

END-TIMES ISSUES

GOD DOESN'T TELL US TO KNOW ALL THE END-TIME DETAILS. HE TELLS US TO BE READY.

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#122

Commandment #7 – and the relationship of God to us.

THE 7TH COMMANDMENT AND OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD:

- **Hundreds** of passages describe the relationship between God and humans in terms of *marriage* and *family relationships* – but it *only* applies to those who have come into a *covenant relationship* with him.
- Who it **does not** apply to:
 - ✓ **Nations** that do not worship the true God (though it may apply to *individuals* within the nation).
 - ✓ **Individuals** who do not worship the true God (though it may apply to the *nation* that the individual belongs to).
- Who it **does** apply to:
 - ✓ **Old Testament Israel (as a nation)** had a covenant relationship with God. It *ended* after the nation *repeatedly* abandoned the relationship, and turned to false gods.
 - ✓ **All individuals who have chosen to follow the true God** – their hearts have been changed. Today, this refers to people who are under the New Covenant.

COVENANT APPLIED TO A GROUP (NATION, LOCAL CHURCH)

⇒ Unsaved people are USUALLY present.

COVENANT APPLIED TO INDIVIDUALS (THEY MAY BE REFERRED TO COLLECTIVELY, AS A GROUP)

⇒ Unsaved people are NEVER included.

TWO WAYS GOD DESCRIBES HIS RELATIONSHIP TO US:

- A **marriage relationship** – such as "Husband/wife." This is applied only to **groups**:
 - ✓ **The nation of Israel** (which included both saved and unsaved people), under the Old Covenant.
 - ✓ **The collective group of saved individuals** – saved people in the Old Testament, as well as all people who are under the New Covenant (which includes all saved people today).
 - ✓ **The "church"** may be described this way; but *context* would have to determine whether the word was referring *only* to saved people, or to a *mixture* of saved and unsaved (comparable to Israel's situation).
 - » If referring to a *local church*, fakes tend to be present. At the final judgment (if not sooner), Jesus will remove them.
- A **family relationship** – such as "Father/son (or child)." This terminology can be applied to **groups** or **individuals**.

- How do these terms relate to the commandments?
 - ✓ **The parent-child relationship** is related to the Fifth Commandment. It tends to be used from the perspective of God as our *Creator*. In the New Testament, it describes our relationship to "God the *Father*." (In this relationship, Jesus is called our "*brother*.")
 - ✓ **The marriage relationship** is related to the Seventh Commandment. It tends to be used when describing God as interacting with us on *our level*. In the New Testament: our relationship to Jesus Christ.

Commandment #5	God as creator; God our "Father"; Jesus our "brother"	⇒ Focus on the relationship of parent/child , also siblings .
Commandment #7	God interacting with us on <i>our level</i> ; Jesus Christ (God in human flesh)	⇒ Focus on the marriage relationship. (Applies <i>only</i> on the group level.)

- **Terms related to sexual sin** (a Seventh Commandment issue) are applied to the *group* – even though the group may contain *both* saved and unsaved individuals. This happens when the unsaved in the group become the majority influence (i.e., the group becomes "apostate").

EXAMPLES FROM THE HUNDREDS OF PASSAGES THAT APPLY THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT CONCEPT TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND PEOPLE:

THESE FOCUS ON THE "HUSBAND-WIFE" CONCEPT.

(At the end, we will include some verses related to the "parent-child" relationship – applications of the *Fifth Commandment*.)

⇒ **Marriage as a covenant.**

- ✓ **Reminder:** Human marriage is a covenant that is *not* to be broken.

... she is your partner, the wife of your **marriage covenant**.

Malachi 2:14b (NIV); this covenant was broken – see vs. 14-16.

... the adulterous woman who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the **covenant** she **made before God**.

Proverbs 2:16b, 17 (NIV)

✓ **The marriage covenant** between God and Israel – which *Israel* broke.

I pledged Myself to you, **entered into a covenant** with you, and you became Mine, declares the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 16:8b (BSB)

... you have despised my oath by **breaking the covenant**.

Ezekiel 16:59b (NIV)

✓ **God will replace this broken marriage covenant** with another one. (This replacement has arrived! Today, we call it the "New Covenant.")

Yet I will remember the **covenant I made with you in the days of your youth**, and I will establish **an everlasting covenant** with you.

Ezekiel 16:60 (NIV); see also v. 62.

"... I will make a **new covenant** ... It will **not be like the covenant** I made with their fathers ... **a covenant they broke**, though I was a husband to them ..."

Jeremiah 31:31b, 32a, c (BSB); described in vs. 33-34.

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⇨ **Israel "betrothed" to God.**

✓ This verse is one of the first to point to the New Covenant concept that would later be described in greater detail. This event occurs *after* the original "marriage" (original covenant) has been broken by Israel.

"So I will **betroth** you to Me forever; I will **betroth** you in righteousness and justice, in loving devotion and compassion. And I will **betroth** you in faithfulness, and you will know the LORD."

Hosea 2:19-20 (BSB)

⇨ **God, was Israel's "husband," yet he also made them.**

✓ **God as husband, under the Old Covenant.**

For **your husband** is your Maker—the LORD of Hosts is His name—the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; He is called the God of all the earth.

Isaiah 54:5 (BSB)

The **context** is *not* on God as "the Creator," but on the fact that their Maker protects, restores and loves them, as a "husband."

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✓ **God as husband, under the Old Covenant (more verses).**

... though I was a **husband** to them, ...

Jeremiah 31:32b (BSB)

"But like a woman unfaithful to her **husband**, so you, Israel, have been unfaithful to me," declares the Lord.

Jeremiah 3:20 (NIV)

✓ **God as husband, under the New Covenant.** Though not given the name "New Covenant," until chapter 31, this passage describes how the New Covenant works. Rather than including *everyone* in the nation, it will selectively include *only those who are "chosen"* – only those who (from the human "responsibility perspective") are willing to follow the God of Israel.

"Return, faithless people," declares the Lord, "for **I am your husband**. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion."

Jeremiah 3:14 (NIV)

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⇨ **Israel, described as God's "bride" or "wife."**

✓ **As God's "bride."**

I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a **bride**, ...

Jeremiah 2:2 (BSB)

✓ **As God's "wife"** – context: *after* the nation turned away from God.

Rebuke your mother, rebuke her, for she is not My **wife**, and I am not her **husband**.

Hosea 2:2 (BSB)

✓ **This passage also mentions the children.** *Sin has consequences*; and a parent's sin often has *devastating consequences* on the children.

» This also happens in *human* relationships, when parents violate this Seventh Commandment. *The children suffer consequences* – often *horrible* ones (and perhaps *eternally horrible* ones).

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⇨ **God "divorces" Israel.** This came *only* after Israel's ongoing refusal to be with her "husband" – choosing instead to commit "adultery," and to "prostitute" herself with other gods (= described in *many* passages).

✓ **When Judah (the southern kingdom) first abandoned God.** At this time, the "divorce" apparently did not have the "legal document" (Deuteronomy 24:1-4). This fact apparently left open the possibility for Judah's return to God (instead of being permanently rejected).

"Where is your mother's **certificate of divorce** with which **I sent her away**?"

... for your transgressions your mother was **sent away**."

Isaiah 50:1b (BSB)

✓ **After the northern kingdom of Israel abandoned God.** This is written many decades later. Judah has gotten *worse* than Israel had been; and God reminds Judah about what happened to Israel:

I gave faithless Israel her **certificate of divorce** and **sent her away** because of all her adulteries.

Jeremiah 3:8a (NIV)

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⇨ **"Prostitution," "adultery," and "immorality"; also, many related concepts.** These concepts, which describe Israel's rebellion against God (her "husband") occur hundreds of times in the Old Testament. Some of the accounts are very graphic in describing the horrorfulness of what Israel was doing – using physical concepts to describe spiritual activities (and guilt).

✓ **Their abandonment of the God of Israel**, and their pursuit of other gods. (Hundreds of verses.)

» Graphic descriptions of Israel's history – Ezekiel 16 & 23.

» This is a common theme throughout the Old Testament:

But they were **unfaithful** to the God of their fathers, and they **prostituted** themselves with the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them.

1 Chronicles 5:25 (BSB)

"... like an **adulterous** wife this land is guilty of **unfaithfulness** to the LORD."

Hosea 1:2b (NIV)

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✓ **Their unfaithfulness to God – associated with many sins.**

- » Sexual sins and perversions – Numbers 25:1-3; Jeremiah 5:7-8.
- » Deceiving, cheating and wronging other people – Leviticus 6:2; Numbers 5:6.
- » It can influence one's choice of a marriage partner – Ezra 10:2; Nehemiah 13:27.
- » Putting one's trust in riches – Job 31:24-25, 28.
- » Astrology – Job 31:26-28. (Additional occult practices are mentioned in other passages.)
- » A detrimental change in climate (judgment by God) – Jeremiah 3:3 (see context).
- » Horrible consequences on children:
 - The children follow the parent's example – Jeremiah 9:14.
 - The children suffer in the *judgment* that the parents receive – Exodus 20:5; Numbers 14:33.
 - Child sacrifice – 2 Kings 17:17; Ezekiel 16:20-21. (Today, it's more popular to kill children *before* birth.)

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✓ **Their sin originated in the heart** – just like it does with us.

Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God, for a **spirit of prostitution** is within them, and they do not know the LORD.

Hosea 5:4 (BSB)

YOU CAN'T FOLLOW JESUS AS LONG AS YOU LOVE YOUR SIN!

✓ **Even when they *did* "return" to God, it was often in pretense.** This is how the southern kingdom of Judah responded, after it saw the judgment of the northern kingdom of Israel:

"... because **faithless Israel** had committed **adultery**, I gave her a **certificate of divorce** and **sent her away**. Yet that **unfaithful sister Judah** had no fear and **prostituted** herself as well.

Indifferent to her own **infidelity**, **Israel** had defiled the land and committed **adultery** with stones and trees. Yet in spite of all this, her **unfaithful sister Judah** **did not return to Me with all her heart, but only in pretense**" declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 3:8-10 (BSB)

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⇨ **Jesus as a "husband"; the church as a "wife."**

✓ **Jesus, as the bridegroom.** At the point when this was said, the "church" did not yet officially exist; so the analogy is different from what we see *after* Jesus' resurrection.

- » Here, the "guests" are Jesus' disciples. The time when Jesus will be "taken from them" refers to his arrest and crucifixion.

Jesus replied, "How can the **guests** of the **bridegroom** mourn while He is with them? But the time will come when the **bridegroom** will be taken from them; then they will fast."

Matthew 9:15 (BSB); also Mark 2:19-20 and Luke 5:34-35.

- » Here, the "friend" is John the baptizer. His ministry was to prepare the way for the bridegroom's arrival.

The **bride** belongs to the **bridegroom**. The **friend** of the **bridegroom** stands and listens for him, and is overjoyed to hear the **bridegroom's** voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

John 3:29 (BSB)

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✓ **Jesus, as the husband; the bride as a pure virgin.** This was Paul's *goal* for the church at Corinth. (It does not mean that everyone in the Corinthian church was saved.)

I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. For I promised you to one **husband**, to present you as a **pure virgin** to **Christ**.

2 Corinthians 11:2 (BSB)

✓ **The parable of the wedding banquet.** The "king" is the Father; the "son" is Jesus; and the focus is on the wedding banquet.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a **king** who prepared a **wedding banquet** for his **son** ..."

Matthew 22:2 (BSB)

✓ **The future marriage of the Lamb (Christ) and the bride.**

For the **wedding** of the **Lamb** has come, and his **bride** has made herself ready.

Revelation 19:7b (NIV)

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✓ **An invitation for us to be at the future wedding banquet.**

Blessed are those who are invited to the **wedding supper** of the **Lamb!**"

Revelation 19:9b (NIV)

⇨ **The New Jerusalem as a "bride."**

✓ **It is compared to a bride in its beauty.**

I saw the **Holy City, the new Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride** beautifully dressed for her **husband**.

Revelation 21:2 (NIV)

✓ **It seems to symbolize the bride of Christ** – perhaps the way "Jerusalem" in the Old Testament could represent both the city and the people living in it.

"Come, I will show you the **bride**, the **wife** of the **Lamb**." And he ... showed me the **Holy City, Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God.

Revelation 21:9b-10 (NIV)

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⇨ **Christ and the church – directly compared to a husband and a wife.**

These two concepts are *parallel*; the interactions or attitudes within these two groups (Christ/church; husband/wife) are also to be parallel.

✓ **The word "church,"** in this passage, refers *only* to saved people. Local churches tend to have at least some "fakes"; but fakes are not included here.* (Also, fakes won't respond properly.)

Wives, submit to your **husbands** as to the Lord. For the **husband** is the head of the **wife** as **Christ** is the head of the **church**, His body, of which He is the Savior. Now as the **church** submits to **Christ**, so also **wives** should submit to their **husbands** in everything.

Ephesians 5:22-24 (BSB)

Husbands, love your **wives**, just as **Christ** loved the **church** and gave Himself up for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to **Himself** as a glorious **church**, without stain or wrinkle or any such blemish, but holy and blameless.

Ephesians 5:25-27 (BSB)

* (Even so, fakes, like all people, have the obligation to obey this.)

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- ✓ The "unity" aspect of the marriage relationship.

In the same way, **husbands** ought to love their **wives as their own bodies**. He who loves his **wife** loves **himself**. Indeed, no one ever hated **his own body**, but he nourishes and cherishes it, just as **Christ** does the **church**. For we are members of **His body**.

Ephesians 5:28-30 (BSB)

- ✓ In case there are any questions about this, take note: The very nature of marriage (as seen in Genesis 2:24) proves it, because *marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church!*

"For this reason a **man** will leave his father and mother and be united to his **wife**, and the two will become one flesh."

This mystery is profound, but I am speaking about **Christ** and the **church**. Nevertheless, each one of **you [men]** also must love his **wife** as he loves himself, and the **wife** must respect* her **husband**.

Ephesians 5:31-33 (BSB)

* (This word is also translated as "fear," as in "fear of God.")

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- ⇨ "Spiritual adultery" does not require physical idols.

- ✓ "Friendship" with the world and its values is "spiritual adultery." *If you do it, you are God's enemy.*

You **adulterous** people, don't you know that **friendship with the world** means **enmity against God**? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a **friend of the world** becomes an **enemy of God**.

James 4:4 (NIV)

- ✓ This **Seventh Commandment violation is not often mentioned in the New Testament**. The New Covenant contains only *saved* people, so it is **impossible** for them to be God's *enemies*. But *churches in this present world can* contain fakes; and such passages are addressed as *warnings* to them. The result of such warnings will be twofold:

- » Those who are **genuine followers of Jesus** will heed the warning; and if they are guilty of sin, they will repent.
- » Those who are **fakes** will have no long-term repentance (whether or not there is a temporary remorse, at the moment they are being exposed to this passage).

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EXAMPLES OF PASSAGES THAT APPLY THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT CONCEPT TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND PEOPLE:

THESE FOCUS ON THE "PARENT-CHILD" AND "SIBLING" CONCEPTS.

(The *principles* related to the Fifth Commandment are related to *authorities, people under authority, and also "equals."*)

- ⇨ The Father and Son concept, as applied to God.

- ✓ These verses emphasize the *functional* relationship between the Father and Jesus – Psalm 2:7; Hebrews 1:5; 1 John 1:3.
- ✓ The Father and Son function *differently*, though they are *equally* God. This parallels the *human* parent-child relationship that God created as a *reflection* of what God is like. (⇨ Both parent and child are equally human, but they have different functions.)

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- ⇨ God as *our* "Father." In salvation, we become his "sons" or "children."

- ✓ How is this possible? **Only through adoption**: Romans 8:23; 9:4; Ephesians 1:5. (We do not change into deity; God continues to be *uncreated* deity, and we continue to be *created* humans.)
- ✓ **Old Testament verses** that emphasize this relationship between God and people: Exodus 4:22-23; Isaiah 63:16; Jeremiah 3:19; Hosea 11:1; Malachi 1:6. (Israel often abandoned this relationship.)
- ✓ **New Testament verses** that emphasize this relationship between God (the "Father") and his people: 2 Corinthians 6:18; Galatians 1:3; 3:26; 4:6; John 1:12; Romans 8:14; 1 John 3:1-2; etc. (See also the verses about adoption.)
- ✓ **God cares for us; he disciplines us** like a father disciplines his son: Psalm 68:5; 103:13; Proverbs 3:11-12; Hebrews 12:5-6.
- ✓ **Jesus as our "brother"**: Mark 3:34-35; Hebrews 2:11.
- ✓ **Jesus, the "child who is born" is called the "Eternal Father,"** in Isaiah 9:6 – one of his *titles*, emphasizing the care and protection that "King Jesus" has for his people.

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OUR MISSION:

BE CAREFUL!

It's *easy* to violate the Seventh Commandment concept, *even if we remain sexually pure physically*.

(Even so, people often have a tendency to violate *both* ways at the same time – as evidenced down throughout history.)

God created humans "in his image" for the purpose of reflecting *his* nature in creation – and also to teach us something about our relationship to him.

Violating the Seventh Commandment *on any level* destroys all this.

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Credits

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