

## CHAPTER 1 - Male

The first human being that God created was 'Man' because God created him in a unique way, the following verses highlights the essence of the creation of Man. In **Genesis 1:26 & 27** we read '**And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them**'. Again in **Genesis 2:7** we read, **and the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.**

### **Why did God create this man?**

In **Malachi 2:15** we read, **and did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed.** The reason God created man is that he should multiply and bring forth a Godly generation, a woman is required to fulfill this purpose and to this end God created a woman who would be a perfect companion. God created Adam and Eve in order to accomplish the plans that he had for the world. It is towards this end that a man and a woman enter into a relationship as Husband and Wife. In **1Corinthians 11:9** we read, **Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.** Again in **Genesis 2:18** we read, **God created a woman in order to remove the loneliness of man.**

In the present day we see that both man and woman fail to live up to their roles as husband and wife, this is due to the lack of preparation on their part. No one begins their married life after gaining the experience as husband and wife, thus there is bound to be differences of opinion, socialization process, situations and circumstances in which one is brought up, education and financial status, as well as society at large play a major part in the progress or the downfall of these couples. The youth phase of an individual plays a very vital role in determining his future. Let us meditate about the youth phase of an individual.

### YOUTH

'Youth' is a very important phase in a man's life. A man's future is subject to the aspects of his interests during the youth phase. In **Ecclesiastes 12:1** we read, **remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.** Only a successful man can lead a successful family life and will also be skillful and mighty. The verses below speaks about the secret of a successful youth. In **Psalms 119:9** we read, **wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word.** What is the benefit that we reap when we live according to this scripture verse, our reward is **victory**. In **1 John 2:14** we read **I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.**

In **1 John 2:13** we read, **I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.** The scripture describes a youth as one who is victorious. There are certain **Do's** and **don'ts** in order to possess victory during the youth phase. When a youth chooses the **Do's** then he is assured a blessed and happy family life.

The things that a man does during his youth will determine whether he would have a happy and healthy family life or an unhealthy family life. Each phase of a man's life consists of certain specific characteristics, it is these characteristics that makes a man victorious. The way we take our lessons in the school of life will determine our success in the marriage and family life. The worldly education, wealth, physical strength will not be the foundation for a successful family life. For e.g. a man may earn more degrees than the alphabets in his name and merely earning a lot of money will not guarantee a happy family life. By earning many degrees he may be called a scholar and by earning a lot of money he may be called a wealthy man, however these cannot guarantee a happy family life. A young man should take note of his character. Just as we seek the help of a doctor when we fall ill, similarly when a young man finds himself diverting from his good character not only will it affect him and his society but it also affects the family. This will lead him to earn a bad reputation, we often see this in the lives of people who are very successful as engineers, doctors, lawyers etc who even though very successful in their career, because of their waywardness during their youth land up being very unsuccessful in their family life. Let us meditate upon the characteristics of a youth.

### **YOUTH PHASE**

We are about to meditate upon the characteristics that a man has to possess during his youth, it is these characteristics that would later on in his life make him a successful husband. Every person he meets during this phase is very important, the good or bad reputation that he earns will last with him forever. The seed that he sows during this phase will grow into a tree and bear fruit in the future. The quality of the fruit is determined by the seed that is sown. This will in turn determine the quality of his family life. For e.g. when a youth concentrates in his studies he earns good grades and gets into the medical college even there he proves successful, he travel abroad and does his higher education and begins to earn a lucrative salary, such a boy is well looked upon by the society, he also catches the eyes of the parents of prospective brides. Parents would imagine that their daughter would be very blessed to have a husband like him. A man finds himself in such a situation because of the efforts he had taken during his youth phase. (This does not mean that every youth should be a doctor). On the contrary another youth whiles away his time in the company of bad friends, drinks and makes merry at the expense of his parent's earnings, fails to pay attention to his studies and ultimately when his parent's retire from their service and looks to him for support he himself in is a very pitiable situation where he is not able to provide for himself and for his parents he turns to anti – social activities in order to meet his needs. His action ruins both his and his family's reputation, who will want to offer their daughter to such an individual? If a man maintains those characteristics that are necessary for a youth during this phase he would be seen as outstanding among the millions. If he fails to do so his life will become a tragedy in the sight of the millions. Let us mediate on what makes a youth to be an outstanding person.

### **OBEDIENCE**

We read in **1Peter 5:5, Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.** One of the foremost characteristics of a youth is obedience, it is not only necessary to be obedient during ones youth but it is important to be so until a man's last days. Obedience should first begin at home, all those outstanding men we come across

in the scriptures were those who were obedient in their youth, the scripture also stresses upon this. In **Ephesians 6:1** we read, **Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.**

## **JESUS CHRIST**

In **Luke 2:51** we read, **And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them:** Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God who bore the sins of the world, the Saviour, the promised child, the one who came down to fulfill the plan of God yet He was obedient to His parents. Even though He was anointed with the Holy Spirit, He did not consider it a matter of inferiority to be obedient to his Mary and Joseph, if the Saviour of the world obeyed His parents how much more should we live in obedience. This noble characteristic in His life was instrumental in Jesus' obedience to the will of God the Father. Through the verse below, let us see the benefit that was reaped by his obedience to his parents.

We read in **Luke 2:52** **And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.** Wisdom, stature and in favour with God and men, in order to earn these, all we need to do is to be obedient. When we satisfy one expectation of the Lord in terms of our obedience to Him, He not only blesses us with earthly blessing but it also leads us to inherit heavenly/spiritual blessings. We see this in the life of Jesus Christ in the following verse **Philippians 2: 8** **And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**

My beloved! When God finds us obedient, even if others do not take note, He takes note and makes us a blessing to many people. Let's look at the blessings that obedience had brought to Jesus Christ in **Philippians 2: 9 – 11** we read **Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** What a privilege when a person climbs to these heights. When we recognize that this is wrought through obedience we realize how important obedience is in our life.

## **ISAAC**

A son's real obedience is seen when he obeys to his father's word. When Abraham was asked to sacrifice his only son, God intervened and rescued Isaac, we read in the scripture that God was pleased with the faith of his servant Abraham. This is Abraham's faith, even though the fear of the Lord, wisdom etc was displayed during this incident, Abraham was able to stand as a pleasing man in the sight of God because of Isaac's obedience. The obedience of the children will lead to the Lord taking delight in the parents, the opposite could also happen, they could lose their countenance in the presence of the Lord due to the behaviour of their children. Let us meditate upon Isaac's obedience

### **1. Following the father to where he calls**

In **Genesis 22:3** we read, **And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son,**

**and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.** Here we see that Isaac did not ask his father as to why his mother Sarah was not accompanying them. Without another word he followed his father on his journey along with the other servants. At the same time he maintained the confidentiality regarding the journey. If he had mentioned the matter concerning the journey to Sarah the whole plan would have been ruined. One of the aspects of obeying the father is that a son should learn to maintain secrecy in the matters that his father confides in him. If Abraham felt that Sarah should be made aware of this journey he would have mentioned it in the presence of Sarah, Isaac responded wisely to his father's call, not only did he follow his father on the journey it was also necessary that they be of one mind when they undertake this journey.

In the present days we find that sons find it difficult to accompany their fathers both mentally and physically. There are some children who run ahead of the father, there are some children who send their father in the morning and follow him in the afternoon. Children who accompany their fathers on their journey would accomplish great things in their future. "Why? And for what purpose?" It is important to undertake the journey without asking such questions, this indicates the characteristics of an obedient child.

## **2. Bearing the Burden for the father**

In **Genesis 22:6** we read, **And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.** If we read the preceding verse we see that they left the servants behind. Isaac, like a servant carried the wood for his father, this indicates Isaac submitting physically to his father, he did not question his father as to why he should carry the wood when the servants are around, instead he carried the wood for his own sacrifice. Even when he had to endure physical hardships he did not retaliate instead without uttering a single word he followed his father. In the present days children are not able to bear even the slightest of discomfort because they do not obey their father.

## **3. Perfect Obedience**

In **Genesis 22:9** we read, **and they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, "built an altar",** arranging the wood, denotes Isaac's patience. In the previous verse we read that when Isaac enquired about the lamb for the burnt offering, Abraham answered him that that the Lord himself will provide the lamb, it is only when a son realizes and relies on the faith and vision of his father will he be able to attain perfect obedience. What does this verse denote? It denotes that the son was not anxious about his future, anxiety often gets in the way of an individual's ability to walk in the perfect will of God, he trusted his father's words and by allowing himself to be bound and laid on the pile of woods we see him submitting even his physical self. He knew that obedience is better than sacrifice.

## **CONCLUSION**

By this act of submission he became a further blessing to his father, he was also able to hear the voice of the Lord that sounded in response to his father's act of faith. It was only then that he heard the voice of the angel of the Lord from heaven, he was

exposed to an unusual personal encounter with the Lord. Obedience leads to submission in the flesh, submission in the flesh brings about godliness.

## **DAVID**

David was the youngest of the seven brothers, some of his brother's were employed in the government service while David was grazing sheep in the wilderness. Let us look at David's act of obedience. He did not reproach his father because he had placed all his brothers in good government service while making him graze the sheep in the wilderness, instead he was devoted to his responsibilities. Some youth, instead of working hard they compare themselves to their hard working bothers that land in good jobs and reproach their father on this account, instead David went about his job devoutly.

### **1. SUBMITTING TO THE WORDS OF THE FATHER**

We read in **1 Samuel 17: 17,18, and Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched *corn*, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of *their* thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.** Obedience to the father, is the first phase of blessing in the son's life. Firstly, it denotes a good relationship between a father and a son, heeding to the voice of the father is appreciable, it is the door to the blessing in the son's life. If David had not heeded to the voice of his father his life would have been in the dark, he would have lost out on a great blessing. Although he knew that the place where his brothers were was not a very amicable place for him to visit, yet he choose to go there because he heeded his father's words, because of this in the most unexpected way he got acquainted to Saul and won a great victory over the great Philistine giant Goliath who was blaspheming the Israelites and won the award that was announced by Saul. All of this happened only because he submitted to the words of his father.

We see that all the men of God on whom we had meditated upon so far, possessed the characteristics of obedience which had ultimately taken them to great heights in the society. My dear beloved! One of the greatest and most essential quality that any youth aspiring to get to greater heights should possess is obedience. Let us meditate upon the perils of disobedience

### **Disobedience**

Disobedience is a very dangerous attribute. Although it appears to be a very small issue it would be a great stumbling block to an individual's blessing. **In Romans 5:18 we read, therefore as by the offence of one *judgment* came upon all men to condemnation;** here we see that Adam's disobedience was the main reason for the subsequent generations' loosing their blessing and living under a curse. Moreover disobedience is not only displeasing to the parents but it is also displeasing to the Lord. We saw the rewards brought by obedience now let us meditated upon the rewards that are encountered by disobedience in the following verses.

**Romans 2:8** But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.

**2Cor 10:6** And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience.

**Hebrews 2:2** For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.


**Ephesians 5:6** Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

**Colossians 3:6** For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.

**Hebrews 4: 11** Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Disobedience is an inherent quality of the human race and this is evident in the following verse **Titus 3:3, For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.** Disobedience is something that every human being should regret. This obedience is not only towards the parents, lets consider the following verses

**1 Corinthians 16: 16** That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with *us*, and laboureth

**Romans 13:1** Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 

**Titus 3: 1** Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.

**1Peter 2:14** Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

**Ephesians 5:21** Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

**Ephesians 6:5** Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.

**Colossians 3:22** Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God.

**Titus 2:10** Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

**1Peter 2:18** Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward.

**Titus 3:1** Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.

**Romans 13:5** Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Disobedience is loathsome to those who know the Lord, if a man is disobedient to others whom he can see in this world, it is impossible for him to obey God who is in heaven. Let us consider the rewards as mentioned in the following verses, **2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8** **And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,** in this verse we see that a man is drawn to very big dangers when he lives in disobedience. We are able to observe the pros of obedience and the cons of disobedience. Obedience is like one side of the coin, the other side of the coin is **WISDOM**. Wisdom plays a vital role in a man's life lets meditate upon it in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER 2 - Wisdom**

A man should function with wisdom right from his youth, in a family life wisdom is more important than money. The verses below denotes the importance of wisdom as mentioned in the scripture

**Proverbs 8:11** For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

**Job 28:18** No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom *is* above rubies.

**Proverbs 3:13** Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding.

**Proverbs 4:7** Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

Why does the bible give so much of an importance to wisdom, it is because wisdom is the corner stone of the family life. We read in **Proverbs 24:3** **Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established.** Lack of wisdom, will lead to the destruction and ruin of even a very affluent family life. There are many types of wisdom

### **a. Worldly Knowledge**

**1Corinthians 2:5** That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

**1 Corinthians 1:21** For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

**1 Corinthians 1: 25** Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

**1 Corinthians 2:6** Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to naught.

**1 Corinthians 1:20** Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

**2 Corinthians 1:12** For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

We see that it is by this wisdom that certain men accomplish many things in this world. In another words, education, music, job, dance, athletes etc or even murder, robbery all these can be accomplished by the worldly wisdom. Let us observe what the scripture speaks about this wisdom. In **Colossians 2:8** we read, **Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.** We cannot assume that by possessing this wisdom a man would be able to establish a successful family life. Even thought this worldly wisdom would cause some to shine as stars in the society, their family life would continue to be in darkness because the requirements to light up a world is different from that which is required to light up a house, a small lamp can provide light to the house. Some people lack this understanding and although they might be as bright shining stars in the outside world they would be belittled in their own family circles.

### **b. Godly wisdom**

Godly wisdom is what God has given to man in **Proverbs 1:7**, we read, **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge** again in **Isaiah 11:2**, **And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding**, this spirit is the Holy Spirit, this Holy Spirit operates as the Spirit of Wisdom, and this spirit operates exactly opposite to the worldly wisdom. The apostle Paul also mentions about this in **1 Corinthians 2:12 and 13**, **Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.**

**2 Corinthians 1:12**, For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom.

**1Corinthians 2:7** But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. **This is the wisdom of God.**

What is this wisdom? In **James 3:17** we read, **But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.** This wisdom enables us to communicate with God; it would also enable us to understand those

things which the Lord communicates with us. It is only through this that we would be able to accomplish Godly tasks. This wisdom only makes sense to the servants of God and it is only related to the work of God. Possession of this wisdom will not ensure a happy family life. By ministering to the Lord one can become a servant of the Lord, but in order to be a successful head of the family and to have a successful family life, one should possess the grace of God and the wisdom that is required to run a home and family.

In short the same person could be very successful in business as well as in ministry by possessing both worldly and Godly wisdom respectively; however this does not imply that the same person would be successful in the family life. It is only when one operates with the wisdom to run a family life would he be successful in doing so. The wisdom that is required during youth is different from that which is required when one becomes a husband. When men at times operate upside down then the storm begins to rage in the family. This is because the mistakes that they have committed in their youth due to the lack of wisdom and counsel is again repeated when they get married.

Beloved! Let us meditated upon the dos and don'ts that are required to live wisdom filled youth phase.

### **3. WISDOM FOR THE YOUTH PHASE**

A man's family life is determined in the same manner by which this wisdom is operational during his youth phase. A successful family life is not established all of a sudden. It is depended upon the youth phase of his life. This requires special grace. It is this wisdom which would make him a successful husband. How do we understand this wisdom, if we understand this wisdom we would be able to posses the wisdom which is required for the youth phase of our life then we would be able to discern that which is not good during the youth phase.

#### **Don'ts for the young men**

**In Proverbs 7: 7-9** we read, **And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house, in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:** in the above verse Solomon the wise speaks of the youth who lacked judgment, in the subsequent verse he describes how a prostitute lures him into her trap. This speaks about his associations and his character; in short it depicts his walk. At the same time this scripture also depicts those things that a youth should do during his youth phase.

#### **a. Making the best use of time**

A youth should function with an understanding of the times, it is very essential for a youth to operate in the wisdom in correspondence to the time he is living in. **Proverbs 7:7 – 9** describes the way in which a youth without judgment spends his day and night. Utilization of the time denotes wisdom. **Ephesians 5:15, 16** See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. **Colossians 4:5** Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

Pay attention to what is mentioned in the above verse, wisdom denotes proper use of time. Our sincerity to the task that we are meant to do will take us to great heights. For example we notice that some youth, instead of devoting their time to studies, while away their time in other things and forget their responsibilities, this denotes a perfect misuse of time.

### **b. Association**

When does one misuse ones time? It is when one wastes time in unnecessary associations. In the above words from the book of Proverbs we see that the foot steps of the youth without judgment leads to the prostitute. What is the mystery behind this, we see that his association is with the opposite sex. As far as possible it is better to avoid unnecessary association with the opposite sex. If a youth maintains a distance in such associations, it will not only help him to be chaste but it will also help him to be a virtuous husband in the future.

In **Proverbs 7:9 In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night**, It is highly imperative that a youth will finds himself in such situations in schools and work places where he may have to associate with the opposite sex, however let us consider the walk of a youth in the above mentioned verse. It denotes being caught in the sight of the opposite sex. It further denotes the fact that he is drawn by the eyes of the opposite sex. When a youth spends time on this he certainly will waste his time. Further more there are other issues related to the flesh, hidden in this, when her gaze falls on him he will start paying attention towards grooming his appearance. In the present days we are sometimes unable to identify whether a person is a male or a female, some men grow their hair long, stylish beards, hairstyles etc, all this is a misuse of time. It is not wrong for an individual to grow or shave his beard, what I would like to mention here is that grooming oneself in ways that would prove to be a stumbling block to others would in the long run prove to be non-profitable to oneself. **Proverbs 7:7-27** tells us that his path leads him to a prostitute and as a result he looses himself and ultimately his health.

### **c. Walk**

In **Proverbs 7:9** the verse mentions '**walking along**', he went to the prostitute's house walking as a man, however lets see how his walk was subsequently transformed, in **Proverbs 7:22-23** we read, **He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.** The above mentioned verse describes how he was compared to an animal and a bird. Thus we see that every wrong step that he takes towards a wrong association with the opposite sex will make him to loose his mind. The metaphors 'animal and bird' denotes how a man, a creation having six sense is reduced to a 5 and below 5 sensed being. This was wrought upon him because he did not pay attention to his walk.

**Proverbs 14:15** a prudent man gives thought to his steps....**thus we see that the path plays a major role in bring about destruction.**

**Job 34:21** For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

**Job 34:11** For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.

**Job 34:4** Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good.

Yes God observes the steps of every man with great concern and discipline, thus how much more should we pay attention to our steps. Where will the wrong steps of a man lead him? It will lead him into sickness and disease. If a man fails to pay attention to his steps during youth, it will lead to ruining the health. Secondly one of the main areas that a youth should pay attention is to his body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

#### **4. MIGHT**

Let us observe the rewards wrought by the steps

'The arrows pierces his liver', in **Proverbs 7:23**, we read '**dart strike through his liver**', the degradation of the body organs speak about the weakness of the youth. The physical strength determines the appearance of a man as either being perceived as young or old. In **Proverbs 20:29**, we read, **The glory of young men is their strength**. When a youth loses his might he tends to function like an old man. When a man is unmarried he is known as a bachelor, the same youth is addressed as husband after his marriage. A youth should be concerned about his physical body otherwise his married life would be a hell. The way a man maintains his body determines the health of his family life, if he does not pay attention to this then his family life would suffer from ill health. Let us observe the dangerous circumstances into which one is led when one does not pay attention to one's steps. In **Proverbs 7:26**, we read **For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her**.

**Who are these mighty men?** In **1John 2:14** we read, **I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one**, the scripture refers to the young men as mighty men. Inappropriate associations will weaken the physical body. It is not necessary that a young man should groom himself, avoiding such inappropriate associations will itself transform him into a mighty man this might would automatically groom him.

Let us consider the youth phase of Samson who was a mighty man of God, what was the result of his association and steps. His association with the Philistine woman resulted in him being thrown into the prison, his eyes were gorged out, and ultimately he died in his youth. In the present age we observe that many youth get infected with Sexually Transmitted Infections, drug addictions etc and ultimately succumb to it. What is the reason for premature death and sickness among youth today?

The unrighteous deeds committed by a man in his youth leads him to destruction. During childhood parents care and prevent their child's health by immunization and medicines, however there is no need for such medicines and injections in youth, it will suffice if he guards himself against these things that are inappropriate and contrary to the scripture, he will preserve his life.

We read in **Ecclesiastes 7:17, be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?** In the present times why do people taste death? Inappropriate association transform into illegitimate relationships and this in turn will destroy their life.

In **Proverb 7:23** we read, **a dart strike through his liver;** What is the essence of the above verse? It reveals to us the end of the youth without judgment who associated with a prostitute.

At times we assume that a prostitute is one who sells her body in exchange for money or goods, however let us consider what the scripture says in **James 4:4, Ye adulterers and adulteresses - Who have broken your faith with God, your rightful spouse. Know ye not that the friendship or love of the world - The desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life, or courting the favour of worldly men, is enmity against God? Whosoever desireth to be a friend of the world - Whosoever seeks either the happiness or favour of it, does thereby constitute himself an enemy of God; and can he expect to obtain anything of him?** Such worldly associations in the modern age is termed as 'romance and dating' and many have been deceived by the devil to believe that such associations are alright and acceptable. In **1 John 2:15** we read, **Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.** According to the scripture it is wrong for a young man and woman to indulge in such relationships before marriage. Let us see what the scripture says about marriage. In **Hebrews 13:4** we read, **Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.** In the verse above let us pay attention to the word 'adulterer', it denotes the reward of such a person and also the importance of marriage. Who is an adulteress?

In **Ezekiel 16:32** we read, **But as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband! Romans 7:3, So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress.** In **Mathew 5:32** we read **But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.** The above mentioned verses describe how a prostitute is identified in the world. When a youth avoids such associations, he would grow in both mind and body. When a youth misuses his body in his youth, after becoming a husband he would be of no use to his wife. It is always good to maintain a distance in the extent of association that one maintains with the opposite sex before marriage. We see that the absence of such associations in the lives of men such as David, Isaac, Joseph, Joshua and Daniel made them wise men and it is this wisdom that caused them to stand before great kings of their times. At the same time we see the contrary in the lives of Samson and Solomon which lead them to commit adultery and they were made a laughing stock in the eyes of people.

My dear Beloved! What we sow in the youth is what we would reap in the future. Worldly association is referred to as desire and attraction to the opposite sex, let us see how to overcome such desires. In **John 8:32, And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Psalm 119:101, I have refrained**

**my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. Psalm 119:105, Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.** Let us look at the encouragement that we receive from the above verse. In every temptation to sin or the plot of the devil, we can overcome them all by the word of God. **Genesis 24:63** we read, **And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.** Let us look at the formula that God provided to Joshua in order to be wise and triumphant. **Joshua 1:8, This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Again in Psalm 39:3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue.**

Beloved! We can observe that in the lives of David, Joshua and Daniel they were men who meditated upon the word of God. That is why they were able to rise and shine in their youth. If there is biblical meditation there would be no association between an individual and the devil and his deeds. It is only then the devil will remain as our adversary. Biblical meditation will lead us to live a pure life, if not we would live a life in unison with the devil. We see that peace flowed like a river in the lives of such men, peace does not appear overnight in the family life. Every step that we take as youth, will be a stepping stone in our family life. Apart from this it will also bring prosperity in our worldly life. When a youth meditates upon the word of God this would pave the way for him to have association with leader and key persons. The man who does not defile himself with any woman in his youth will associate with kings and people in authority. The time that David spent in keeping himself holy and on meditating on the word of God caused him to dine with King Saul. Similarly in the life of Isaac we see that he earned the favour of King Abimelech. The man who meditates upon the word of God would be outstanding in his life. On the contrary let us look at the consequences wrought by the worldly associations.

Dinah was the daughter of a Jacob a man of God, she was defiled by Shechem, he then sent his relatives to negotiate marriage with her family. Jacobs household are accustomed to circumcision therefore Shechem's people agreed to circumcise themselves. On the third day when they were still in pain the sons of Jacob slay the men of the land. When Jacob enquired about this matter with his sons, their response was **Genesis 34:31, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?** Let us pay attention to the word prostitute mentioned here, the physical relationships that a young man or woman has before marriage is described in the scripture as prostitution. The scripture addresses a youth as Man before his marriage and after his man is married the bible addresses him as husband.

### **SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP AND YOUTH**

Having sex after marriage is a blessing **Genesis 2:24, Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.**

**Ephesians 5:28**, So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

**Ecclesiastes 9:9**, Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

The above verses approve of sexual relationships, however; we read in **Ecclesiastes 3: 1, there is a season to every purpose under heaven**. The above mentioned verses are not for a youth it is for a husband. The scripture calls those youth who before their marriage involves in sexual relationships as prostitutes and adulterers. When one gets involved in such things the Lord would plague them and bring his judgment upon them. Let us see what the scripture says to the youth in the following verse

**1 Corinthians 7:1**, we read.....*It is good for a man not to touch a woman*. What we need to take note of here is that it is better for a man not to touch a woman, this applies to a man not to a husband, this is because **1 Corinthians 6:18**, we read, **Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body**. Again in **1 Corinthians 3:17** we read, **If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are**.

The scripture says the following about marriage, **Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge**. The honour that is given to the marriage is in that before marriage a man and woman should keep themselves pure. Defiling the body before marriage brings curse. At times it would result in death, Sechem desired to marry Dinah, he was not desirous of only having a physical relationships, however he was judged by the above mentioned verse, it was referred to a relationship with a prostitute. Similarly Samson also defiled his body before marriage, in turn the Philistines gorged out his eyes, his hair was cut, he was ridiculed in the eyes of men and ultimately he died.

Let us see what the Bible tells us about having physical relationship before marriage,

**Genesis 34:7** And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard *it*: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done.

**Proverbs 6:32** *But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

**Proverbs 6:29** So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.

**Mathew 5:28**, But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

**1 Corinthians 6: 9 – 10**, Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Thus the desires one has towards the opposite sex makes one weak. Youth are meant to be strong we read in **1 John 2:14 I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong**. However the lust withers away the body. In **2 Samuel 13:2**, we read, **And Amnon was so vexed, that he fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin**. In order to get her, he acted as a sick man and requested his father to allow her to serve him in his sick bed. While Tamar is attending to Amnon he expresses his desire, let us look at Tamar's response in **2 Samuel 13: 12-13, And she answered him, Nay, my brother, do not force me; for no such thing ought to be done in Israel: do not thou this folly. And I, whither shall I cause my shame to go? And as for thee, thou shalt be as one of the fools in Israel. Now therefore, I pray thee, speak unto the king; for he will not withhold me from thee**. We read in **2 Samuel 13:15, Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone**. In a short time Tamar's brother Absalom kills Amnon and takes revenge on him for defiling his sister. The scripture tells us that the **wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)**. The scripture uses the expressions such as "Violated her" and 'Rape' to denote the relationship between an unmarried man and woman, (**Genesis 34:2 & 2 Samuel 13:14**). On the contrary the scripture uses words such as 'knew' and 'united' to describe the relationship between a husband and a wife.

Let us now observe the way a youth who meditates upon the scripture functions, **Genesis 24: 67**, here the scripture says that **Isaac loved Rebecca**. Taking a wife after falling in love is unscriptural. On account of this we see that Isaac's family life was filled with peace. Therefore, not doing those things that are a defilement within Israel will make a youth wise. This is the wisdom of the youth. A youth can overcome and preserve himself by meditating on the word of God thereby he would be able to gain possession over wisdom. Youth should possess the understanding about marriage right from their young age. The youth who would be ridiculed for his good morals while he is a youth, while at school and college will in the future grow to possess global fame. On the contrary those youth who defiles themselves by the ways of the world and glorifies such immoral acts while in his youth would in the future become a scorn and an object of ridicule in the sight of people. Thus living as heroes and herons during the youth will seem great at that time however in the future they would appear as clowns in the eyes of the world. In this present day busy world if we consider those who are wasting away we would be able to observe that as youth their life would not have been proper. When a youth decides to follow such wise deeds his unwise ways will disappear. Now let us meditate as to how a youth gains the status of a husband.

### **CHAPTER 3 - Youth and marriage**

Beloved! Upto now we have meditated upon the do's and don'ts that a young man should follow, the wisdom that he should possess and how he could live as a mighty youth. Now let us meditate upon the matrimonial aspects with regards to a youth. We read in **Genesis 2:18, And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone;** in response to this state of Man, God instituted marriage. Why do we sometimes come across youth who might be desirous of getting married, but is not able to do so? What is the mystery behind some men who in spite of a good educational background, handsome salary and good personality are unable to get married? Bachelor-hood is the phase before a man gets married, there is a lot of difference between the life after and before marriage. There are certain things that a man should perform during the phase between bachelorhood and husband; it is these things that make him a husband. Normally the basis on which a bachelor gets married is based on the acceptance from the prospective bride; because of this a bachelor tries his level best to woo his prospective partner by way of his appearance, job and other worldly aspects. In John 15:19 Jesus says **"although you are in the world you are not off the world"**.

In **Romans 12:2** the Apostle Paul says, **do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world.** Some bachelors would emphasize the fact that since the prospective bride has accepted the proposal, they should go ahead with the marriage, this would lead to him being accepted only by the prospective bride and not by the rest of the members of her family. In course of time he would be viewed as a person who cares little about the feelings of the parents of the bride and this would lead to him not receiving due respect and acceptance within his in-laws household. Parents are always concerned about the marriage of their daughter, however their hearts should be moved to the extent of wanting to get their daughter married to the individual. Let us now meditate upon those aspects of a youth that would win the confidence of the prospective bride's household.

A youth may be drawn to a particular girl and may desire to marry her, he may spend many hours wooing her. However in the event of him not being able to convince her family he may decide to marry her against the desire of her household, under these circumstances his marriage may turn out to be a disaster because her heart would be drawn towards her household. The members of her household would also not allow them to lead a peaceful family life. Let us consider the way in which the man of God, Samson in the Old Testament chose his prospective bride. In **Judges 14:1-2** we read, **And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife.** The marriage that was thus entered into was very short-lived. In **Judges 14:20** we read, **But Samson's wife was given to his companion.** The fact that he showed himself wiser than the members of his bride's household brought his ruination. We can read the whole incident in **Judges 14: 12 – 20.** It is under these circumstances that Samson's wife was handed over to his companion.

**Why do some husbands live as bachelors even after they get married?** A bachelor should not take for granted that he has ultimately married the girl of his choice, this could prove to be very disastrous in a married life. If a girl's household is made to shed tears on account of such an incident, it will secretly draw her affection back to her own household. Under these circumstances, no matter how mighty a man is or how much of affection he has towards his wife, these incidents would pave the way for his losing his battle and having to accept defeat in the family life. Subsequent to her weeping before him for seven days, we see that her family considered it better for her to be given to a weaker man than a mighty man. A bachelor should not by his words, actions or the display of his worldly efficiencies belittle the status of his wife's household, this would in due course of time lead him to lose his stand as a son-in-law and the husband of the daughter. If the members of the prospective bride's household gets even the slightest impression that they are being belittled by their to-be son-in-law, they would rather get their daughter married to a simpleton than to a bachelor who is very successful in all areas. No matter how successful a man is, if on any account his wife is made to shed tears during the initial stage of their married life, this would prove to be disastrous in due course of time. Samson's might served the purpose of tearing the jaws of ferocious lions but did not come in handy in his family life.

We see some men who fail to draw the distinction between family and professional life. They exert the same authority in the family as they would in their office. This would subsequently land them in failures in their married life. Thus it is important to pay attention to these issues, if not the wife who was given into his bosom would land up embracing another man in her bosom, we see this in the life of Samson. When a family beholds a prospective groom they should be able to perceive how their daughter would be treated by him, instead he should not be acting as a counselor trying to display his wisdom and the fact that he knows everything. In short a prospective groom should be perceived as a humble and simple person. When this is not maintained, despite the fact that a bachelor is well established in the world he may not be viewed as a prospective groom for a girl. He should ensure that he does not constantly talk about those things that his bride's family is not aware of, such as the intricacies of his job and the technicalities it encompasses. This would seem as Greek and Latin to them and they may perceive him as a headstrong person. There is no need for the bride's family to be informed on all the aspects concerning the groom's capabilities and wisdom. This would allow him to lead a peaceful life and maintain his status as a husband. We saw a young man in the scripture that became a husband but ultimately lost his husband-hood, now let us meditate up on the characteristics of a young man who rose to the heights of becoming the son-in-law to the king.

The Philistine champion, Goliath would appear everyday before the Israel army and would speak blasphemously against them, the Israel army would run away and hide their face from him. **1 Samuel 17:25, And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? Surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel.** What was the reason for a famous king to announce his daughter as a reward amongst other rewards? It was because of the reproach that was caused to him by Goliath. In other words, he sought a person who

would provide security for him and his blessings. Any man would desire a son – in – law who would be capable of maintaining all that he has earned and come to possess in his life. This is true in affluent families, Saul was a very powerful king however when all that he had was under threat there was nothing he could do to overcome that situation.

**For the attention of bachelors & husbands!** Very often the bride's family would look for a groom who would be able to fulfill their own lacks. They will never be vocal about their incapacities but they would be bold in proclaiming what they are capable of doing in exchange. We see this reflected in King Saul who although was not in a position to deliver the people of Israel from the hands of Goliath was very enthusiastic in announcing a reward to the person who could do so. It is very important for a groom to be aware of the incapacities of the bride's household. What every youth needs to take note of here is that, they should not always keep their eyes fixed on the rewards but instead should be aware of the circumstances under which these commitments are made. It is not necessary for a man to have wealth in order to marry a girl from an affluent family what he requires is wisdom. What Saul did could be compared to the modern day's fathers of brides who are willing to provide huge rewards in exchange for certain qualities in a youth.

When the parents offer their daughter in marriage it is important to take note of the weakness of that family and not get carried away by the financial amenities that accompany her. This is not in order to take advantage of the bride's family but it is to gain their confidence. How could we get to know their expectations? One way of doing so is through the neighbours. Another indication is that they would always look for something that is lacking among the members of their own household. For example, people often think that those from affluent families always desire proposals from similar families, however it is most likely that they would desire to seek a proposal from a groom who possesses those qualities that are not found among the members of their own household. If a marriage proposal is struck between two families of the same financial status and interest it is most likely that they would land up competing with each other. Whether an aristocratic or an ordinary family they would prefer to give their daughter to whoever is able to fulfill their expectations and lack. This is how a man can be successful in wooing not only the prospective bride but will also help in winning the confidence of her entire family. The bride's family may have social, political and economic influences, however if a prospective groom takes into consideration only these influences of the bride's household, these very same things would in the later days prove to be his greatest disadvantages. It is important to identify the Goliaths that the prospective bride's family is unable to slay, in order to pass the initial phase.

**Is a prayer life alone, sufficient for becoming a husband?** Beloved! Prayer is essential for a good family life, however this is not the only criteria to woo a prospective girl's household. In **1 Samuel 16:23**, we read **And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.** Thus we see that Saul did not come forward to make David his son – in – law when he was comforted in his body and soul. At this point I would like to draw your attention to the societal needs of a girl's family and

the importance this plays in wooing the girl's household. We often see that parents would seek a groom for their daughter who is got some social influence and standing, they would seek such a person who would add to their social, political and economic status. If David had not given respite to Saul when he was tormented by the evil spirit it would have not made much of a difference to Saul since only he would have succumbed to the spirit, however if he had lost to Goliath he would have lost his kingdom and the children of Israel would have been taken into captivity by their enemies. What needs to be noted here is that the girl's household would not only take into consideration the benefits their family would enjoy through this proposal but would also consider the good that it would bring to all their relatives. Directly or indirectly they would prefer a groom who would be beneficial to their entire household, it is only when a prospective groom takes these things into consideration would he be successful in overcoming the first phase of wooing the girl's household. This would lead the girl's parents to consider him as a prospective groom for their daughter. The girl's household would take account of how their own prospects and influence in the society would be if they accept this proposal. This is why as mentioned earlier they would prefer a son – in – law who is capable of doing those things that other members in their own household and among their own relatives are incapable of doing. Prayer life alone will not suffice in these aspects, along with the prayer life one also needs to perform and in terms of worldly aspects he should not only be a blessing for the daughter but also be beneficial to the entire household.

### **Loving The Relation**

The aspects regarding a prospective groom that we have meditated upon so far are those that pertain to his performance in the outside world. After this the family would observe how he would treat the other relatives within the household besides their own daughter. They would take into consideration how he would relate to the girl's siblings. David's victory over Goliath was what he had wrought in the world it could be attributed to his might and skill and above all the grace of God, this could be compared to the blessings and success one would have in the official areas these days. However one of the most important areas that the family would take into consideration is the way he relates to the other siblings, how sensitive he is towards them, how he displays his emotions and how he reacts with others. This was the test that even David had to pass, we read in **1 Samuel 18:1, And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.** Consider the outcome of this in **1 Samuel 18:2, And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.** This is the mystery that transforms a stranger into ones own son.

We read in **1 Corinthians 13:7 Love Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.** How should one express this love? What prevents a man from expressing his love is the worldly status. When we relate to a person only on the basis of our relationship then the love towards that person would overflow, for example when a person relates to his brother – in – law only on the basis of this relationship then there will be love but instead if he expresses his love based on the social and economic status then the relationship become strained. It is like drinking water through a straw, it is different from

drinking water directly from the cup, the straw always restricts and limits the flow of water through it.

How could David have loved Jonathan? David won Goliath only in the battle field. He did not boast about that victory and base his expectations from relatives based on that victory. He did not think ' I am a ordinary Shepard boy and I slayed the giant, what good is the son of the king', and he did not boast about himself. It is sufficient for a man to boast about himself in order to make others feel inferior and mocked upon. At the same time neither did he love Jonathan in order to win the favour of the king. David loved Jonathan without any expectations. It is only when a man handles these things carefully will he be able to win the love of his wife's siblings. One should not attach oneself to the wife's siblings on the basis of their success neither should one detach oneself from them when they are down in life. It is only when one relates to them well during both their ups and downs will the love flow. These things would cause the bride's family to show affection towards the groom and would not want him to leave their household, on the contrary if one makes a mockery of the educational status, physical appearance, economic status etc of the girl's siblings he would not be welcome in the girls household.

David's wilderness experience included, tearing apart lions and bears and protecting the flock, he came from a very difficult background, however that was the path that the Lord had prepared for David and it was Lord' s leading upon his life. On the contrary Jonathan was brought up in the luxury of his father's palace however not relating to Jonathan on the basis of his own experiences was what allowed David to love Jonathan to such a great extent. We should not try to impose the experiences gained from our own trials on other people and expect them to go the same path that we traveled. We should allow them to travel the path that the Lord has prepared for them. It is most likely that husbands do not pay attention to these aspects while relating to people in the wife's household. This would in turn lead the wife to grow more sympathetic towards her own siblings because of the constant reproach of the husband towards the wife's household. It is better to avoid conversations which would lead to unnecessary disputes over the wife's siblings. This would prevent from setting the relationship between a husband and wife ablaze. There are many husbands who have burnt themselves in this fire. These are things concerning which a man should have sufficient knowledge before getting married. Look at the next phase of this friendship, we read in **1 Samuel 18:4, And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.** This is the mystery behind wining the favour of the wife's siblings. Worldly victories can be compared to David's victory over Goliath. That victory only pertains to the outside world. It is wrong to expect that the members of the wife's household should express their love on the basis of that victory. The love of the wife's household should be won through the related means. Now let us take into consideration the way a youth should live in the society.

## **CHAPTER 4 - Social status**

When David killed Goliath, he received worldly fame and honour and a social standing in the society, however this is very different from one's social status. Goliath was an enemy and the wisdom that is required to overcome an enemy is different from the wisdom that one requires to maintain relationships with one's own family. An individual needs to possess the wisdom that is required to overcome his enemies and to maintain a good relationship with his relatives, however there is a third dimension to this and that is the wisdom that is required to maintain one's social associations. Only the Lord can give an individual such wisdom.

### **Official wisdom**

In **1 Samuel 18:5** we read **'And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.'** The above verse denotes the social status of David which was wrought him by his official status. In **1 Samuel 18:15** we read, **'wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.'** An individual's status is based on one's professional status. It is not possible for everyone to gain a professional degree in order to gain a social status. It depends on one's family background, financial capacities etc. there are several individuals who despite having a professional degree do not fair well in society. There are certain things that one needs to handle wisely. If these are handled wisely then everything else (social status) would automatically come to an individual. Saul gave David a high rank in his army because he handled his responsibilities wisely. This can be considered as official wisdom. Before he gained the wisdom to handle his responsibilities we see that David did whatever Saul sent him to do.

### **David's Maturity**

**'Whatever Saul sent him to do'** in this we see the maturity of David, the whole kingdom was able to stand because of David. If it was not for David the Philistines would have overcome the kingdom. David did not think in his mind "the whole nation is in peace because of me and yet Saul is making me wander about" this shows the Christ like humility of David. Many successful individuals would consider it below their dignity when they are asked to go to places. Instead they would expect others to come and wait on them. This is one of the secret ingredients in being a successful Official, this in a way denotes the love for the people. When an individual is willing to go wherever he is sent without any bias this will bring him success in his work. Going to meet someone and visiting some place denotes the love we have for that person and the commitment we have towards our job. Above all this denotes David's briskness. No matter how successful we are, if without remaining in the same place if we are willing to go wherever we are sent it will make us very great, however it is not enough that one should be willing to go wherever one is sent, rather it is the way in which David handled his responsibilities that made him an Officer.

### Handling responsibilities wisely

We read in **1 Samuel 18:5**, ‘**And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him**’, Going places is one experience but handling the responsibilities in that place with wisdom is a different experience. Some people would be willing to go where they are sent but they would do things without wisdom and people would regret their presence in those places. It is sufficient that one handles one’s responsibilities wisely, high ranking positions would be automatically conferred upon them. We read in **1 Corinthians 7:4**, ‘**The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband**, this denotes the office a husband holds within marriage according to the scripture, however, the scripture says that a man should in the first place hold an office in the worldly realm before he holds office within marriage. If one tries to hold only the office of marriage without first establishing himself in the world he will land up losing his status within the office of marriage. Youths should in the first place establish themselves in their profession before thinking about marriage. The bride’s household would be very keen in these matters, they would inquire regarding the professional status of the groom. They would be interested in inquiring about the work prospects of the groom, the potentials that he has and the prospects that he has in his job, business etc. Thus we see that holding an office denotes the official status of an individual. The secret of rising in one’s office denotes the understanding with which one handles one’s responsibilities.

### Handling one’s responsibilities with understanding

Let us meditate upon the word ‘**understanding**’, through the verses below,

**Job 28:12** But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?

**Job 28: 20** Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?

**Job 28: 28** Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom....

**Psalms 111:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom....

Let us consider the ways of a foolish person in order for us to have a better understanding of wisdom, by this we would also be able to gain an insight and be successful in our life. Let us consider the ways of the foolish. In **2 Corinthians 12:11** we read, ‘beloved, when we start to boast about our own self unknowingly we begin to give into foolishness.’ We see Paul instructing the church in **2 Corinthians 10:12** ‘**For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.**’ The above verse is a caution to us, at the same time it also makes us wise. We see how an official lost his position by ignoring the warning in the verse and failed to guard himself and ultimately lost his leadership.

We read in **Daniel 4:30 – 31**, **‘The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.’** In this verse we see the great king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon hardly did he finish boasting about the work of his hand and himself that he lost his status as king what was the outcome of this, we read in **Daniel 4:33**, **‘The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles’ feathers, and his nails like birds’ claws.’** He lost his official status as king, it could be compared to suspensions in the present world. He was pushed from a position in which he considered that there was no one higher than himself. He lost his kingly stature to that of an animal. A food that an individual consumes is based on his official status. After he lost his kingdom he ate grass like cattle what does this denote, one should not always boast about ones achievements in the profession. These characteristics would work in the favour of our enemies who are always in the look out for opportunities to put us down. Next let us consider one’s official profile.

In **Daniel 4:36** we read **‘At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.’** Profession is the mark of a man. Here we read ‘his ministers and his nobles sought him’. What makes those who depart from us to return to us is our countenance. If an individual possesses understanding, this understanding would bring wisdom and the wisdom would make one’s countenance to shine. Let us see what the scripture says about wisdom.

Wisdom is from the Lord we see this in **Romans 16:27, 11:33** and **Proverbs 2: 6**. This invisible God took the form of man and came down to earth as Jesus Christ, wisdom abided in him this is denoted in the verses **Colossians 2:3, Isaiah 11:2** and **1 Corinthians 1:24**. In **Ecclesiastes 8:1** we read **‘Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man’s wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.’** In accordance to this verse we read in the scripture that the countenance of Lord Jesus shone (**2 Corinthians 4:6, Mathew 17:2**). The Holy Spirit gives this same godly wisdom to all those who seek him in **1 Corinthians 12:11** we read **‘But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.** The scripture tells us that God gives wisdom to each according to their individual mission, thus we read in **1 Corinthians 7:7** **‘For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.’** That is why we read King Nebuchadnezzar say that his honor and splendor were returned to him, which was essential for the glory of his kingdom. We see in the present world that people in high office for example those in the police service have a countenance which depicts authority whereas if we see a thief he would have the countenance that depicts fear and suspension. If we behold the face of a lazy person it would appear sleepy, why do we read that honor and splendor was restored to Nebuchadnezzar?

Let us now see those things that people who aspire to be successful in their profession need to take into consideration. We read in **Daniel 4:33** **'The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws'**. Combing ones hair and cutting nails, this would draw the attention of people, thus it is important to maintain our personal hygiene. Men need to groom their hair, natural hair-fall is acceptable, but at the same time when one grooms oneself contrary to nature it would lead to one being looked down upon. We read in **1 Corinthian 11:14** **Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?** Similarly with regards to nails, we should groom ourselves in such a way that we do not attract any undue attention. Some people grow their nails long much to the astonishment of other people, some people constantly bite their nails, some dig their nose and ears in public all these behaviours would make others to consider us as unhygienic. We need to pay attention to such behaviours in the office. We read in **Daniel 4:33** that king Nebuchadnezzar's body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.

Beloved! This shows that Nebuchadnezzar was unconcerned about his physical appearance. Official profile and an official continence does not come automatically, it has to do with the way one maintains personal hygiene and grooms oneself. Let us see what the scripture has to say about this. We read in **1 Corinthians 3: 17 and 18** **If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.** Again in **1 Corinthians 6:18** we read, **'Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that commiteth fornication sinneth against his own body.** If God destroys a person that condition of that person is very dangerous. God gets upset not only when one uses ones body for prostitution, he is also concerned about the personal hygiene of individuals. Let us see what David has to say about his fingers, we read in **Psalms 144:1** **Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.** Let us consider what happened to king Nebuchadnezzar when his countenance was restored to him. We read in **Daniel 4:36** **At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me.** Being sought by the ministers and nobles depicts the relationships that we need to maintain in the official circles. Pride will drive us away from the people. Associations talks about our love and peace that we maintain with people. Let us meditate on what the scripture tells us in **Romans 12:18** **If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.**

When Jesus went about His Father's office in the world, he chose 12 men as disciples he kept them with himself, although he knew that one of them would betray him and the other would deny him he still did not sever his association with them, he did not go about his ministry alone. One needs to be a team player at the same time one should not entertain unnecessary gathering together and whiling away the time during office hours. Associations would provide room for us

to overcome jealousy and bitterness within the office, some people would go about their jobs with a frown, there is no harm in greeting everyone with a smile when we enter the office in the morning. Superiors would always want people in the office who go about their jobs cheerfully and are able to maintain good interpersonal relationships with colleagues. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was restored to him after his ministers and nobles sought him and he became greater than before. Now let us see how David went about his office wisely. The foolishness of the great emperor Nebuchadnezzar drove him to the wilderness. But on the contrary wisdom made David who was grazing the sheep in the wilderness to be seated in the palace. The life of David and Nebuchadnezzar would illustrate what good understanding means.

### **Boastfulness**

David did not blow his own trumpet about his victory over Goliath in all the places to which Saul sent him. Boasting and narcissism would drive us into isolation. Nebuchadnezzar was proud of the Babylon that he had built, a man who does not boast about himself and the work of his hands would raise to great heights.

### **Association**

We read in **1 Samuel 18:5 And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.** This is the outcome of the office culture that we had meditated upon until now. The verse 'this pleased all the people' refers to customers and 'Saul's officers' refers to ones colleagues. This illustrates the good customer relations that David maintained, even though one has very good customer relations but do not maintain good relations with colleagues this would lead to strain in interpersonal relationship with the customers. At the same time if one is not good at maintaining good customer relations then one would ultimately loose ones job, David was aware of this and he maintained good relationship this is commendable.

Often we see that an individual would at times be able to pay attention to only one aspect and owing to this a he may not be able to retain his job for long. Such youth are always in the lookout for new opportunities and even when they do get one, they are not able to sustain it for long. At times a youth, just because he is getting on in age would lie about his job to the household of the prospective bride and would get married, when the bride's family ultimately gets to know of this there would be a raucous in the house. This is because a youth does not pay attention to his professional life. Why do some youth do not get jobs? It is because a youth is blinded towards such professional requirements. Although there is corruption, caste based reservations and so many other aspects such youth who posses' good qualities would always stand a chance of being successful. One should get over one's boastfulness, it is only then will one be able to associate with others. It is only then that one can attain a social status. In order for a bride's household to be convinced by the professional background of the groom it is necessary for him to maintain good relationship and to earn the goodwill of his colleagues. David was very much aware of this.

Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was restored to him when his ministers and nobles sought him. Let us consider the life of Christ.

We read in **Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.** If it was essential for the promised messiah and the only begotten son of God to earn the favour of men, how much more important it is for ordinary men such as ourselves to earn the favour of men. Therefore which ever be the people in the midst of whom the Lord places us, when we do not given to our flesh they would be amicable to us. Will everyone in the organization tolerate the growth of such an individual? Now let us consider the politics one has to face in the office.

## **CHAPTER 5 - Office Politics**

Dear beloved you may wonder why such a detailed explanation is given with regards to how a youth should be if he should be considered as a prospective groom. A youth should pay attention to these aspects if he is to successfully tackle the various relationships that he would encounter in the future. We often see that a successful individual will earn the envy of many people in the society. The office is an arena where different types of individuals come together. If an individual finds favour in the sight of the boss it might lead to strife between the individual and middle and lower level management. If an individual is successful in handling the head the tail will create contention if one is able to tackle the tail then this would lead to discord with the head. A youth should be able to balance both ends. If not it would be like couple going on a honeymoon, which is a short stay, invariably the couple would have to return to their home. Similarly if an individual fails to strike a balance between the boss and the other management staff he would find himself overwhelmed by the situation and would ultimately have to quit. If an individual continues in his career in the similar manner it would ultimately ruin his family life.

We see lot of unemployed youth whiling away their time blaming the society and the government and their poverty situations. Some youth are unable to retain their jobs, they are of the opinion that their qualifications and experience would fetch them a job even if they resign from the current job, because of such an attitude, although they possess the necessary skills with regards to their jobs but lack the wisdom required to function in an office they would be hopping jobs ever so often. Their resume would never get passed seasoned Human Resource (HR) personnel, since they would have constantly hopped jobs, just like on a honeymoon trip they would have stayed in a job for barely a month. When such a Resume come before the HR personnel for perusal, the applicant's negligence and listlessness would undermine his qualifications and skills. No individual would be interested in changing jobs often unless it is for better prospects. If an individual is not able to overcome the politics in the office and he keeps changing jobs the prospective brides household would be lead to think that if in the future in accordance to the verse in the scripture which reads "a man's enemy is the members of his own household" how would he be able to handle those situations? It would not be inappropriate to say that the official life is the reflection of family life. Let us meditate upon an official who overcame official politics. Until now we saw how one could rise in the official realms now let us see how to associate with those in authority.

## David and Official Politics

David slayed Goliath, brought peace to the Israelites, stepped in to the palace (the office) and was placed as an officer over the soldiers yet he did not enjoy peace in his life. It is only after this that his problems began. All this while when he was grazing the sheep he encountered a lion and a bear and was able to overcome both, however when he was called to be a shepherd of the people the very same people became his enemies.

## The King's Annoyance

We read in **1 Samuel 18: 6 – 9**, **And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.** The above mentioned verse is the foundation for the annoyance of the king. When compared with the King and his kingdom, David considered his life as nothing and he was willing to risk his life to safeguard them, but these very same things became the cause for crisis in his life. Consider the phrase '**Saul eyed David**', the way in which Saul eyed David when he encountered a favourable situation on account of David was different after that incident.

For the attention of those who desire to go up the ladder, you may have to encounter the envy of people before you reach a position that you desire. This is where you have to use your wisdom, what was the result of Saul's envy? We read in **1 Samuel 18:11** **And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.**

My beloved! How do we respond to such an envious situation? David was not alarmed by Saul's approach and action against him, this is a good example for us as we continue to live in an ungrateful world. David did not curse Saul for being ungrateful. The scripture tells us that not once but twice, David missed getting killed at the hand of Saul.

David easily encountered the Philistine Giant Goliath, but he rescued himself from the hands of Saul. He understood the difference between the enemy and the one in authority. If we try to wrestle against the authority we would very soon find ourselves in a losing battle and would have to quit. To put it in modern HR terms, we may consider this as a wrong management strategy and a failure on the part of the management to address the issue. However we see David adopting a very different approach. We get to read this in **Ecclesiastes 10:4** **If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.**

Yes my beloved! Quitting will suppress us, if such a characteristic is present in any youth, when he encounters problems in his relationships in the

future his first strategy would be to quit. They would hang around when everything works fine but will flee when things go wrong, people would brand such individuals as opportunist. The office acts as a training ground where one can learn the various strategies to handle the various relationships one would encounter in the family. Within a family there are relatives such as father-in-law, mother-in-law etc, similarly in an office there are accountants, managers etc. The strategies he adopts in the office would make him wise enough to handle the relationships in the family. This is because the mistakes that he commits in the office in the midst of strangers would help him to correct himself, however the mistakes he commits in his family and in the midst of his relatives would lead to strain in relationships. Thus we see that if one does not encounter the annoyance of the king one would not be able to march towards the leadership. It is this wisdom that would move the King/head, quitting will not move them. Let us see the outcome of this in **1 Samuel 18:12-13 And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.**

My beloved! We saw how one needs to submit to authority in the work place now let us see how to manage those in authority.

#### **How should we manage those in authority?**

We read in **1 Samuel 18:15 Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.** Saul feared David because he saw that David was very wise in managing authority.

#### **Who is this very wise man?**

In **Proverbs 14:29** we read '**He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly**'. Short temper will present folly. Whether it is official or family areas short temper would bring ruin. In **Proverbs 14:17** we read '**He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly**'. In **Proverbs 19:19** we read '**A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again**'.

The scripture subtly reveals to us that Saul was afraid of David because David was longsuffering he was not of haughty temper. One who possesses sound understanding cannot be short tempered and one who is short tempered cannot possess good understanding. Even when Saul threw the arrow at David he did not get angry instead he rescued himself and did not try to kill Saul in the pretext of defending himself. When we are attacked by loved ones we should only attempt to rescue ourselves and not try, in the bargain to destroy the other. If we try to do so we will find ourselves trapped. This is illustrated in **Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not**. Why does the scripture denote anger as a sin? What is the sin hidden in the anger? In the abundant usage of words sin will abound. Let us consider the abode of this destructive wrath.

Which is the wrath's abode?

**Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.** Again we read in **Proverbs 27:4 Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?**

What sort of a mind will harbour anger?

**Ecclesiastes 7:9**...anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

**Galatians 5:26** Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

**1 Timothy 2:8** I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

The office set-up is the training ground where the young men should tame their anger. We read in **James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.** Dear beloved anger will only cause destruction. The anger that we display in the office will lead to us to loose out on relationships and also hamper our promotion. At times the job itself will be at stake. The consequences of anger is worthless.

### **The consequences of anger**

It is difficult to say when anger would strike or subside, let us now meditate upon the losses that came upon men of God because of their anger.

### **God's Work**

If a man gives vent to his anger, be it in spiritual or in secular realms, a man will not be able to fulfill the duties bestowed upon him by his higher authorities. Let us consider the Prophet Moses in the scripture we read in **Deuteronomy 34:12 And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.**

This mighty man of God could not enter the promise land because he gave vent to his anger. When the children of God had no water to drink in the wilderness of Kadesh, they forgot the mighty works of God and murmured against Moses and Aaron. We read in **Numbers 20:8 Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.** Contrary to the word of God he struck the rock instead of speaking to it, however God made the water to flow out of the rock, but Moses could not enter the Promised Land. Oh what a tragedy! Moses who was long suffering and had patiently endured a lot of trouble, was provoked to anger by the murmuring of the children of Israel struck the rock and this action changed the plan of God for his life. This is why we see the scripture cautioning us in **James 1:20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.**

Let us meditate on how this anger destroys the peace within the family and leads to strife between relationships.

### **Family life**

We read in **Judges 14: 9 And he (Samson) took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.** Here we see how Samson who had gone to visit his in-laws considered himself very smart and started to rattle away riddles in an attempt to display his smartness, however the people of his wife's household proved to be even more smarter by using his wife to find out the answers to his riddles. Ultimately we see Samson had to give them the garments that he had announced as the prize and left in a fit of rage to his father's house. Subsequent to this his wife was given in marriage to one of his own friends, here we see that the prize of anger was divorce. Be it a man or a woman who leaves the house in anger will have to lose his/her spouse for life. Even if we repent and later on try to make up for our actions, it would be like trying to stick to gather a broken glass, the cracks will show anyway. So it is even when we try to patch up the relationships that are torn apart by anger. After a few days Samson desirous of his wife, went to visit her taking along a lamb. However to his dismay she was given as a wife to another man. Some will not hesitate to lavish expensive gifts on their wife however they will take anger along with it and they will also provide justification for that anger. Let us learn to give up this self righteous attitude and learn to call a spade a spade. This is what we read in **Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.** Anger will easily ruin relationships. Thus a youth needs to pay attention to these aspects in his life, he has to train himself to control his anger right there in his work place itself. This will make the authorities submit to us. This is what David did, we read this in **1Samuel 18:16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.** This is a life of testimony. This characteristic in David stirred the heart of Saul to give his daughter in marriage to David. There was a snare in the marriage as well. However Saul himself swore to give his daughter in marriage to David. In **1Samuel 18:22** we read, **'And Saul commanded his servants, saying, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son in law'**. What does this indicate? This indicates that the bride's household is requesting a third party to convince the groom to marry their daughter. If the bride's household lays eye on such a groom they will surely not want to miss the opportunity to make him their son-in-law. Thus we see that such characteristics are essential in a youth if a girl's household should consider a boy as a suitable match for their daughter. Defeating Goliath is one type of experience, managing the bride's siblings is another, this could be compared to the relationship that David had with Jonathan. Being victorious in one's career, managing the conspiracies one might encounter in the office, above all displaying one's patience in such a way that would make people to fear are all various experiences through which a youth should successfully overcome before he is considered as a prospective bridegroom. This will capacitate him to handle similar situations in his family life, the bride's household should be aware of such capacities in a prospective groom.

We see in the life of Samson that the lack of understanding about his strength among those of his wife's household led to a difference of opinion between them, it also led to him giving his wife away to another man and he also had to face great financial losses because the wife's household was unaware of his capacities. We see in the previous paragraph that David possessed such capacities and won the confidence of the bride's household. However Samson's approach was different, he went directly to the bride and so he was unable to gauge the strengths, weaknesses and guile of the bride's household which led to his ruination. A youth should reveal himself to the bride's household and introduce himself at an opportune moment, after gauging their strengths and weakness, he should move matters only after gauging the situation. Whereas we see Samson jump headlong into the arena, he directly approached the bride, this only led to his marriage it did not guarantee him a good family life, for this, one needs to be sensitive to the feelings of the bride's household if not, any small word or deed would hurt their feelings and create misunderstanding.

At the same time a youth should also be sensitive to the needs of his own household if not in accordance to **Micah 7:6 a man's enemies are the men of his own house**. His own household will create problems for him in his family life. Let us consider the life of Esau in **Genesis 26:35** we read '**Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah**'. What was the reason for this grief? It was Esau's marriage. We read in **Genesis 26:34 And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite**. Esau took wives for himself from the gentiles who at the time followed a culture, way of dressing, food habits and approach to elders within the household which was very contradictory to the Hebrew's. The consequence of these marriages led his mother to rise against him and cunningly devised a plan by which he ultimately lost his right as an eldest son. It is not only the bride's household who can cause hindrance to a happy family life the groom's household could play an equal role in this. Thus a youth should be able to peacefully involve the members of his own household in his marriage. If not his own household will force him to regret his decision. Like a physical balance he should be able to balance both his and his bride's household, if not either household could make his family life barren. We meditated upon how a youth becomes a husband, now let us consider how he ought to be as a husband.

## **CHAPTER 6 - Husband and marital life**

Until now we meditated upon the life of a youth now let us see how he ought to live with a new relationship. The physical relationship between a man and a woman is considered as sexual relationship however the relationship between a husband and a wife is what we call a marital relationship. In our country an individual is required to have a valid driving license if he is to drive his vehicle if not he could get caught by the authorities and penalized for the crime of driving without a valid driving license. Similarly marriage is a God given license for a husband to have relationship with his wife. Yes my dear beloved! The relationship that a husband and wife have after marriage is what is called as marital relationship.

Let us look at what the scripture says about this relationship

**1. Defile (Genesis 34:2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her.)** When a man

and a woman consent to have sexual relationship outside or before marriage the scripture calls such a relationship as defiling. For example let us read Genesis 19:36 **'Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father'**. The context in which this verse is placed illustrates this relationship as defiling.

**2. Rape (2 Samuel 13:14 Howbeit he would not hearken unto her voice: but, being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her)** When a man and a woman has a sexual relationship without the consent of either party or by force, such a relationship is considered as a rape according to the scripture. The above verse illustrates the relationship between a husband and a wife but under an undesirable and unacceptable circumstance. At the same time let us also consider the way in which the scripture describes the normal marital relationship between a husband and wife under certain terms and conditions in **Genesis 30:16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.**

Dear beloved! under certain circumstances the two sisters Leah and Rachel are given in marriage to Jacob, which makes them behave like mistresses. Leah gives Rachael the Mandrakes that her son found in the field in exchange for spending the night with Jacob, this deal causes even the normal marital relationship to become defiled. In the New Testament we read in Mathew 1:18 the scripture addresses Joseph as a righteous man. Let us see what the scripture says about the marital relationship of this righteous man. We read in **Mathew 1:25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son.** Consider the phrase **'he knew her not'**. The scripture describes the marital relationship between the husband and wife as **'knowing'**. This is further illustrated in 1Samuel 1:19 **El Ka Nah 'knew' Han nah his wife.** This is the marital relationship permitted by the scripture. What does the phrase **'to know the wife'** mean? Know the wife does not only indicate having a physical relationship with the wife. It means being able to understand the wife, it goes beyond the phrases 'defile' and 'rape'.

Yes Beloved! One should understand the wife, there are several aspects to a wife, let us consider the illustrations of a wife from the scripture. We read in **1Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.** The first thing that the husband needs to understand is that a wife is a weaker vessel.

### **Wife and weakness**

Women was created from one bone, thus there is no doubt that she is a weaker vessel. Since the scripture describes the wife as a weaker vessel it is very essential for the husband to understand the weakness of the wife. There is bound to be several expectations from both the parties with regards to the marital relationships. The success and the failure of the marital life will depend on the understanding of these weaknesses. Let us meditate upon the wife and her weaknesses.

#### **1. Weakness in faith**

In **Romans 14:1** we read **'Him that is weak in the faith receive ye.** You may think what is the connection between this and the marital life. The mind plays a very vital

role in marital relationship. Healthy thoughts will help develop faith. If a wife suffers from inferiority complexes and begins to compare herself with another woman in terms of her beauty and capabilities, all this would undermine her faith. We read in Genesis 16:2,3 **And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.** We see such women even today. The role of the husband becomes very essential in this area in order to bring her out of her inferiority complexes. We read in **Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.** Thus a husband needs to speak such encouraging words and help the wife overcome her inferiority complex. At the same time it is also necessary to avoid flattering which will lead to dire consequences in the future. We read in **Genesis 34:3 And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.** There are different types of speech, there are specific ways of speaking depending on the type of relationship. But when it comes to talking to the wife a husband should be able to speak to her heart. It is only then she will develop the faith required for normal every day life. It is not necessary that every conversation should be based on scripture. It is also essential to build the faith required for practical life. In short it is very essential for a husband to maintain good communication with his wife.

## 2. Weakness in the flesh

'The flesh is weak', the scripture tells us that the flesh will invariably become weak, we read in **Job 14:22 But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.** No man can guarantee the wellbeing of the flesh, everyday the human race is challenged by new virus, germs and diseases and several researches are undertaken all around the world to combat these killer diseases. Along with the mind the body also plays a very vital role in the marital life let us consider the following verses

**Genesis 2:24** Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

**Ephesians 5:31** For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

**Mark 10:8** And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

**1 Corinthians 6:16** What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

**Mathew 19:5** they shall be of one flesh.

A husband should realise that the wife is not only weak in mind but she is also weak in body. There are several problems that women face that are related to there menstrual and gynecological set – up. We read in **1 Corinthians 12:22 &26 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.** A wife would expect the husband to be sensitive to these problems. A husband should relate to a wife realizing these

weaknesses in her. We read in **1 Samuel 2:5 They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.** Thus giving birth to children often is bad for a woman's health. Some men in the desire of having a male child would transform the wife into a child bearing machine, thus leading to the degradation of her health. Secondly we see that food plays a very vital role in physical health. We read in **Romans 14:2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.** Food is necessary for health. The husband's have a major role in helping the wife to overcome inhibitions in consuming certain types of food that is good for the body. A wife would be much satisfied in eating the humble food from the hands of the husband than consume vitamin tablets, tonics or other forms of supplementary nutrition. We read in **Ephesians 5: 28, 29 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.** As unto the Lord a woman should submit to her husband. We read in **Ephesians 5:22,24 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing, Titus 2:8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you, Colossians 3:18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.** These verses serves as a caution to the wife similarly the scripture also cautions a husband that he should protect and nourish the wife just as Christ does to the Church. A wife will be able to overcome her physical weakness through the nurturing and compassion of the husband. Thus we see that a healthy body plays a vital role in marital life. We read in **1 Corinthians 7:4, The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.** A wife would desire her husband to be aware of this. When a husband approaches the wife within a marital relationship, without being aware of these aspects it not only depicts his ignorance but also his beastly nature.

### 3. Weakness in Knowledge

We read in **Hosea 4 :6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.** At times the wife may speak things that she ought not to speak, which would hurt the husband. She might speak without realizing the sensitivities between relationships. Let us see the words spoken by Job's wife when he had lost everything and his body was afflicted with boils we read in **Job 2:9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.** Similarly consider the wife of righteous Lot in **Genesis 19:26 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.**

Yes my dear beloved, women at times speak and act without taking into consideration the importance of relationship, this brings great losses to the family. We read in **Proverbs 14:29 He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.** Let us consider what the scripture says about such women who are short tempered. **Proverbs 21:19 It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.** A husband should be aware of these things if not the marital life will become a wilderness. If a man is married to a woman who is short tempered it is up-to him to tame down her anger. If a husband is insensitive to the anger of his wife and if he approaches her for marital relationship

when she is angry then he becomes a prey to that anger and violence. It might occur that the husband would get injured by the wife in the bargain. We read in **Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.** Instead of trying to explain to a wife that it is unscriptural for a wife to get angry it is better for the husband to save the wife from such fits of anger. Let us consider how a husband should live as illustrated by the scripture. **1 Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel.** The scripture tells us to live our lives prudently and the scripture calls one such person a prudent person.

### **Who is this Prudent Person?**

**Proverbs 12:16** A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.

**Proverbs 15:5** A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

**Proverbs 16:21** The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

A husband should be able to tame the wife's anger.

Living a prudent life is not just something to be preached but should be practiced. We read in **James 3:13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.** The remedy for the knowledge based weakness of the wife is the prudence of the husband. Until now we meditated upon what it means to know the wife, now let us meditate upon the men from the scripture who knew their wife.

**1 Samuel 1:19** And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.

Let us meditate upon the character of El Ka Nah,

### **How to make a wife happy? The Do's for the husband**

#### **1. Enquire**

(Jesus) we read in **1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.** My dear beloved! first of all the mind should be of one accord in a marital relationships. The scripture in Ephesians 5:22, 24, Colossians 3:18 and Titus 2:8 instructs a **wife to submit to the husband as unto the Lord**, however it is also important for the husband to be of the divine nature as Christ. One aspect of that divine nature is enquiry. Job 10:5, 36:6 Psalms 140:12 Ecclesiastes 3:15, 2 Peter 5:7 these verses highlights this fact. Enquiry should not be misunderstood for interrogation, when a husband lovingly enquires of his wife this paves the way for a successful marital life. We read in **Galatians 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.** The way a man treats his wife in the day will determine the way she would react to him during the night (marital relationship). Many people are unaware of this fact and this leads to many problems in their marital relationships. Let us consider the scriptural

reference to this. **1 Samuel 1:4 and 8** And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions; Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart grieved? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?

Hannah passed through a lot of reproach because she was barren. **1 Samuel 1:2 and 6** And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children; And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb, consider the consoling word of El Ka Nah as he enquires with his wife. It is remarkable that he does not despise her for her barren state instead he enquires of her. This is what a wife would desire, no matter young or old her heart would delight in the fact that her husband's attention is towards her. It is in these junctures that the heart gets united before the body. To put it in short before a wife's physical needs are met her heart should be satisfied by the affectionate words and conversation of her husband. It is only then she will not hesitate to commit herself fully to such a person who is concerned about her. Key to a good marital life is communication. We read in **1 Timothy 3:5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)**. Enquiry is also related to the work of God, one cannot while away the time by mere talking at the same time it is not the only thing for a marital life let us look at the other aspects.

## 2. Outing

Although Hannah was barren, both El Ka Nah and Hannah visited the temple yearly. It is remarkable to note that El Ka Nah never hesitated to take his wife who was barren to public places. Some men may hesitate to take their wives to public places because they do not consider them beautiful enough and they also consider their marriage a big mistake. On the contrary there are men who are threatened by the looks of their wife that they would constantly keep their wife under house arrest. It is not a sin to take the wife out, in the scripture we see many examples of husband taking their wife on outings. It is also apt for a husband to take the wife out. Let us consider the following verses from the scripture

**1 Corinthians 9:5** Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

**Genesis 12:5** And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

**Acts 24:24** And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

Yes my dear beloved! it is not a transgression to take the wife on outings it is always better to avoid giving lame excuses such as financial constrains in doing so. These aspects are given much importance because they provide an opportunity to satisfy the desires of a wife's heart and feeling its only then will the physical relationship bring bliss.

### 3. Trust

We read in **Mathew 1:19 Then Joseph her (Mary's) husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately.** The reason for this is **Mathew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.** After this we see the angel of the Lord reveal the plan of God and then disappear. Joseph then takes Mary as his wife. **Mathew 1:25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son.** The words 'knew her not until she brought forth her first born', means that he knew her after. One of the aspects of 'knowing the wife' is to trust the wife. At times women encounter situations where no one would be in a position to trust her, even if the whole world calls her a harlot her husband should be in a position to trust her.

Mary went through a lot of reproach when she was found to be with a child through the Holy Spirit. However when a girl accepts Christ as her Lord and Saviour she would receive peace, salvation, joy, pardon for her sin and also persecution, this is because she choose not to confirm to the lustful standards of the world. At times we see that innocent women become prey to the rumors and speculations of the neighbourhood merely by attending prayer meetings. During these times the trust that her husband has on her will help her overcome these situations. The silent approval of her behaviour will indicate the trust that he has on her and will give her strength to face such situations. At times the silent approval and acceptance is worth much more than a host of words. This will ensure the happiness of the wife. In short the husband should learn to trust his wife and not be suspicious of her. **James 1: 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.**

Yes my beloved! This suspicious nature will ruin the marital life. A wife will not be happy to share a physical relationship with a husband who does not trust her, if she is forced to do so it will ensure only one sided happiness. In course of time she will begin to hate every male. Moreover God is also displeased with such suspicious nature. There may be occasions where a husband may have to temporarily stay away from his wife, during this phase a husband needs to keep his thoughts pure. At the same time he should not defile his wife in his thoughts. At two different instances Sarah the wife of Abraham was taken unwillingly to the palace of King Abimelech and Pharaoh respectively, however we do not read in the scripture that Abraham enquired about her stay or how she spent her time with two strange men. **Genesis 12:14-20, 20:1-20.** We read in **1Samuel 30:3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.** Thus David happened to loose his wives into the hands of his adversaries. However he only attempted to rescue his wives he did not interrogate them. This is one of the divine characteristics of the saints. This is one of the reasons why these men of God had a very good relationship with God and also maintain a good relationship with their respective wives.

One of the core aspects of knowing the wife is to know her heart. The men of God were experts at this. A husband can practice this at all times irrespective of the situation. Thus we see that the wife can be made happy not merely by maintaining marital relationships. Responding to her heart will bring delight to a wife and will cause her to involve willingly in the marital relationship. Merely forcing a wife to have marital relationships under the pretext of being married will not serve the purpose. It is when

force and pressure is applied in these aspects that the family life becomes a disaster. This is one of the aspects of knowing the wife.

#### 4. Acceptance

We read in **Mathew 1:24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.** The phrase ‘took her’ indicates that a husband should accept a wife in his heart before accepting her physically. This is the difference between ‘took her’ and ‘knew her’. This is what is indicated in Mathew 1:25 **And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son.** He stopped viewing her with suspicion and accepted her, in other words he did not cast her out. Dear beloved! The wife could be from a very different background in terms of education, finance, language culture etc on the whole she could be from a very different socio – economic and cultural background which might be backward or far advanced when compared to the husband’s household. However the husband has to ensure that she does not feel out of place and should not let her down in front of his household. These things will in the long run, have a very serious impact either for the good or the bad.

Enquiry, outing, trust and acceptance, it is only through this that a husband can know his wife’s heart. A husband has to first and foremost bear this in mind. There should be some transformation for the better in the mind of the wife. A wife should gradually grow to admire the husband, this does not mean admiring the physical structure of the husband. The physical structure will not help in the long run, he has to possess certain characteristics. If he lacks these noble characteristics, the wife’s eyes will be blinded towards his physical features which will ultimately be of no use. Now let us meditate upon those things that a husband should not do.

#### DON'TS FOR THE HUSBAND

A husband/man should be aware of how he should be within a marital relationship. A husband is biologically a man he bears the physical resemblance of a male. However we read in **1Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.** Whether married or not a man has to get rid of certain things as he grows up. When a man grows up he should abandon his childish ways, let us meditate upon the childish ways.

#### 1. Dependency

We read in **Numbers 11:12 Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?** This verse speaks about Moses brining the children of Israel out of Egypt. We can observe the childish behaviour in this verse. This indicates dependency. **Carry them in your bosom,** indicates that a child does not face the outside world, it buries its face in the bosom of the one who carries it. In other words it is not exposed to the outside world. Similarly in the family life, when one is not exposed to the realities and practicalities of the real world then he is seen as dependent on the elders in the family. In this present world a wife’s desire would be for her husband to have an upper – hand in the family affairs. A wife would desire some essential modern gadgets and no matter how affluent a background she hails from she would desire her husband to get her these things. At times the elders in the household may feel that these gadgets are not required. In these

areas a wife would expect that her feelings are respected more than her wants. If a husband pays attention to the opinions of others in the household rather than the wife's this will cause her to grieve. The opinions of the elders may be appropriate only for their generation, however the wife will be of modern thoughts. The generation gap will cause major rifts in relationships in these aspects.

## 2. Trusting Everything

We read in **Proverbs 14:15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.** A wife would desire that her husband should be a discerning person. Trusting all things without discernment is crueler than the suspicious nature. The verse below illustrates this **1John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.** This is further illustrated in **Genesis 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.** Heeding to the voice of the serpent the husband and wife disobeyed the word of God and ate of the forbidden fruit, thus bringing down the curse of God. In **Joshua chapter 9** we see, that the children of Israel trusted the Hivites and allowed them to live among them and hired them as slaves. But apparently when their true identity was revealed they murmured against the princes.

My dear beloved! What does these verses indicate, the husband should be sober minded. If not he would invite troubles between him and his wife by allowing outsiders to intervene in their relationship. This will anger the wife, it will also lead to the wife considering him an immature person lacking discernment. A child will trust everything, but for a husband to trust everything, especially when he is living with his wife in the midst of his own relatives. She expects him to consult her in matters concerning their lives. Instead when a husband makes his decisions and draws conclusions based upon what his parents or sibling says, this leads to rift between the husband and the wife and such things cannot be compensated through monetary aspects.

## 3. Foolishness

**Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child;** This indicates childishness or childish nature, this should not be seen in a man, this childishness can be displayed in two aspects namely communication and pride.

### a. Communication

**1Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.** This not only indicates childishness it also denotes foolishness. We often see children engage in useless arguments and loose talk. We read in **2Timothy 2:23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do generate strifes** and in **Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.** I wish to draw your attention to the phrase 'produce quarrels', communication plays a major part in this.

### b. Pride

we read in **2Corinthians 12:11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing** and again in **2Corinthians**

**11:12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.** When this pride takes hold of the heart, a person would begin to boast about himself, at times it would lead to insulting the wife's household which will in turn cause the wife to grieve within her heart. This will further lead to unnecessary arguments over each others siblings, this is the characteristics of the devil. Thus we see that communication and pride are two childish characteristics that would hurt the wife.

#### **c. Play**

We read in **Zachariah 8:5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof** and again in **Job 21:11 They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.** Playfulness is a childish characteristics especially playing on the street. In this fast world there are some husbands who do not spend time with their wife instead they spend their leisure time playing games with their friends in clubs and play grounds some spend their nights playing night matches. My dear beloved! We read in **Genesis 26:8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.** This is what is appreciable according to the scripture. In short this does not indicate physical exercise which is desirable, however we see that a wife would have made plans to spend the holiday with the husband instead the husband would set out early in the morning to play with his friends or other youngsters. This will anger the wife and would lead to rift in the marital relationship.

#### **d. Gossip**

We read in **Mathew 11:17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.** Thus accusing people is another characteristic of a child, there may arise several opportunities within a family situation to accuse other people, however the scripture desires that we handle such situations in a mature way. Let us consider some of the examples from the scripture, firstly Laban treated his son-in-law Jacob as a slave and tried to cheat him on several occasions. Similarly we see Saul who attempted to even kill his son – in- law David. Here we observe that these men did not accuse their fathers – in – law. This won the commitment, appreciation and affection of their beloved wives till the end. This also helped them in maintaining a sound mind.

#### **4. Slavery**

In **Galatians 4:3** we read, **Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.** Slavery is a childish characteristic, at times we see husbands becoming slaves. We read in **John 8:34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.** Again in **1Corinthians 7:23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.** Some people would confirm to the patterns of the world, however the wife would desire that they live their lives differently. There are several forms of slavery, some men might become slave to another woman apart from the wife, we often observe children who become slaves to their aunts, uncles and other relatives, as a grown-up, a man should be able to moderate relationships. These childish characteristics should be done away with by grown up men.

## 5. Unaware of the craft of men

**Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;** One should be aware of the crafts of men, this is very essential to maintain the family unity. There will be some people who would use their craft to cause mischief between a husband and a wife, a husband should be well aware of the schemes of such men no matter who they are. The interference of outsiders (friends and relatives) will ruin the peace of the family and also the marital relationship. Overcoming such people and their schemes is in the hands of the husband he should function with and awareness of such aspects.

## 6. The practice of consuming nutritious food

We read in **Hebrews 5:12 and 13 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.** One should be sober with regards to the food habits. We read in **Romans 14:2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.** One should be attentive to the food one consumes. We see that King Solomon had more than 600 wives and concubines in his palace. What was the secret to his successfully maintaining them? He was a very wise man, however let us see the type of food that he consumed which is illustrated in **1Kings 4:22-24 And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah. Then king Solomon sware by the LORD, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life. Now therefore, as the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day.**

My dear beloved! It is not possible for us to eat such food nowadays, for one to enjoy marital life one needs to pay attention to the food habits. Being fussy like children when it comes to food, will lead to many complications in the physic, this will have adverse affects on the marital life. When a husband is aware and follows the do's and don'ts within the marital relationship this brings delight to the wife. There is much pleasure when a wife willingly submits herself within a marital relationship rather than when she is forced to do so. This will also ensure that her heart is not drawn after another man. The heart will be successful in doing that which the flesh cannot do, that is gaining the trust and confidence of the wife. The heart has a major part to play within the marital relationships, however when the marital relationships is reduced to a mere physical act, then it gives rise to doubt, fear, tiredness, and fatigue. Thus we see some people ending up in counseling centres and queuing up at the sexologist clinic to seek solutions to their problems.

The things that would delight a wife's heart are **1.Enquiring, 2.Outing, 3.Trust 4.Acceptance.** When a husband does these things, the wife may not be stirred, however, when he follows the don'ts such as **1.Dependency, 2.Trusting everything, 3. Foolishness, 4.Slavery, 5. Unaware of the crafts of men, 6. Consuming food that has no nutritional value,** these will bring displeasure to a wife's heart. After all this the

physical oneness should follow suit. If not marital life would turn into a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. These things will draw the wife to the husband, if not marital bliss would be reduced to a ritual or formality within the office of marriage. This will ensure the constant love of the wife round the clock, there will be an exchange of pleasure, and these two things will be of great help.

**To give** – when a husband does what he ought to do

**To receive** – when a husband avoids that which he ought not to do

This is not the end to becoming a successful husband. Now let us meditate upon his spiritual life.

## **CHAPTER 7 - The husband and Spiritual Life**

Until now we meditated upon how a male, youth, husband should be seen within a family life. As a youth or as an individual one can serve God, however will he be able to serve the Lord with a good conscience after his marriage? The answer to this question is 'Yes' according to the scripture, it is possible. We read in **Genesis 5:22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.** We also observe that **the Prophet Samuel had a house with family and children we read in 1Samuel 7:17 And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the LORD** again we read in **1 Samuel 8:2 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beer-sheba.**

Godly men like Enoch and Samuel had their respective families and yet had a very good relationship with God. There was nothing wrong in it, thus we see that such men of God lived good lives in the sight of both God and men. Thus marriage is never a hindrance to the spiritual life and the relationship with God, nevertheless there is no doubt that similar relationships outside the office of marriage such as illegal, extra – marital, pre-marital affairs the love for money, materialistic nature etc, will earn the disapproval and reproach of God.

In this modern world we observe the proud boastings of those who claim to be self righteous, they publicly deny the actual essence of manhood as illustrated in the scripture. Lip serves, tithing to be noticed and attending various services are not things that are desired and expected by the Lord.

### **The Spirituality expected by the Scripture**

We read in **1 Corinthians 11:7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.** The scripture indicates that the husband should be in the image and likeness of God. Let us look at some of the characteristics of the 'Image of God'.

**Genesis 1:26, 27** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

**Genesis 5:1** This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him.

**James 3:9** Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

**Colossians 3:10** And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.

These verses indicate that God Created man in his image and likeness. When they as a family did those things that were forbidden, the 'God like' image was lost and they also lost the glory of God. A husband should make every effort to avoid doing those things that have been forbidden by God and he should also ensure that all the members of his family also do the same. Samson was dedicated to the Lord as a Nazarite, as a Nazarite he is not supposed to go near a dead body or eat the fruit of the vine, however we see Samson break both these regulations. Thus instead of avoiding those things that he ought to avoid he avoided the word of God. As a result of this he lost his wife to another man. It is in these aspects that a husband needs to put into practice as part of his spirituality.

Enoch and Abraham were men of God who in their lives turned their backs on things that were forbidden by the Lord. It is not sufficient to merely preach the word of God it is even more important to practice the word. Moreover he should possess the fear of the Lord. We read in **Psalms 128:4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD** and again in **Psalms 128:3 Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.**

Thus we see that the role of a successful husband is not limited to only being righteous, having a good marital relationship with his wife, earning a decent income etc. it is also necessary for him to ensure that his wife lives happily within his home. When a husband fails to live up to these criteria then it is most likely that the wife would dare to cross the threshold. However even if a husband is strong in these things there are chances of a wife going astray. We read in **Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.** When a man fails to fear the Lord then surely there will be rifts in the relationship between him and his wife. We see that the wives of several mighty men today have dared to cross the threshold, we see the reason for this illustrated in the life of Samson who lost the fear of the Lord. God expects a Nazarite never to drink strong drinks nor eat any products from the vine and he should keep away from those that were considered scripturally unclean. However when Samson acted contrary to the expectations of God the storm started to rage in his family life. When he lacked the fear of the Lord, we read in **Judges 14:20 But Samson's wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.** At the same time we see that storms in the form of Abimalech, Pharaoh and the Philistines raged in the lives of Abraham and David especially at a juncture when their wives were taken captives we see the Lord intervene and restore their family. God plagued Abimalech and Pharaoh causing them to restore Abraham's wife to him and also to enter into a covenant of peace with them. Whereas we see that in the life of Samson the Lord did not intervene when his family was facing ruination, but Samson used the name of the Lord to perform certain things however he could not rescue his own wife. Using the name of the Lord is different from being used by the Lord.

Samson used the name of the Lord and performed great things yet lost his wife to another man.

Beloved we can never retain our wife by performing great feats. It is not the money that a husband earns that will make a wife submissive within the office of marriage and family. It is only possible by the grace of God. In order to live a prosperous and powerful life you need to have the fear of the Lord only then will you be able to live as a successful husbands.

May God Grant you the grace to be a successful husband!

**Inside this book**

- ❖ How to live the bachelorhood
- ❖ How to live as a husband
- ❖ Maintaining relationships in the in-law's household
- ❖ Things that a husband should do (Dos)
- ❖ Things that a husband should not do (Don'ts)
- ❖ Do's and Don'ts of the marital life
- ❖ How to make the wife happy
- ❖ The spiritual requirements of the husband
- ❖ Bachelor and Marriage
- ❖ Sexual relationship and Marriage
- ❖ Sexual relationship and youth
- ❖ Don'ts for a bachelor

**Hope Praying Ministry**

No 123 9<sup>th</sup> Cross Street,  
Prakash Nagar  
Tiruninravur – 602024  
Tamil Nadu  
South India

Phone - +91 9381045396

E mail – [arulforchrist@yahoo.com](mailto:arulforchrist@yahoo.com)