



The God of promises and covenants has shaped our understanding of the beauty and seriousness of covenants in a variety of ways throughout history, but the clearest and most profound representation of what our Creator desires when it comes to covenants might be the blessing of marriage. Consider what God reveals in the second chapter of the Bible.

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be \_\_\_\_\_; I will make him a \_\_\_\_\_ fit for him." Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called \_\_\_\_\_,  
because she was taken out of Man."

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become \_\_\_\_\_ flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (Gen 2:18-25)

- ✿ What do we learn about the God of promises and covenants from this passage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- ✿ In Matthew 19:3-9, a group of Pharisees test Jesus by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" Pay careful attention to Jesus' response. How do the words of God's own Son—especially his reference to Genesis 2:24—shape our understanding of what God desires and expects from marriage?

In the last book of the Old Testament, notice how the marriage of a husband and wife is described by God.

And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. But you say, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was \_\_\_\_\_ between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by \_\_\_\_\_. Did he not make them \_\_\_\_\_, with a portion of the \_\_\_\_\_ in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. (Mal 2:13-15)

☼ What is God teaching us about marriage in this section of Malachi's prophecy?

☼ In Lesson 8 of this series, we learned a lot about the God whose heart was grieved by Israel's unfaithfulness. When we hear the LORD, the God of Israel, proclaiming "I hate divorce" (Mal 2:16, NASB), how should his words powerfully shape our understanding and handling of the marriage relationship?

The apostle Paul also used Genesis 2:24 to teach Christians about marriage.

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_. (Eph 5:31-32)

☼ What does Paul mean by calling this a "mystery"? How does it "refer" to Christ and the church?

☼ Taking the full context (Eph 5:22-33) of that passage into account, how does Jesus and his relationship to the church serve as inspiration to husbands and wives, and also as a representation of what God wants covenant relationships to be?