

## God's Opinion Of Violence Towards Women

'You cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with sighing because He does not accept your offering any more, nor will He receive it with good will at your hand. You ask, "Why?" God has been witness between you and the wife of your youth against whom you have dealt treacherously though she is your companion and the wife of your marriage covenant. He made you two one flesh. Why one flesh? Because He wanted Godly children from you. Take heed to your spirit and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. "I hate divorce," says God, "And I hate the husband who covers his wife with violence! Therefore take heed to your spirit so you do not deal treacherously with your wife"' (Malachi 2:13 to 16).

These verses are very clear. In God's eyes, marriage is a holy covenant for life. In the above verse it is written, God hates the husband who is violent towards his wife. In fact, the Lord hates all forms of violence. Violence is one reason the Lord flooded and destroyed the earth during the days of Noah (Genesis 6:11 & 13). Violence was one reason the Lord was going to destroy Nineveh (Jonah 3:8). God regards a violent man as acting treacherously against his wife and against the marriage covenant. The Lord created marriage for companionship and so the couple could raise Godly children together. Marriage is very serious in the eyes of the Lord and He witnesses every wedding covenant, promise, oath and pledge made by the couple at their wedding. When men violate the wife with violence, he is violating his marriage covenant. God is asking men to use self-control (take heed to your spirit) and to treat his wife with love and respect. God hates separation and divorce. 'From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will join to his wife. The two will become one flesh so they are no longer two but one flesh. What God has joined together let no man separate' (Mark 10:6 to 9). 'They asked Jesus, "Why did Moses allow us to give her a bill of divorce and divorce her?" Jesus answered, "Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives but from the beginning it has not been so"' (Matthew 19:7 & 8).

When a man treats his wife badly, God will not accept his offerings nor answer the husband's prayers. 'You husbands, live with your wives according to (Spiritual) knowledge, giving honour to the woman ... as being joint heirs of the grace of life so your prayers may not be hindered' (1 Peter 3:7). Women are joint heirs with men and will inherit the Kingdom jointly. In the Lord's eyes, women are equally one with men as Spiritual Temples of the Holy Spirit. 'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free man, male nor female for you are all one in Jesus our Messiah' (Galatians 3:28). 'Your body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit Who is in you, Whom you have from God' (1 Corinthians 6:19). No violence towards women is acceptable to God. Every kind of violence and bloodthirstiness are abhorrent to God and especially when the victims are women and children who should be loved and protected by the husband, not harmed. 'The Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man' (Psalm 5:6).

'Husbands ought to love their own wives as they love their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. No man ever hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it as the Lord Jesus loves the Assembly (church). We are members of His Body, of His flesh and bones. (It is written) a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife. The two will become one flesh. This mystery is great concerning the Messiah and the Assembly (church). Each of you must love his own wife as himself and let the wife see that she respects her husband' (Ephesians 5:28 to 33). If people would exercise love, patience and forgiveness, and if the couple would bring their troubles to the Lord, there would be fewer marriage breakdowns. A relationship works both ways so both parties need to behave correctly towards their spouse. Men need to treat their wives with respect but women too should show her husband respect and not nag, belittle, demean, criticise or act aggressively towards her husband. 'A worthy woman is the crown of her husband but a disgraceful wife is as rotteness in his bones' (Proverbs 12:4). 'Whoever finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains the favour of the Lord' (Proverbs 18:22). 'Who can find a worthy wife? Her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband trusts in her ... Her children call her blessed. Her husband also praises her, "Many women do noble things but you excel them all"' (Proverbs 31:10, 11, 28 & 29).

Violence towards women is sometimes a generational attitude. Sons watch their fathers or other male members of the family treat women without respect so they think that behaviour is correct. From a very young age boys need to be taught to treat all girls and women with respect especially within their own family. Boys were once warned not to ever hit a girl and were punished for doing so. Parents and teachers, it is your responsibility to teach all boys in your care not to behave aggressively at any time, ever. The way boys treat their sisters and mother will be the same way they will treat their own wife and children in the future so to stamp out violence, teach boys to be kind and respectful to girls and women of all ages. If a man is good to his wife, she will in turn make him a happy man. If a man is a good father, his children will respect him in old age. 'Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your life' (Ecclesiastes 9:9). 'Behold, children are a heritage or gift of the Lord and the fruit of the womb (children) are a reward ... Happy is the man who has his house full of them' (Psalm 127:5). Coercive control is another very subtle form of violence. This

usually occurs between couples but it can happen when a father has control of his daughter or even when a mentally ill man wants to control a neighbour believing it is his 'right' to control women and he can become violent when she refuses to comply. This form of control is aggressive and for the woman, overwhelming and soul-destroying. She can feel helpless and powerless. The authorities often do not understand the impact of such a terrible form of control and usually there is little help available. Men like this are unreasonable, irrational, illogical, narcissistic, demanding and sometimes murder their victim simply because she refuses to come under his control. He might try to control her money. He might stop her from having contact with family and friends. He might move her away from her family to have a stronger hold over her. He might tell her what to wear, how to wear her hair, who she can speak to or time her when she has to go out. If you are a man who behaves like this, you need to take your problem to the Lord and stop immediately. If there is help available for perpetrators like that, go and seek help. It is written, 'Cursed is the man who does injustice to a woman or a child' (Deuteronomy 27:19). If you are violent or controlling, God Himself will curse you. Coercive control is not acceptable. Another form of violence towards women is rape and any form of sexual assault, which are never acceptable and God will severely punish any man who does that.

When the Lord brings two people together for marriage, it is not just a legal arrangement to be taken lightly. Marriage is not 'just a piece of paper'. In God's opinion, marriage is a sacred covenant of love, companionship, comfort, loyalty, faithfulness, joy and satisfaction, and if possible, to have the blessing of children. The Lord expects people to be faithful to their marriage and to their spouse (Exodus 20:14) because He is always watching us. 'Drink water out of your own cistern and running water out of your own well (do not commit adultery). Why should your springs overflow in the streets and streams of water in the public squares? (Why should you have illegitimate children?) Let them (your children) be for yourself alone not for strangers. Let your spring (marriage) be blessed. Rejoice in the wife of your youth ... let her satisfy you at all times. Be captivated always with her love. Why should you be captivated with an adulteress? Why embrace another? The ways of mankind are before the eyes of God. He examines all their paths' (Proverbs 5:15 to 21). 'He who commits adultery with a woman is void of understanding. He who does it destroys his own soul. He will incur wounds and dishonour. His reproach will not be wiped away ... As he who goes in to his neighbour's wife, whoever touches her will not be unpunished' (Proverbs 6:29, 32 & 33). 'Let marriage be held in honour by all and let the marriage bed be undefiled because God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers' (Hebrews 13:4).

If mistakes have been made in the form of violence or aggression, if adultery has occurred, whatever has been done, we know we can ask the Lord for forgiveness and He will always forgive. 'If we confess our sins to God, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us the sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness' (1 John 1:9). Spouses need to forgive the weakness and sin of their marriage partner, but the sin must stop, the person must repent and from then onwards behave themselves and treat their spouse and marriage with honour. Forgiveness is vitally important. Just as God forgave us for a multitude of transgressions when we first accepted salvation, so we must forgive anyone and everyone who has sinned against us, including our spouse. Anyone and everyone does not leave anybody out. We must forgive everybody who has sinned against us no matter what they have done. 'Whenever you stand praying, forgive if you have anything against anyone so your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your transgressions. If you do not forgive neither will your Father in heaven forgive you for your transgressions' (Mark 11:25 & 26).

Why is a loving marriage so important to the Lord? 'This mystery is great concerning the Messiah and the Assembly (church)' (Ephesians 5:32). The reason God created marriage as a love relationship was a forerunner of the love relationship Jesus will have with His Bride, the purified, genuine, holy, devoted believers and disciples from all over the entire earth, from ancient times soon after creation right up to the Last Day, which is yet in the future. The Groom (Jesus) and the Bride (Israel and the Church, Jews and Gentiles together as one Body) will be truly pure and holy. When men become violent towards his wife, his earthy bride, he is dealing treacherously with the holy union and breaking the holy covenant and he is undermining the Spiritual 'type' of holy marriage. God likens earthly marriage to the long awaited Marriage Supper of the Lamb. That is why marriage is solely between one man and one woman. Homosexual, same sex marriage is not acceptable to God. The pure, holy union between Jesus the Sacrificial Lamb and His Bride, the unblemished Assembly or Body of the Messiah, is the ultimate goal for Yahweh God, for Jesus the Son of God and for every genuine Jewish believer and Christian. We say here 'genuine' believers because there are people who claim to be Christians but sin outrageously. The Lord calls them wicked and those wicked people will not be included among the invitations for the Holy Supper of the Lamb. It is the genuine, righteous, holy Jews and Christians, who have faithfully served the Lord, who make up the Bride of our Messiah and will be able to wear their 'bright, pure, fine linen marriage garments' to the Holy Feast. 'If anyone is genuine, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, who are not accused of loose or unruly behaviour. The overseer must be blameless as God's steward, not self-pleasing, not easily angered, not given to wine, not violent and not greedy for dishonest gain, given to hospitality, a lover of good, sober minded, fair, holy and self-controlled' (Titus 1:6 to 8). 'Let each man have his own wife and let each woman

have her own husband. Let the husband give to his wife the love and affection owed her and likewise the wife to her husband' (1 Corinthians 7:2 & 3). 'Let the overseer (Rabbi, minister, pastor) be the husband of one wife ... not violent, gentle, not quarrelsome' (1 Timothy 3:2 & 3).

Scripturally, the Marriage Supper is by invitation only and only people who have been genuine and loyal in their walk with the Lord will be invited. In the following parable, Jesus explained it is God the Father Who is organising the holy Marriage feast but some people will refuse to attend, some are unworthy to attend, so those who have come into the Kingdom of God from a lost life, people who have repented and people who walk with the Lord will be invited. 'The Kingdom of Heaven is like a certain King Who made a marriage feast for His Son and sent out His loyal servants to call those who were invited to the marriage feast but they would not come. He sent out other loyal servants saying, "Tell those who are invited, 'Behold, I have made ready My dinner ... Come to the marriage feast!'" But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his merchandise and the rest grabbed the King's loyal servants and treated them shamefully and killed them. When the King heard that, He was angry and sent His armies, destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then He said to His loyal servants, "The wedding is ready but those who were invited were not worthy. Go to the streets and as many as you may find, invite to the marriage feast." Those loyal servants went out into the highways and gathered together as many as they found. The wedding was filled with guests. When the King came in to see the guests, He saw there a man who did not have on wedding clothing (who had not repented of sin) and He said to him, "Friend, how did you come in here not wearing wedding clothing?" He was speechless. The King said to the loyal servants, "Bind him hand and foot, take him away and throw him into the outer darkness, where there is weeping and grinding of teeth, for many (Christians) are called but few will be chosen" (Matthew 22:2 to 14). 'Let us rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and let us give the glory to God for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His Bride has made herself ready. She was permitted to array herself in bright, pure, fine linen, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints (genuine, loyal believers, both Jewish and Gentile). Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. These are true words of God' (Revelation 19:7 to 9). This is why marriage is so important to the Lord and is not to be taken lightly nor should it be tarnished with violence.

Many thousands of people will worship the Lord along with thousands of holy angels and cherubim. This is the great mystery concerning Jesus and the Assembly (church) (Ephesians 5:32). At the Lamb's Supper, there will be at least one person and possibly many more from every tribe, language, race and nation dating way back to creation right up to the Last Day. 'One of the seven holy angels ... said, "Come here. I will show you the Bride of the Lamb ... I, Jesus have sent My holy angel to testify these things to you for the Assemblies (synagogues, churches). I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." The Holy Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Those who hear let them say, "Come!" Those who are thirsty (for God) let them come. Those who desire, let them take the water of life freely' (Revelation 21:9; 22:16 & 17). 'Behold, a great multitude which no man could number, out of every nation, of all tribes, peoples and languages, standing before the Throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes with palm branches in their hands. They cried with a loud voice saying, "Salvation be to our God Who sits on the Throne and to the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9 & 10). 'A sound like a voice of many holy angels around the Throne, the living creatures (cherubim) and the elders (ancient obedient servants of God like Enoch, Noah, Elijah, Abraham, Moses etc). The number of them was ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb Who has been slain, to receive the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honour, glory and blessing!" I heard every created thing in heaven, on the earth, buried under the earth, in the sea and everything in them saying, "To Him Who sits on the Throne and to the Lamb be the blessing, the honour, the glory and the dominion, forever and ever! Amen"' (Revelation 5:11 to 13). 'I watched until thrones were placed and One Who was Ancient of Days sat. His clothing was white as snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was fiery flames and its wheels burning fire. A fiery stream issued forth from before Him. Thousands of thousands ministered to Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The judgment was set and the Books (of Judgement) were opened' (Daniel 7:9 & 10).

Those men who think violence towards women is acceptable are wicked and God will deal with them in His own way and in His own time. Even if they escape justice through the earthly court system, they will not escape justice through God's holy courts on Judgement Day. Let us all stand against violence of any description but especially against women and children. 'You fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath but nurture them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord' (Ephesians 6:4). 'Husbands, love your wives and do not be aggressive towards them ... Fathers, do not provoke your children so they will not become discouraged' (Colossians 3:19 to 21). 'Husbands, love your wives' (Ephesians 5:25 & 28).

Amen and God bless you.

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