, adultery excludes from God's kingdom (1 C. 6:9). Marital fidelity is to be maintained intact (ἡ κοίτη ἀμίαντος, Hb. 13:4), even though there are no human witnesses. The omniscient God is the Judge of the adulterer (*loc. cit.*). The O<sup>47</sup>T prohibition of adultery is not confined to the negative avoidance of the sinful act. It finds its true fulfilment only in the love of spouses who are joined together by God (R. 13:9).<sup>3485</sup> Impulsive and uncontrolled desire is sinful even in the lustful glance (2 Pt. 2:14). It is a mark of the inwardly impious and licentious nature of bold heretics, who in doubting the *parousia* (3:3f.) also undermine belief in the divine judgment (3:5ff.<sup>49</sup>

Judge - **to engage in a judicial process, judge, decide, hale before a court, condemn, also hand over for judicial punishment**<sup>50</sup> and the punishment of the guilty [the thought prominent in the Hb pass<sup>51</sup>.]; **13:4; Js 5:9;**<sup>52</sup> to judge someone as definitely guilty and thus subject to punishment—'to condemn, to render a verdict of guilt, condemnation'<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>OT Old Testament.

<sup>4835</sup> Warnings against adultery are rare in Paul because he usually issues sexual admonitions in terms of the broader term → πορνεία.

<sup>49</sup> Friedrich Hauck, "[Μοιχεύω, Μοιχάω, Μοιχεία, Μοῖχος, Μοιχαλίζ,](#)" ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 734.

<sup>50</sup> William Arndt et al., [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 568.

<sup>51</sup>pass. **pass.** = passive (either of grammatical form or of passive experience); also used in reference to literary portion=passage

<sup>52</sup> William Arndt et al., [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 568.

<sup>53</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, [Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains](#) (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 555.

## Commentary Studies

### 13:4. God will judge those who are unfaithful in marriage

Once more, the pattern of injunctions and motives is repeated with skilful variation. Marriage is to be highly prized, and (synonymously, or rather more specifically) married couples are to keep themselves exclusively for one another, or incur God's judgment. Condemnation of adultery is universal in the Bible as in later Judaism and Christianity: Ex. 20:14 codifies an already strong tradition (F. Hauck in *TDN*<sup>54</sup> T 4.729–735; S-<sup>55</sup>B 1.294–301; 3.342, 366–368).

The language remains concise. In this context the first two phrases must be exhortations, not statements; ἔστω, not ἐστίν, is to be supplied.

Τίμιος<sup>56\*</sup>, here emphatic by position, is most commonly used in the Greek Bible of precious stones, either literally (e.g.<sup>57</sup>, 1 Ki. [3 Kgdms.] 7:9–11) or in eschatological imagery (e.g.<sup>58</sup>, Rev. 18:12, 16, 21). It is not used elsewhere of marriage, but cf. Pr. 6:26, of the precious souls of men endangered by a prostitute; 12:27; 20:6; Acts 5:34, of a good man; Acts 20:24, of Paul's life; 1 Pet. 1:19, of Christ's blood; not used of material value in the NT. Γάμος<sup>59\*</sup> is most commonly used in the plural to mean "wedding," occasionally "festivity" (Est. 9:22); here only in the Greek Bible in the singular, meaning "marriage"; in Wis. 14:24, 26, the plural γάμοι refers to many marriages, not to a single wedding. Bauer 2, referring to Jos<sup>60</sup>. *Ant.* 4.4.67, distinguishing between singular and plural; Ign<sup>61</sup>. *Pol.* 5:2; M<sup>62</sup>M. Ἐν πᾶσιν is taken by Braun as masculine, but most commentators (also Andriessen 1977, against Vanhoye 1977a; Bauer 2aδ) consider it neuter, meaning "in all respects," as in v. 18; cf. ἐν παντί, v. 21; διὰ παντός, <sup>63</sup>→ 2:15; κατὰ πάντα, 4:15. If the phrase is understood in this way, the first injunction becomes as insistent as the second, with its emphatic ἀμίαντος. In any case, the meaning of the two phrases is closely

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<sup>54</sup>*TDNT Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*

<sup>55</sup>S-B Strack-Billerbeck

<sup>56\*</sup> all references in Hebrews listed

<sup>57</sup>e.g. *exempli gratia* (= for example)

<sup>58</sup>e.g. *exempli gratia* (= for example)

<sup>59\*</sup> all references in Hebrews listed

<sup>60</sup>Jos. Josephus

<sup>61</sup>Ign. Ignatius of Antioch

<sup>62</sup>MM Moulton-Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*

<sup>63</sup>→ See

similar, the first stating positively what the second expresses by a virtual double negative; so καί does not signal new information.

Ἡ κοίτη is used literally in Lk. 11:7; of human generation in Rom. 9:10 (RS<sup>64</sup>V “by one man”); of sexual immorality in Rom. 13:13<sup>\*65\*</sup>; only here in the NT positively, of sexual relations in marriage. The word is frequent in the LX<sup>66</sup>X, but never in exactly this sense; the strongest echo is of Wis. 3:13:

ὅτι μακαρία στεῖρα ἢ ἀμίαντος,  
ἥ τις οὐκ ἔγνω κοίτην ἐν παραπτώματι;

cf. v. 16, where κοίτη recurs in a condemnation of adultery.

Ἀμίαντος was used of Christ in 7:26<sup>67\*</sup>; cf. the fear of defilement of the Christian community expressed with μιáίνω in <sup>68</sup>→ 12:15. The (lack of) defilement is now spiritual, not physical and ritual, as for example in Jn. 18:28; but it is still associated with worship and prayer; cf. Wis. 4:2; 8:20; 2 Macc. 4:36 of the temple; 15:34. An imperative is clearly implied.

The motivation (γάρ) follows, as in the previous verses: instead of the positive inducement of v. 2, there is a threat of judgment. In a context exclusively concerned with marriage, the distinction between πόρνος (12:16<sup>69\*</sup>), of sexual immorality in general, and μοιχός<sup>70\*</sup>, of adultery, tends to disappear; the two come under the same divine condemnation. Πόρνος and μοιχός are used together, with a similar threat of judgment, in 1 Cor. 6:9. Moffatt’s suggestion that πόρνους refers to married people practising incest or sodomy is too specific for the context.

Κρίνω: <sup>71</sup>→ 10:30 = Dt. 32:36; in both places, of future judgment, with God (the Lord) as subject. The final ὁ θεός is emphatic by position (cf. 3:4; 4:10; 6:3; 11:10; 13:16).<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>RSV Revised Standard Version

<sup>65\*\*</sup> all references in NT listed

<sup>66</sup>LXX Septuagint (normally A. Rahlfs’s ed., Stuttgart 1932)

<sup>67\*</sup> all references in Hebrews listed

<sup>68</sup>→ See

<sup>69\*</sup> all references in Hebrews listed

<sup>70\*</sup> all references in Hebrews listed

<sup>71</sup>→ See

<sup>72</sup> Paul Ellingworth, [\*The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text\*](#), New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1993), 697–698.

4 The allusion to the body and to shared vulnerability in v 3b is carried forward in the directive concerning respect for marriage and sexual responsibility in v 4a. In Hebrews, unlike Philo, there is no disparagement of the physical body (2:14; 10:5, 10; cf. Williamson, *Philo*, 275–76). Respect for the life of the body is the corollary of an understanding of human sexuality as the gift of God. It is to be honored as an expression of our distinctiveness as persons. Sexual responsibility affirms the lordship of God the Creator over the sphere of bodily life. Consequently, regard for marriage and for the physical intimacy integral to marriage is an essential aspect of the pursuit of holiness to which the community has been called by God (12:14).

The form in which the directive has been cast consists of two injunctions to marital purity (v 4a), supported by their own motivation (v 4b). The fact of marriage must be respected ἐν πᾶσιν (“by everyone”). Although in principle the writer would undoubtedly desire that society as a whole valued fidelity in marriage, his immediate concern is for those in the redeemed community (so also Filson, ‘Yesterday’, 79). Marital infidelity is inconsistent with the summons to fraternal love in 13:1. Regard for marriage is an essential expression of the quality of love that binds the community together as brothers and sisters who share a common confession. As a community they must respect marriage as the gift of God and support those who share the marriage relationship with empathy and affection.

Respect for marriage has broad implications concerning sexual relationships, both for those who are married and for those who are not. The formulation ἡ κοίτη ἀμίαντος, “the marriage bed must be undefiled,” is a euphemism for preserving the sexual integrity of the marriage relationship. The adjective ἀμίαντος is more commonly associated with things than with persons (e.g., Wis 4:2: “the contest for prizes that are undefiled”; cf. BAG<sup>73</sup>D 46). The term belongs to the cultic idiom (see Thurén, *Lobopfer*, 213–15; Spicq, *ConNT*<sup>74</sup> 11 [1947] 232–33, argues that it is necessary to preserve the cultic nuance here: sexual impurity entails desecration of the sacred). Here it is used of ἡ κοίτη, “the marriage bed,” with reference to sexual purity (as in Wis 3:13; 8:19–20; TJoset 4:6; Plutarch, *Numa* 9.5). The writer appears to inject casually the language of defilement into a non-cultic setting. The explanation for this may be that the injunctions in v 4a specify an aspect of the pursuit of holiness, acknowledging the awesome, holy character of God (12:14, 28–29).

Illicit sexual intercourse defiles the marriage bed; it profanes what God has made holy. (On the defiling of marriage by adultery, cf. Gen. 49:4; *T. Reub*<sup>75</sup> 1:6; Jos., *Ant.* 2.55; for a powerful statement from a contemporary, cf. Horace, *Odes* 3.6: “Full of sin, our age has defiled first the marriage bed, then our children and our homes; springing from such a source, the stream of disaster has overflowed both people and nation. The young girl is eager to learn Ionian dances, and soon acquires the art of flirting; even in childhood she devises impure affairs. Soon she is looking for young lovers, even at her husband’s table, and does not even choose out those on whom she will quickly bestow illicit pleasures when the lights are low. When invited, she openly,

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<sup>73</sup>BAGD W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ET, ed. W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich; 2d ed. rev. F. W. Gingrich and F. W. Danker (University of Chicago, 1979)

<sup>74</sup>*ConNT* Coniectanea neotestamentica

<sup>75</sup>*T. Reub. Testament of Reuben*

and not without her husband's knowledge, gets up and goes, whether it is some peddler who calls her or the owner of some Spanish ship, a lavish buyer of shame!") Those who are sexually immoral and adulterers "defile" the marriage bed as they bring with them their defilement. (On the contagious character of defilement, see 12:15.) In calling the members of the house church to sexual purity, the writer demands that they reflect a level of moral sensitivity which, though unusual, was not unknown in Roman Hellenism. For example, among the rules of a private religious association in Philadelphia, dating from the first century B.C., are the provisions that "a man [is not to take] another woman in addition to his own wife ... nor is he to corrupt a child or a virgin.... A free woman is to be pure and is not to know bed or sexual intercourse with any other man except her own [husband]" (W. Dittenberger, ed., *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*<sub>3</sub>, 985).

Those who defile marriage through sexual offense can anticipate the certainty of judgment, "for God will judge those who are sexually immoral and adulterers" (v 4b). The thought is thoroughly biblical and Jewish (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:20–23; Job 24:15–24; Prov 5:15–23; Sir 15:17–20; 23:18–20, 22–23a; Wis 3:16–19; 4:4–16). The descriptive term πόρνοι, "sexually immoral persons," has reference to those who engage in sexual relationships outside of marriage (cf. Countryman, *Dirt*, 229, who suggests that πόρνοι here signifies men who use prostitutes; alternatively, he suggests it may refer to anyone who holds family property in contempt). The word μοιχοί, "adulterers," denotes those who are unfaithful to the vows of commitment expressed in marriage (cf. Sir 23:18a: "A man who breaks his marriage vows," followed by a graphic depiction of the husband [23:18–21] and the wife [23:22–27] who commit adultery). (For an analysis of adultery as an offense against sexual property, analogous to theft, with an appeal to Exod 20:14–15, 17, see Countryman, *Dirt*, 157–59, 175–81; see, however, Lev 20:10, where adultery is treated as a violation of purity in the Holiness Code.) Together the two expressions cover all who engage in illicit sexual activity (F. F. Bruce, 392; P. E. Hughes, 566; for the sequence πόρνοι followed by μοιχοί in a traditional Jewish treatment of sexual offenses, see Sir 23:16–27). The warning against impurity is traditionally associated with the concern for holiness, which is the essential condition for the true worship of God (Thurén, *Lobopfer*, 212–17).

Sexual immorality is actually a rejection of the presence and goodness of God who created the human family in its maleness and femaleness. It is an expression of a selfishness blind to the emotional fragility that characterizes every person. The writer warns that those who place personal gratification above responsibility to God and to the community will encounter God himself as Judge (as in 12:23, 29). Implicit in the future tense of κρίνῃ, "[God] will judge," is an allusion to the final judgment that determines human destiny (cf. 6:2; 9:27; 10:25, 27, 29–31, 38–39; 12:23, 27, 29; 13:17). The awesome prospect of the final judgment throws into high relief the ultimate importance of respect for marriage and for sexual integrity. They represent aspects of the pursuit of holiness that are foundational to the worship of God.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> William L. Lane, [Hebrews 9–13](#), vol. 47B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1991), 516–517.



As vv. 1, 2 echo 10:24, 32, 33, v. 4 drives home the πόρνος of 12:16, and vv. 5, 6 echo the reminder of 10:34. Evidently (v. 4), as among the Macedonian Christians (1 Th 4:3–9), φιλαδελφία could be taken for granted more readily than sexual purity. **Τίμιος** (sc. ἔστω as in v. 5; Ro 12:9, the asyndeton being forcible) **ὁ γάμος ἐν πᾶσιν**, i.e. primarily by all who are married, as the following clause explains. There may be an inclusive reference to others who are warned against lax views of sexual morality, but there is no clear evidence that the writer means to protest against an ascetic disparagement of marriage. **Κοίτη** is, like the classical λέχος, a euphemistic term for sexual intercourse, here between the married; **ἀμίαντος** is used of incest, specially in *Test. Reub.* i:6, ἐμίανα κοίτην τοῦ πατρός μου: Plutarch, *de Fluviiis*, 18, μὴ θέλων μιαίνειν τὴν κοίτην τοῦ γεννήσαντος, etc.; but here in a general sense, as, e.g., in Wisdom:

μακαρία ἡ στεῖρα ἢ ἀμίαντος,  
 ἥτις οὐκ ἔγνω κοίτην ἐν παραπτώματι,  
 ἔξει καρπὸν ἐν ἐπισκοπῇ ψυχῶν (3:13),  
 and οὔτε βίους οὔτε γάμους καθαρούς ἔτι φυλάσσουσιν,  
 ἕτερος δ' ἕτερον ἢ λοχῶν ἀναιρεῖ ἢ νοθεύων ὀδυνᾷ (14:24).

In **πόρνους γὰρ καὶ μοιχοὺς** κτλ., the writer distinguishes between μοιχοί, i.e. married persons who have illicit relations with other married persons, and πόρνοι of the sexually vicious in general, i.e. married persons guilty of incest or sodomy as well as of fornication. In the former case the main reference is to the breach of another person's marriage; in the latter, the predominating idea is treachery to one's own marriage vows. The possibility of πορνεία in marriage is admitted in Tob 8:7 (οὐ διὰ πορνείαν ἐγὼ λαμβάνω τὴν ἀδελφὴν μου ταύτην), i.e. of mere sexual gratification<sup>771</sup> as distinct from the desire and duty of having children, which Jewish and strict Greek ethics held to be the paramount aim of marriage (along with mutual fellowship); but this is only one form of πορνεία. In the threat **κρινεῖ** (as in 10:30) ὁ θεός, the emphasis is on **ὁ θεός**. “Longe plurima pars scortatorum et adulterorum est sine dubio, quae effugit notitiam iudicium mortalium ... magna pars, etiamsi innotescat, tamen poenam civilem et disciplinam ecclesiasticam vel effugit vel leuissime persentiscit” (Benge<sup>781</sup>).

<sup>771</sup> μὴ ἐν πάθει ἐπιθυμίας, as Paul would say (1 Th 4:5).

<sup>78</sup>Bengel J. A. *Bengelii Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (1742).

This is another social duty (cp. Phil<sup>79</sup>o, *de Decalogo*, 24). In view of the Epicurean rejection of marriage (e.g. Epict. iii. 7. 19), which is finely answered by Antipater of Tarsus (Stob. *Florileg.* Ixvii. 25: ὁ εὐγενὴς καὶ εὐψυχὸς νέος ... θεωρῶν διότι τέλειος οἶκος καὶ βίος οὐκ ἄλλως δύναται γενέσθαι, ἢ μετὰ γυναικὸς καὶ τέκνων κτλ.), as well as of current ascetic tendencies (e.g., 1 Ti 4:3), there may have been a need of vindicating marriage, but the words here simply maintain the duty of keeping marriage vows unbroken. The writer is urging chastity, not the right and duty of any Christian to marry. Prejudices born of the later passion for celibacy led to the suppression of the inconvenient ἐν πᾶσι (om. 3<sup>80</sup>8. 46<sup>81</sup>0. 62<sup>82</sup>3. 183<sup>83</sup>6. 191<sup>84</sup>2\* Didymus, Cyril Jerus., Eus., Atha<sup>85</sup>n, Epiphanius, Thdt<sup>86</sup>). The sense is hardly affected, whether γάρ (<sup>87</sup>κ <sup>88</sup>A <sup>89</sup>D\* <sup>90</sup>M <sup>91</sup>P lat sa<sup>92</sup>h bo<sup>93</sup>h) or δέ (<sup>94</sup>C <sup>95</sup>D<sup>c</sup> <sup>96</sup>Ψ <sup>97</sup>6 syr arm eth Clem., Eus., Didymus, Chrys.) is read, although the latter would give better support to the interpretation of the previous clause as an antiascetic maxim.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Philo *Philonis Alexandriai Opera Quae Supersunt* (recognoverunt L. Cohn et P. Wendland).

<sup>80</sup>38 saec. xiii. [δ 355]

<sup>81</sup>460 saec. xiii.–xiv. [α 397]

<sup>82</sup>623 saec. xi. [α 173]

<sup>83</sup>1836 saec. x. [α 65]

<sup>84</sup>1912 saec. x.–xi. [α 1066]

<sup>85</sup>Athan Athanasius

<sup>86</sup>Thdt. Theodoret

<sup>87</sup>κ saec. iv. (v.) [01: δ 2].

<sup>88</sup>A saec. v. [02: δ 4].

<sup>89</sup>D saec. (vi.) [06: α 1026] cont. 1:1–13:20. Codex Claromontanus is a Graeco-Latin MS, whose Greek text is poorly\* reproduced in the later (saec. ix.–x.) E = codex Sangermanensis. The Greek text of the latter (1:1–12:8) is therefore of no independent value (cp. Hort in WH, §§ 335–337); for its Latin text, as well as for that of F=codex Augiensis (saec. ix.), whose Greek text of Πρὸς Ἑβραίους has not been preserved, see below, p. Ixix.

<sup>90</sup>M saec. ix. [0121: α 1031] cont. 1:1–4:3; 12:20–13:25.

<sup>91</sup>P saec. ix. [025: α 3] cont. 1:1–12:8; 12:11–13:25.

<sup>92</sup>sah *The Coptic Version of the NT in the Southern Dialect* (Oxford, 1920), vol. v. pp. 1–131.

<sup>93</sup>boh *The Coptic Version of the NT in the Northern Dialect* (Oxford, 1905), vol. iii. pp. 472–555.

<sup>94</sup>C saec. v. [04: δ 3] cont. 2:4–7:26; 9:15–10:24; 12:16–13:25.

<sup>95</sup>D saec. (vi.) [06: α 1026] cont. 1:1–13:20. Codex Claromontanus is a Graeco-Latin MS, whose Greek text is poorly\* reproduced in the later (saec. ix.–x.) E = codex Sangermanensis. The Greek text of the latter (1:1–12:8) is therefore of no independent value (cp. Hort in WH, §§ 335–337); for its Latin text, as well as for that of F=codex Augiensis (saec. ix.), whose Greek text of Πρὸς Ἑβραίους has not been preserved, see below, p. Ixix.

<sup>96</sup>Ψ saec. (vi.?) viii.–ix. [044: δ 6] cont. 1:1–8:11; 9:19–13:25.

<sup>97</sup>6 saec. xiii. [δ 356] cont. 1:1–9:3; 10:22–13:25

<sup>98</sup>James Moffatt, [\*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews\*](#), International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark International, 1924), 227–228.

**13:4** With v. 4 the subject shifts to marriage and sexual purity. The main clause of v. 4 is both compound and verbless. The KJV supplies an indicative verb in the first clause and leaves it implied in the second: “Marriage is honorable in all; and the bed undefiled.” However, most commentators and translators take the author’s meaning to express an imperatival idea for three reasons: the following reason clause supports it; the beginning of v. 5 is a parallel verbless construction, but one which indicates the necessity of understanding an implied imperative verb; and the fronted position of the adjective translated “honored” in the clause supports the imperatival sense as well.<sup>60996</sup>

This verse serves as a specific example of showing brotherly love (v. 1) in that, as Bruce well says, “Chastity is not opposed to charity, but is part of it.”<sup>601007</sup> Here the author places a high priority on the sanctity and inviolability of the marriage bond. The New Testament affirms the Old Testament’s revelation concerning the divine origination of marriage.<sup>601018</sup> The first statement, “Marriage should be honored by all,” places special focus on the word translated “honored” by its fronted position in the clause. The word itself means to highly esteem and respect. This general statement about honoring marriage is followed by a more narrowed focus on the sanctity of the sexual relationship in marriage: “and<sup>601029</sup> the marriage bed<sup>611030</sup> kept pure.” This phrase refers to sexual intercourse within marriage, meaning husbands and wives should remain sexually faithful to one another and to their marriage vows. The Greek adjective translated “pure” conveys the meaning “undefiled,” “unpolluted,” “untainted.”<sup>611041</sup> It is in the emphatic position in its clause. One implication of this verse is that marriage should in no way be considered as spiritually inferior to celibacy.<sup>611052</sup> In fact, Paul warns the church about those who “forbid people to marry” in 1 Tim 4:3.

The “by all” construes the dative prepositional phrase in Greek to encode agency: “by all people.” Bruce and Hughes likewise take it in reference to people, but view the phrase in a

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<sup>99606</sup> Bruce, *Hebrews*, 368; Miller, *Hebrews*, 426; the NIV has a moderating translation: “Marriage should be honored by all.”

<sup>100607</sup> Bruce, *Hebrews*, 372.

<sup>101608</sup> Including the fact that in both OT and NT, marriage is understood to be between one man and one woman. See Genesis 2; Matt 19:4–5; Mark 10:6–8; and Eph 5:22–33.

<sup>102609</sup> Dods considers the conjunction καί “and” to imply an inference being drawn from the first half of the clause: “and thus let the (marriage) bed.” (“Hebrews,” 375).

<sup>103610</sup> The word in Greek is κοίτη, translated “marriage bed” and refers euphemistically to sexual relations in marriage.

<sup>104611</sup> See L&N 53.36.

<sup>105612</sup> L. Morris, “Hebrews,” 146.

locative sense: “among all people.”<sup>611063</sup> Others take the reference to be aspectual or circumstantial with the meaning “in every respect” or “in every circumstance.”<sup>611074</sup>

The compound clause is followed by a subordinating clause, introduced by *gar* “for” expressing the grounds of the preceding exhortation: “for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” The term  *pornos* in Greek does have a general meaning of a sexually immoral person and can refer to those who commit sexual sins in general, homosexual or heterosexual, outside of marriage. However, used in conjunction with *moichos*, “adulterer,”  *pornos* is probably best translated in its more restricted sense of “fornication,” with reference to anyone who violates another’s marriage by engaging in sexual relations with either partner in that marriage.<sup>611085</sup> The term *moichos*, “adulterer,” refers to anyone who violates his or her own marriage vows by having sexual relations with someone other than their own spouse.<sup>611096</sup> The two nouns are used together by Paul in 1 Cor 6:9. Such sexual immorality God will judge, where *theos*, “God,” is emphasized in the Greek text by being placed clause final.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106613</sup> Bruce, *Hebrews*, 368; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 566.

<sup>107614</sup> So Morris, “Hebrews,” 146; and Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 697. Paul warns the Thessalonian church to abstain from sexual immorality on the grounds that this is God’s will and the Lord judges those who so conduct themselves.

<sup>108615</sup> See L&N 88.274; BDAG 855, 657.

<sup>109616</sup> So Hughes, *Hebrews*, 566; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 373; and Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, 517.

<sup>110</sup> David L. Allen, *Hebrews*, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2010), 608–610.