

Exodus 22:16–17

Taking the Marriage Heart and the Marriage Bed Seriously like God Does

Friday, August 19, 2022 ▫ **Read Exodus 22:16–17**

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the man in v16 begin by doing? To whom? What do they end up doing? What must he pay? As what must he receive her? What may the father still do (v17)? What shall the man do anyway?

How did God's civil law for Israel emphasize the importance of keeping the seventh commandment? Exodus 22:16–17 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God absolutely forbids sexual intercourse outside of marriage.**

The couple in question in these verses is "in love." This is not a rape situation, in which the man would be executed (cf. Deut 22:25–27). And if one of them were even betrothed to another, it would be adultery punishable by death (cf. Deut 22:23–24).

No, the word translated "entices" means that he has persuaded or seduced her. She is a willing participant. Though it is gentler than they deserve that they do not die, the risk for both is great.

First, they immediately lose all opportunity to consider or marry another. The best that they can hope for is that the father of the woman will be willing to give her in marriage. But the bride-price must still be paid, and now without preparation; no advantage is gained.

Second, it may be that the father refuses to give her. In this case, the man still loses the money. And now they have both lost all opportunity for marriage, as they are damaged goods and to marry one of them would be to commit adultery.

In this second case, also, Israel is spared from having this man and woman propagating. If a child is born, he becomes a member not of the household of the man and the woman, but rather of her father and his wife. If no child is born, then neither of them will have children. Their lines will end with them. It is a death sentence, albeit not immediately carried out.

How seriously the Lord takes sexual purity! And yet very many in our society, and even in the churches are quite unserious about it. We have become lovers of death and the destruction of households, churches, and nations. Many who would oppose the lying together in the middle of v16 yet dabble and even promote, among the unbetrothed, the romantic attachments from the beginning of the verse. They accommodate in the heart what God abominates in the action.

May God grant unto us repentance from this sin, and faith in Jesus Christ, Whose blood is rich enough to atone even for this! And from Him, may we then receive life and love for God that makes us to love true life as He Himself has designed it.

What are some ways that our culture shows that it does not take sexual purity seriously? What are some ways that believers indulge in the heart the same sort of romantic attachments among the unmarried that results in the sin committed in this passage?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for whatever ways we are falling short in protecting purity of heart and body for marriage and the marriage bed. Grant unto us to honor the marriage bed and to value sexual purity as You do. And restore our nation and churches and families to a place where this is the rule, rather than the exception, we pray through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP51A "God, Be Merciful to Me" or TPH174 "The Ten Commandments

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Exodus 22 verses 16 and 17. These are the words of God. If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, He shall surely pay the bride price for her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money.

According to the bride price of virgins. So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent work.

A couple of things that are necessary for differentiating, what sort of situation these two verses are treating in the first, is this word entices, which can mean seduces allures persuades. In the context, we might even say romances This is not a rape situation where the woman is unwilling that is handled in Deuteronomy 22:25-27.

And of course the man in that situation is executed and it is not an adultery situation. Neither of them have been betrothed If she were not even married, if she were just betrothed than they would be considered adulterers. And again, the penalty for that in Deuteronomy 22 is execution is death.

This is a situation where Man has Romance a woman and before they are betrothed or married? They willingly commit immorality. They indulge in the actions of the marriage bed without the benefit of the marriage that makes up the marriage bet. And in that case, the penalty is actually here.

We might say very merciful Since we know that in any other situation, the the same action would require death. And yet, although it has merciful in that, it is not immediate death. The penalty is actually extremely severe because by romancing and then fornicating, these two have cut off from themselves.

Any hope of marrying any other again, they just eliminated all of the options that they might have. Had The man has put himself out 50 shekels, which is, or shakalim. If you want to pluralize it in Hebrew a the almost twice the price of a maid servant for instance, but the bride price was 50 and he loses the 50, whether or not he gets the bride.

And you can imagine that verse 17 would usually be the clause that takes effect. If this was one of my daughters, absolutely, the father would utterly refuse to give her to him. This is not the man who romant the man, who romanced my daughter and led her into fornication.

And now I want her to be consigned, to be the bride of such a man for the rest of her earthly days. Absolutely not better for her to be an unmarried daughter in my house upstanding house where God will be known and her soul will be cared for than to be a wife in such a man's house.

Would utterly refuse? And so the man is out, 50 chaqueline. He's also known as a fornicator. He probably cannot get married himself at all. What other Father is going to give his daughter to such a man, after all of this has taken place. And of course, the daughter having been spoiled.

Or despoiled, we could even say because of the enticing. The romancing that took place that brought her into this situation. She would have no hope of marriage either which ultimately does end up being a death sentence. And even if a child were to result from that union, that child would be brought up in the household of her parents as a step brother of sorts and would belong to that household.

And the man's name would not be perpetuated in Israel. And so they would live out their days as it were, but a godly person desires that, even after they leave this world, they leave more image bearers in this world and especially when evangelism was not really an option, right?

The the Israelites didn't have a plethora of people that they could evangelize and convert and we don't get the idea that they were particularly interested in such things, and it wasn't the time yet of the outpouring of the spirit in which God who has elected all whom. He is going to save was going to gather in the nations and mass, You know, those Gentiles who do come in after that mixed multitude in Exodus chapter 12, that came out with them in Egypt, those Gentiles who do come in, are the exceptions and not the rule.

Now, if you are a childless Christian, you still have the opportunity to leave renewed image bearers behind you, by way of evangelism. And of course, if you are a believer to whom the Lord gives children. One of your the legacy that you leave is, especially in God's blessing, upon your bringing, up your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord that they would fear him, and become believers in.

Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit attending. The means that are theirs as a privilege of being in your home as a privilege of being in the church. But for these two, the couple and exodus 22, 16 and 17, Their legacy dice, their name and the the most important form of influence, that one can have perishes from the earth.

And so there is something like a death sentence but it's one that takes the rest of their lives to finally and sadly be executed. And so you see the Lord takes the aping of where the attempt to have the action of the marriage bed without marriage. He takes it.

Extremely seriously. And this is a tremendous rebuke to a culture and even a church culture, that doesn't take it seriously. This is a tremendous rebuke to each of our hearts when we are tempted to lust or desire, either the, the physical action, or even without betrothal The Romancing that leads to that physical action, the desire to have the heart component of marriage, without marriage is inwardly and spiritually, similar and analogous and parallel.

And there are many, who offend God, both by putting themselves at risk of desiring, the physical component because we're whole beings and the two go together and not only do they put themselves at risk of that but they indulge their hearts in this enticing or alluring or romancing that brings these two into under the the dreadful penalty in verses 16 and 17.

And if a father after reading and understanding these passages, These two verses would still give his daughter to such a man, as this I'm surely, they're must be greatly extenuating circumstances or else the extenuating circumstances. Just he's not a father who cares enough about his daughter's soul which itself would be a curse to find out.

The daughter in such a situation as almost always used to happen. I don't know how perverted our culture has become, so that consciences are seared but the daughter almost always has instant regret. And if not instant regret than eventual and lingering and horrible regret and She may consider it a curse even if her dead agrees.

So the Lord takes us very seriously, and this is one reason why we should not only Be careful about the physical purity, the marriage vet purity, but also the enticing or alluring of the heart before. Betrothal that we would have that we would have chosen and commit it. That a marriage is a good match.

It's wise, She is godly and that he is godly and that we have every reason to believe that they will do well. And we've made a commitment based upon that. And then in the context of that commitment, leading up to the wedding day, you start that enticing. That romancing, that persuading, so that in between the betrothal and the wedding.

You have the emotional foundation, the heart foundation of what will be, what will be enjoyed, and finally celebrate it and the marriage bed on the wedding night. The Lord help us to to take marriage and purity of marriage and the heart and the marriage bed. As seriously as the seventh, commandment teaches us.

And even as this part of the Israelite civil law that he gave them teaches us. Let's pray.

Our Father in heaven. We thank you for this portion of your word. We thank you. Lord that as you have given us to move steadily through your words together as a family and the years of to bringing up of these, your children in this one of your households that you cover everything that we need to hear.

And particularly this thing that in the context of our culture, we so desperately need to hear we pray that you had help us to first and foremost, give our hearts to you. And second of all desire to have good marriage in the order in which your words teaches us, I pray Lord that you would give to all godly marriages.

This affection and alluring and romance that you have designed to be the heart component. And that it would be kept pure, the wife only for her husband and the husband's heart only for his wife. We thank you for the picture that you give us even in Hosea of your graciously, drawing out to yourself in the wilderness.

The rejected and adulterous wife, whom you bring back to yourself for indeed. That is what we have been. And yet you have loved us and given yourself for us and taken ourselves to you. Pray. Lord. That, that not only the future marriages of our children, but my, and my wife's marriage, all of the marriages represented in our congregation.

And in all the congregations of your church that they might have both heart romance and marriage bed celebration, and that the heart romance would be kept pure and exclusive. And that the marriage vet celebration would be kept pure and exclusive. Oh, Lord, teach us to to treat this. As weightily as your word does as you do and help us to love you with this part of our lives.

And with all of our lives for we ask it through Jesus. Amen.