



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 65”

February 27th, 2010
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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 65

1Kings 19:1–2

1 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.”

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

Our takeaway point in this series on the Biblical Design of Gender is that God has designed man as the cooperative coalition of husband and wife so that man can successfully achieve the objective that God has given us to exercise dominion over the earth, developing wisdom and knowledge in preparation for further responsibility in our eternal life.

Let me give a historical review of the Old Testament before we get back to our gender study. As we know from our earlier study, the patriarch Abraham’s grandson Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel, had twelve sons. Joseph, who was Jacob/Israel’s favorite son and his oldest son by his favorite wife Rachel, led the family into Egypt. Because Israel considered Joseph his firstborn, Joseph was given a double inheritance in the Land. Joseph had two sons, and each of Joseph’s sons received an inheritance, as did the ten of the other eleven sons of Israel. The son that did not receive an inheritance in the Land was Levi, who was given the ministry of the worship of God as a responsibility rather than an inheritance upon which to raise crops.

After the Israelites were liberated from Egypt, God, through the ministry of Moses, led the descendents of Israel to the Promised Land, which is present day Palestine, with a command to conquer the land and destroy the indigenous people living there, as they did not worship God, but rather were worshippers of idols. The Israelites, under the leadership of Joshua, made a good start in clearing the Land, but when Joshua died, the Israelites found warfare not to their liking and decided to live with the indigenous people of the land. We have studied for the last couple of weeks that it is a bad thing for people that worship God to align themselves with unbelievers. God warned the Israelites against doing so, in **Deuteronomy 7:3–4:**



3 Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.

4 For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.

But, the Israelites found the unbelievers attractive, largely because they had different, less stringent rules of sexuality than did the Israelites. Women that make themselves more sexually available are generally more attractive to men than women that make themselves less sexually available.

The ritual act of Israelite worship was the sacrifice of an animal or grain offering to the Lord and listening to the reading of the Scripture. The ritual act of idolatrous worship was sexual intercourse. Thus, God told Israel, in

Deuteronomy 7:4:

4 For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.

And the pagan idol worshippers turned the Israelites away from God with great efficiency. Thus, God no longer supported Israel militarily in their occupation of the land, and Israel began to find itself under the rule of the indigenous kings.

The loss of sovereignty caused Israel to repent of its sin of idolatry, and return to God. With this reform, God once again supported Israel militarily. But Israel was infected by the nations, and clamored to change their form of government from a theocracy to a kingdom, as were the nations.

God acquiesced to the Israelites and made Saul the first King of Israel, but Saul was disobedient to God. When Saul decided to not sacrifice the possessions of the conquered to God as God instructed him, God rejected Saul and made David King. David was a man after God's own heart, and, other than the sexually indiscreet episode with Bathsheba, followed God's instructions. Fortunately for David, Bathsheba was an Israelite, and thus she never tempted David to worship idol gods. David installed his son Solomon as King just before he died, and because of Solomon's request to God for the wisdom to rule Israel, God made Solomon extremely successful as a King. Solomon built a magnificent temple for God, and God empowered Solomon to build the Kingdom of Israel up, both politically and economically, into a kingdom the power and riches of which has never been seen, before or since.

But Solomon's harem was his downfall. Solomon sought out the most beautiful women available from every kingdom within his reach and married them. The Bible records that Solomon had 700 wives and princesses and 300 concubines. As Solomon aged, he increasingly enjoyed the company of these nubile young women. As the young women were idol worshippers, Solomon



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returned the pleasure that his wives gave him by building temples for their idols in Israel.

Solomon's facilitation of idolatry displeased God, who decided to divide the Kingdom in two pieces, to give one piece to Solomon's son to keep His promise to David that David would always have a descendent on the throne, and then to give the other piece to a new king. When Solomon died and his son Rehoboam became king, the ten northern tribes of Israel broke away from the two southern tribes to form two separate kingdoms. The two southern tribes, ruled by Solomon's son Rehoboam, were known as Judah, and the two northern tribes, ruled by an Egyptian Jew named Jeroboam, were known as Israel.

But after receiving the rule over the ten northern tribes, Jeroboam did not trust God to keep his kingdom secure. Jeroboam's fear was that the triannual pilgrimage that the Israelites made to Jerusalem in the southern kingdom to worship God would lead to the men of the northern kingdom to reunite with the men of the south. **1Kings 12:26–31** records:

26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom may return to the house of David:

27 If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah."

28 Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!"

29 And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

30 Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.

31 He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi.

Thus, Jeroboam set the stage for the cessation of the worship of God in the northern kingdom of Israel. Beginning with the reign of Jeroboam, the majority of the Kings of Israel either worshipped Jeroboam's gods or other idol gods. The king of Israel in our current lesson is Ahab, who worshipped Baal, for a similar reason as previous kings. **1Kings 16:30–33** records:

30 Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him.

31 And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him.

32 Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.



33 And Ahab made a wooden image [of Baal]. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

Once again, the worship of an indigenous idol reigned in the land because of the marriage of the king to an idolatrous wife. Jezebel derived her power from her marriage to Ahab, because Jezebel knew exactly how to manipulate him in order to hold sway over the Kingdom.

Women are special creatures with the ability (together with a husband and God) to create life within their wombs. Mothers are the source of life and sustenance, through breast-feeding and emotional caretaking. Through social bonding, women are the link between men, family and society. Through their acceptance of a particular man, women determine the social behavior of that man. It is likely true that if “bad boys” couldn’t get a date, they would become good boys.

So, wives naturally wield power over their husbands. A husband naturally comes to his wife seeking the same affection and approval that he received from his mother. And when the husband gets that affection and approval from his wife, he is on the road to becoming completely devoted to her.

When women understand and use their power of emotional approval properly, their men, their marriages, their lives are transformed. And when wives use their power over their husbands benevolently in the midst of negative circumstances, such as financial woes, illnesses and recalcitrant children, both wife and husband can be still happy with one another as they go through the storm.

But this is, to a large degree, a one way street. When it comes to interpersonal relationships, men and women are as different as night and day. Women have the power, and men do not. God said, in **Genesis 2:18**:
18 And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

But the Bible does not say that it is not good for a woman to be alone. This is because God has given women the emotional resources that will keep them from being alone. Although women have the ability to capture a man’s emotions, the reverse is not true. **1Corinthians 11:9** tells us:

9 Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.

God gives women emotional resources that men generally do not have. When there are no men around, women bond with one another. In the dance venue in which my wife and I socialize, there are generally more women than men, and the most popular dances are those in which the women dance in unison with one another, because women compliment and bond with one another. But when we visit a venue in which there are more men than woman, the men dance with one another only very reluctantly.



We visited such a venue this week, and although the male instructor danced with the other men during the instructional period, I did not see two men dancing with one another during the social period. And when the guy came to dance with me, I instinctively put my hands into my pockets and made it clear that I was uncomfortable in that situation.

God gives women the ability to capture men's emotions and thus bind a man to them. **Genesis 2:24** tells us:

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

The word rendered, "be joined" in this passage of Scripture is the Hebrew word that means "cling to". The Bible uses the same word in **Deuteronomy 28:21**, in which it says:

21 The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess.

Men will cling to their women like the plague clings to a sick person as long as a woman gives the man her approval. That is the power that a woman has, and, as **1Corinthians 11:9** tells us, the power does not exist in reverse.

Jezebel, Ahab's wife, had woman power in abundance. Like Solomon's wives, Jezebel made it her business to make her husband happy. And since she did so, her husband Ahab, the King of Israel, allowed her to do anything that she wanted to do in the Kingdom, including make the worship of idol gods the state religion of Israel, as **1Kings 16:30–33** tells us.

At the conclusion of our last lesson, we left the prophet Elijah, having called a drought and famine on the nation of Israel because of Ahab and Jezebel's idolatry. God told Elijah to meet with Ahab, end the drought and bring Israel back to the worship of God. **1Kings 18:1** records:

1 And it came to pass after many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth."

God instructed Elijah to propose a competition to Ahab and the men of Israel to prove the identity of the true God. **1Kings 18:17–24** records:

17 Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?"

18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals.

19 Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

20 So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel.



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21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

22 Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

23 Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it.

24 Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” So all the people answered and said, “It is well spoken.”

So the competition began. **1Kings 18:25–26, 29** records:

25 Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it.”

26 So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, “O Baal, hear us!” But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.

29 And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.

Without fire, the sacrifice of Baal went unburned. So Elijah prepared his sacrifice to God. **1Kings 18:33–34, 36, 38-39** records:

33 And [Elijah] put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, “Fill four waterpots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.”

34 Then [Elijah] said, “Do it a second time,” and they did it a second time; and he said, “Do it a third time,” and they did it a third time.

36 And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word.

38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!”

Elijah gave the men of Israel indisputable proof of the power of God, and then Elijah called on Israel to make another sacrifice to God. **1Kings 18:40-41, 45-46** records:



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40 And Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!” So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there.

41 Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain.”

45 Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel.

46 Then the hand of the LORD came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

And Elijah’s sacrifice convinced all the men of Israel. But there was one person whom Elijah did not convince. **1Kings 19:1–3** records:

1 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.”

3 And when [Elijah heard] that, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

Ahab was the King of Israel, and he saw the fire from heaven consume the sacrifice and the rain end the draught that had been on the land for three years. Even with all of this evidence of the power of God, Ahab was not constrained by the power of God, but rather by his wife. That, my friends is woman power. Solomon’s wives had woman power, and now we see that Jezebel had woman power. And the Scripture tells us that Elijah saw it.

Elijah saw Ahab face to face, challenged Ahab to a contest and then won the contest. Jezebel sent Elijah a message, and Elijah turned tail and ran, left Israel altogether, and hid out in the southern kingdom of Judah, outside of Jezebel’s jurisdiction. Why? Although Ahab was the King of Israel, Jezebel had the power over the King of Israel. Ahab was convinced of the power of God by the fire that fell from heaven, but Ahab still yielded to the power of Jezebel, because of the power that she had over him.

How did Jezebel get such comprehensive power over Ahab? **1Kings 21:1–15** tells us:

1 And it came to pass after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

2 So Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, “Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money.”

3 But Naboth said to Ahab, “The LORD forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!”



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4 So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.” And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food.

5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, “Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?”

6 He said to her, “Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you another vineyard for it.’ And he answered, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’ ”

7 Then Jezebel his wife said to him, “You now exercise authority over Israel! Arise, eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

8 And she wrote letters in Ahab’s name, sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who were dwelling in the city with Naboth.

9 She wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people;

10 and seat two men, scoundrels, before him to bear witness against him, saying, You have blasphemed God and the king. Then take him out, and stone him, that he may die.

11 So the men of his city, the elders and nobles who were inhabitants of his city, did as Jezebel had sent to them, as it was written in the letters which she had sent to them.

12 They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honor among the people.

13 And two men, scoundrels, came in and sat before him; and the scoundrels witnessed against him, against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, “Naboth has blasphemed God and the king!” Then they took him outside the city and stoned him with stones, so that he died.

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, “Naboth has been stoned and is dead.”

15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, “Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead.”

How did Jezebel get such comprehensive power over Ahab?

Jezebel took care of Ahab, so Ahab took care of Jezebel. Ahab allowed Jezebel to do and to have whatever she wanted, so much so that the men of Israel knew that when Jezebel spoke, her words had even more authority than did those of the king. That, my friends, is woman power.



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But woman power is simply power. Woman power is much like electricity. You can use electricity to run your refrigerator and keep your food from spoiling, or you can use the same electricity to electrocute someone.

Jezebel decided to use her woman power for evil, but other women, like David's wife Abigail, used her woman power for good. When David was coming to destroy the estate of Abigail's husband Nabal because Nabal refused to compensate David's men for watching over Nabal's shepherds and sheep, Abigail sprung into action. **1 Samuel 25:14–15, 17-19, 21, 23-24, 28, 30-35** records:

14 Now one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, "Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he reviled them.

15 But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields.

17 Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him."

18 Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys.

19 And she said to her servants, "Go on before me; see, I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

21 Now David had said, "Surely in vain I have protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him. And he has repaid me evil for good.

23 Now when Abigail saw David, she dismounted quickly from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground.

24 So she fell at his feet and said: "On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be! And please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant.

28 Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. For the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the LORD, and evil is not found in you throughout your days.

30 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel,

31 that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant."



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32 Then David said to Abigail: “Blessed is the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me!

33 And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand.

34 For indeed, as the LORD God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!”

35 So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, “Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and respected your person.”

David so respected Abigail that when her husband died, on his own, David married her. A wife has the power to turn the heart of her husband in her hand, even as **1Peter 3:1** tells us:

1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

And the harmonious interaction between husband and wife is certainly in the plan of God, who tells us, in **Ephesians 5:17–21**:

17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.

We are instructed to be submissive to one another, even as the Lord Jesus Christ was submissive to God, and gave Himself to build God’s Kingdom on a hill called Calvary, as **John 3:16–17** tells us:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

And Jesus, by submitting Himself to the plan of God, as Abigail gave herself to David, fulfilled God’s plan and reaped the benefits of obedient submission, as **Philippians 2:9–11** tells us:

9 Therefore God also has highly exalted [the Lord Jesus Christ] and given Him the name which is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,



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11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus Christ is Lord specifically because He gave Himself to the plan of the Father, sacrificing Himself on the Cross of Calvary. And Jesus tells us that our belief and our resolve to emulate His sacrifice are our keys to the Kingdom of God. Jesus instructs us, in **John 13:34–35**:

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The time for arguing between husbands and wives is out. The instruction of the Lord is clear. We are called to submit to one another and love one another. That submission and love is the crux of Christianity, and only as we show that love to one another in our most intimate relationships can others see our Christian testimony.

If we show our Christian “love” only to those with whom our relationship is peripheral, we have not really passed the test, because the real test is our ability to sacrifice ourselves for one another, as Jesus sacrificed Himself for us.

The scribes and Pharisees that crucified Jesus proved that a theologically sound argument from an unloving person is as unattractive to God as idolatry, simply because actions speak louder than words. So we must recognize that our most important Christian testimony is how we conduct our most intimate relationships. And in that regard, **Ephesians 5:33** makes it clear:

33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

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