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## Appendix 7a: Virgins, Widows, and Divorced Women: The Unions God Accepts

This page is part of the series on the unions God accepts and follows this sequence:

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### The Origin of Marriage in Creation

It is common knowledge that the first marriage took place right after the Creator made a female [נְקִבָּה (nəqēvāh)] to be the companion of the first human being, a male [זָכָר (zākhār)]. Male and female — these are the terms the Creator Himself used for both animals and human beings (Genesis 1:27). The account in Genesis says that this male, created in the image and likeness of God, observed that none of the females among the other creatures on earth resembled him. None attracted him, and he desired a companion. The expression in the original is [עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ ('ēzer kənegdô)], which means “a suitable helper.” And the Lord perceived Adam’s need and decided to create for him a female, the feminine version of his body: “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him” (Genesis 2:18). Eve was then made from Adam’s body.

### The First Union According to the Bible

Thus, the first union of souls took place: without ceremony, without vows, without witnesses, without a feast, without registry, and without an officiant. God simply gave the woman to the man, and this was his reaction: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man” (Genesis 2:23). Soon after, we read that Adam had relations [יָדָע (yāda‘) — to know, to have sexual relations] with Eve, and she became pregnant. This same expression (to know), linked to pregnancy, is also later used with the union of Cain and his wife (Genesis 4:17). All the unions mentioned in the Bible consist simply of a man taking a virgin (or widow) for himself and having relations with her — almost always using the

expression “to know” or “to go in to” — which confirms that the union indeed took place. In no biblical account is it said that there was any ceremony, whether religious or civil.

## When Does the Union Take Place in God’s Eyes?

The central question is: **When does God consider that a marriage has taken place?** There are three possible options — one biblical and true, and two false and of human invention.

### 1. The Biblical Option

God considers a man and a woman married at the moment the virgin woman has her first consensual relation with him. If she has already had another man, the union can only take place if the previous man has died.

### 2. The False Relativist Option

God considers that the union takes place when the couple decides. In other words, the man or the woman may have as many sexual partners as they wish, but only on the day they decide that the relationship has become serious — perhaps because they will move in together — does God consider them as one flesh. In this case, it is the creature and not the Creator who decides when the soul of a man is joined to the soul of a woman. There is not the slightest biblical basis for this view.

### 3. The Most Common False Option

God only considers that a union has taken place when a ceremony occurs. This option is not much different from the second, since in practice the only change is the addition of a third human being to the process, who may be a justice of the peace, a registry official, a priest, a pastor, etc. In this option, the couple may also have had multiple sexual partners in the past, but only now, standing before a leader, does God consider the two souls united.

## The Absence of Ceremonies in Wedding Feasts

It should be noted that the Bible mentions four wedding feasts, but in none of the accounts is there any mention of a ceremony to formalize or bless the union. There is no teaching that a rite or external process is necessary for the union to be valid before God (Genesis 29:21–28; Judges 14:10–20; Esther 2:18; John 2:1–11). The confirmation of the union occurs when a virgin has consensual sexual relations with her first man (the consummation). The idea that God only unites the couple when they stand before a religious leader or a justice of the peace has no support in the Scriptures.

PDF: [Download PDF with all marriages in the Bible.](#)

## Adultery and the Law of God

From the beginning, God forbade adultery, which refers to a woman having relations with more than one man. This is because **a woman's soul can only be joined to one man at a time here on earth**. There is no limit to how many men a woman may have during her lifetime, but each new relationship can only occur if the previous one has ended by death, because only then has the man's soul returned to God, from whom it came (Ecclesiastes 12:7). In other words, she must be a widow to unite with another man. This truth is easily confirmed in the Scriptures, as when King David sent for Abigail only after he heard of Nabal's death (1 Samuel 25:39–40); when Boaz took Ruth as his wife because he knew her husband, Mahlon, had died (Ruth 4:13); and when Judah instructed his second son, Onan, to marry Tamar to raise offspring in the name of his deceased brother (Genesis 38:8). See also: Matthew 5:32; Romans 7:3.

## Man and Woman: Differences in Adultery

Something clearly observable in the Scriptures is that there is no adultery against a woman, but only against a man. The idea taught by many churches — that by separating from a woman and marrying another virgin or widow, the man commits adultery against his ex-wife — has no support in the Bible, but rather in social conventions.

**READ: [Mark 10:11–12 and the False Equality in Adultery](#).**

Proof of this is found in the many examples of servants of the Lord who went through multiple marriages with virgins and widows, without God's reproval — including the example of Jacob, who had four wives, from whom came the twelve tribes of Israel and the Messiah Himself. It was never said that Jacob committed adultery with each new wife.

Another well-known example was David's adultery. The prophet Nathan said nothing about there having been adultery against any woman of the king when he had relations with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12:9), but only against Uriah, her husband. Remember that David was already married to Michal, Abigail, and Ahinoam (1 Samuel 25:42). In other words, adultery is always against a man and never against a woman.

Some leaders like to claim that God makes men and women equal in all things, but this does not reflect what is observed in the four thousand years covered by the Scriptures. There is simply not a single example in the Bible where God censured a man for committing adultery against his wife.

**READ: [Why Jesus Does Not Allow Polygamy Today](#).**

This does not mean that a man does not commit adultery, but that **God considers the adultery of a man and a woman differently**. The biblical punishment was the same for both (Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22–24), but there is no link between male virginity and marriage. It is the woman, not the man, who determines whether there is adultery or not. According to the Bible, **a man commits adultery whenever he has relations with a woman who is neither a virgin nor a widow**. For example, if a virgin man of 25 sleeps with a 23-year-old young woman who has already had another man, he commits adultery — because, according to God, that young woman is another man's wife (Matthew 5:32; Romans 7:3; Numbers 5:12).

## Levirate Marriage and the Preservation of Lineage

This principle — that a woman may only unite with another man after the death of the first — is also confirmed in the law of levirate marriage, given by God to preserve family property: “If brothers dwell together and one of them dies without having children, the wife of the deceased shall not marry a stranger outside the family. Her husband’s brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her...” (Deuteronomy 25:5–10. See also Genesis 38:8; Ruth 1:12–13; Matthew 22:24). Note that this law was to be fulfilled even if the brother-in-law already had another wife. In the case of Boaz, he even offered Ruth to a closer relative, but the man refused, for he did not wish to acquire another wife and have to divide his inheritance: “On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead on his inheritance” (Ruth 4:5).

## The Biblical Perspective on Marriage

The biblical view of marriage, as presented in the Scriptures, is clear and distinct from modern human traditions. God established marriage as a spiritual union sealed by consummation between a man and a virgin or widow, without the need for ceremonies, officiants, or external rites.

This **does not mean that the Bible forbids ceremonies as part of weddings**, but it should be clear that they are neither a requirement nor a confirmation that a union of souls has taken place according to God’s law.

The union is considered valid in God’s eyes only at the moment of consensual relations, reflecting the divine order that the woman be joined to only one man at a time until death dissolves that bond. The absence of ceremonies in the wedding feasts described in the Bible reinforces that the focus is on the intimate covenant and the divine purpose of continuing the lineage, not on human formalities.

## Conclusion

In light of all these biblical accounts and principles, it becomes evident that God’s definition of marriage is rooted in His own design, not in human traditions or legal formalities. The Creator set the standard from the beginning: a marriage is sealed in His sight when a man unites in consensual relations with a woman who is free to marry — meaning she is either a virgin or a widow. While civil or religious ceremonies may serve as public declarations, they carry no weight in determining whether a union is valid before God. What matters is obedience to His order, respect for the sanctity of the marital bond, and faithfulness to His commandments, which remain unchanging regardless of cultural shifts or human opinion.