

~WIFE (510)

[Hebrew, *ish-shah'*, Greek, *gy-ne'*]

- Among The Ancient Hebrews
- Wife Protected Under The Law
- Description Of A Good Wife
- Figurative Use

- A married woman. In Hebrew, *'ish-shah'* means, woman, literally, a female man, or wife, the wife was referred to as one **owned by a husband**.
- No more will you be said to be a woman left entirely, and your own land will no more be said to be desolate, but you yourself will be called, **My Delight Is in Her**, and your land **Owned As A Wife**. For Yehowah will have taken delight in you, and your own land will be owned as a wife. (**Isaiah 62:4**) Footnote
- In Greek, *gy-ne'* can mean, **wife**, or it can mean, **woman**, whether married or not. Yehowah God provided the first man Adam with a **wife** by taking a rib from him and building it into the **woman**. She thereby became bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.
- She was the counterpart of Adam and was created as a helper for him.
- And Yehowah God went on to say; It is not good for the man to continue by himself. I am going to make a helper for him, as a complement of him. (**Genesis 2:18**)
- So the man was calling the names of all the domestic animals and of the flying creatures of the heavens and of every wild beast of the field, but for man there was found no helper as a complement of him. (**Genesis 2:20**)
- Hence Yehowah God had a deep sleep fall upon the man and, while he was sleeping, he took one of his ribs and then closed up the flesh over its place. (**Genesis 2:21**)
- And Yehowah God proceeded to build the rib that he had taken from the man into a **woman** and to bring her to the man. (**Genesis 2:22**)

- Then the man said; This is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. This one will be called Woman, because from man this one was taken. (**Genesis 2:23**)
- God dealt directly with Adam, and in turn, Adam passed on God's commandments to his wife. By reason of his prior creation and his being created in God's image, he had the priority as head and was the spokesman for God to her.
- His headship was to be exercised in love, and the woman as a helper was to cooperate in the procreative mandate issued to the pair.
- Further, God blessed them and God said to them; Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth. (**Genesis 1:28**)

See Also WOMAN

- After the sin, first of Eve, who instead of being a helper to her husband proved to be a temptress, and then of her husband Adam, who followed her in transgression, God pronounced judgment on the woman, saying,
- To the woman he said; I shall greatly increase the pain of your pregnancy, in birth pangs you will bring forth children, and your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you. (**Genesis 3:16**)
- Since that time, among many peoples of the earth the woman has indeed been dominated, often in a very harsh way, by her husband, and instead of being a companion and helper, she has in many cases been treated more like a servant.

.. Among The Ancient Hebrews

- Among the ancient Hebrews the man was the head of the house and was his **wife's** owner, **Hebrew, *ba'`al***, and the woman was the one owned, ***be`u-lah'***.
- Among servants of God the wife occupied a dignified and honorable place. Godly women of spirit and ability, while subject to their husbandly head, had much latitude and freedom of action and

were happy in their place, they were blessed in being used by Yehowah God to perform special services for him.

- Examples among the many faithful wives of the Bible are Sarah, Rebekah, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, and Mary the mother of Jesus.

•• Wife Protected Under The Law

- While the husband occupied the superior position in the marriage arrangement, God's requirements were that he was to provide for and care for the family in a material and spiritual way.

- Also, any wrongdoings of the family reflected on him, consequently he had a heavy responsibility. And while he had greater privileges than the **wife**, God's Law protected the **wife** and gave her certain unique privileges, so that she was able to live a happy, productive life.

- A few examples of the Laws provisions involving the **wife** were: Either husband or **wife** could be put to death for adultery. If the husband was suspicious of secret infidelity on the part of his wife, he could bring her to the priest, for Yehowah God to judge the matter, and if the **woman** was guilty, her reproductive organs would atrophy, on the other hand, if she was not guilty, the husband was required to make her pregnant, thereby publicly acknowledging her innocence.

- Speak to the sons of Israel, and you must say to them, In case any man's **wife** turns aside in that she does commit an act of unfaithfulness against him. (**Numbers 5:12**)
- And another man actually lies down with her and has an emission of semen, and it has been hidden from the eyes of her husband and has remained undiscovered, and she, on her part, has defiled herself but there is no witness against her, and she herself has not been caught. (**Numbers 5:13**)
- And the spirit of jealousy has passed upon him, and he has become suspicious of his wife's faithfulness, and she in fact has defiled herself, or the spirit of jealousy has passed upon him, and he has become suspicious of his wife's faithfulness, but she in fact has not defiled herself. (**Numbers 5:14**)
- Then the man must bring his **wife** to the priest and bring her offering along with her, a tenth of an ephah of barley flour. He

- must not pour oil upon it nor put frankincense upon it, because it is a grain offering of jealousy, a memorial grain offering bringing error to remembrance. (**Numbers 5:15**)
- And the priest must bring her forward and make her stand before Yehowah. (**Numbers 5:16**)
 - And the priest must take holy water in an earthenware vessel, and the priest will take some of the dust that happens to be on the floor of the tabernacle, and he must put it in the water. (**Numbers 5:17**)
 - And the priest must make the woman stand before Yehowah and loosen the hair of the woman's head and put upon her palms the memorial grain offering, that is, the grain offering of jealousy, and in the hand of the priest there should be the bitter water that brings a curse. (**Numbers 5:18**)
 - And the priest must make her swear, and he must say to the **woman**; If no man has lain down with you and if while under your husband you have not turned aside in any uncleanness, be free of the effect of this bitter water that brings a curse. (**Numbers 5:19**)
 - But you, in case you have turned aside while under your husband and in case you have defiled yourself and some man has put in you his seminal emission, besides your husband. (**Numbers 5:20**)
 - The priest must now make the woman swear with an oath involving cursing, and the priest must say to the woman; May Yehowah set you for a cursing and an oath in the midst of your people by Yehowah's letting your thigh fall away, and your belly swell. (**Numbers 5:21**)
 - And this water that brings a curse must enter into your intestines to cause your belly to swell and the thigh to fall away. To this the woman must say; Amen! Amen! (**Numbers 5:22**)
 - And the priest must write these cursings in the book and must wipe them out into the bitter water. (**Numbers 5:23**)
 - And he must make the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and the water that brings a curse must enter into her as something bitter. (**Numbers Chapter 5**)

- And the priest must take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand and wave the grain offering to and fro before Yehowah, and he must bring it near the altar. (**Numbers 5:25**)
- And the priest must grasp some of the grain offering as a remembrancer of it and must make it smoke upon the altar, and afterward he will make the woman drink the water. (**Numbers 5:26**)
- When he has made her drink the water, it must also occur that if she has defiled herself in that she committed an act of unfaithfulness toward her husband, the water that brings a curse must then enter into her as something bitter, and her belly must swell, and her thigh must fall away, and the **woman** must become a cursing in among her people. (**Numbers 5:27**)
- However, if the **woman** has not defiled herself but she is clean, she must then be free from such punishment, and she must be made pregnant with semen. (**Numbers 5:28**)
- This is the Law about jealousy, where a **woman** may turn aside while under her husband, and she does defile herself. (**Numbers 5:29**)
- Or in the case of a man where the spirit of jealousy may pass upon him, and he does suspect his wife of unfaithfulness, and he must make the wife stand before Yehowah, and the priest must carry out toward her all this Law. (**Numbers 5:30**)
- A husband could divorce his **wife** if he found something indecent on her part. This would likely include such things as showing him gross disrespect or bringing reproach upon the household or that of his father. But the wife was protected by the requirement that he must write out for her a certificate of divorce. She was then free to marry another man.
- In case a man takes a woman and does make her his possession as a **wife**, it must also occur that if she should find no favor in his eyes because he has found something indecent on her part, he must also write out a certificate of divorce for her and put it in her hand and dismiss her from his house. (**Deuteronomy 24:1**)
- And she must go out of his house and go and become another

man's. (**Deuteronomy 24:2**)

- If the **wife** made a vow that her husband thought unwise or detrimental to the family's welfare, he could nullify it.
- However, if it is in the house of her husband that she has vowed or has bound an abstinence vow upon her soul by an oath. (**Numbers 30:10**)
- And her husband has heard it and has kept silent toward her, he has not forbidden her, and all her vows must stand or any abstinence vow that she has bound upon her soul will stand. (**Numbers 30:11**)
- But if her husband has totally annulled them on the day of his hearing any expression of her lips as her vows or as an abstinence vow of her soul, they will not stand. Her husband has annulled them, and Yehowah will forgive her. (**Numbers 30:12**)
- Any vow or any oath of an abstinence vow to afflict the soul, her husband should establish it or her husband should annul it. (**Numbers 30:13**)
- But if her husband absolutely keeps silent toward her from day to day, he has also established all her vows or all her abstinence vows that are upon her. He has established them because he kept silent toward her on the day of his hearing them. (**Numbers 30:14**)
- And if he totally annuls them after his hearing them, he also actually bears her error. (**Numbers 30:15**)
- This, however, was a safeguard for the **wife**, keeping her from any hasty action that might bring her into difficulty.
- Polygamy was allowed under the Mosaic Law but was regulated so that the **wife** was protected. The husband could not transfer the right of the firstborn from the son of a less-loved **wife** to the son of his favorite wife.
- In case a man comes to have two **wives**, the one loved and the other hated, and they, the loved one and the hated one, have borne sons to him, and the firstborn son has come to be of the hated one. (**Deuteronomy 21:15**)

- It must also occur that in the day that he gives as an inheritance to his sons what he happens to have, he will not be allowed to constitute the son of the loved one his firstborn at the expense of the hated ones son, the firstborn. ([Deuteronomy 21:16](#))
- For he should recognize as the firstborn the hated ones son by giving him two parts in everything he is found to have, because that one is the beginning of his generative power. The right of the firstborns position belongs to him. ([Deuteronomy 21:17](#))
- If an Israelite daughter was sold by her father as a servant and the master took her as a concubine, her owner could allow her to be redeemed if she did not please him, but he could not sell her to a foreign people.
- And in case a man should sell his daughter as a slave girl, she will not go out in the way that the slave men go out. ([Exodus 21:7](#))
- If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master so that he does not designate her as a concubine but causes her to be redeemed, he will not be entitled to sell her to a foreign people in his treacherously dealing with her. ([Exodus 21:8](#))
- If either he or his son had taken her as a concubine and then married another **wife**, she was to be provided with food, clothing, and shelter, as well as the marriage due.
- And if it should be to his son that he designates her, he is to do to her according to the due right of daughters. ([Exodus 21:9](#))
- If he should take another **wife** for himself, her sustenance, her clothing and her marriage due are not to be diminished. ([Exodus 21:10](#))
- If he will not render these three things to her, then she must go out for nothing, without money. ([Exodus 21:11](#))
- If a husband maliciously charged his **wife** with having falsely claimed to be a virgin at the time of marriage and his charge was proved false, he was punished and had to pay her father twice the marriage rate for virgins and could never divorce her all his days.
- In case a man takes a **wife** and actually has relations with her

and has come to hate her. ([Deuteronomy 22:13](#))

- And he has charged her with notorious deeds and brought forth a bad name upon her and has said; This is the woman I have taken, and I proceeded to go near her, and I did not find evidence of virginity in her. ([Deuteronomy 22:14](#))
- The father of the girl and her mother must also take and bring forth the evidence of the girls virginity to the older men of the city at the gate of it. ([Deuteronomy 22:15](#))
- And the girl's father must say to the older men, I gave my daughter to this man as a **wife**, and he went hating her. ([Deuteronomy 22:16](#))
- And here he is charging her with notorious deeds, saying; I have found your daughter does not have evidence of virginity. Now this is the evidence of my daughters virginity. And they must spread out the mantle before the older men of the city. ([Deuteronomy 22:17](#))
- And the older men of that city must take the man and discipline him. ([Deuteronomy 22:18](#))
- And they must fine him a hundred silver shekels and give them to the girl's father, because he brought forth a bad name upon a virgin of Israel, and she will continue to be his **wife**. He will not be allowed to divorce her all his days. ([Deuteronomy 22:19](#))
- If a man seduced an unengaged virgin, he was required to pay the marriage price to her father and, if the father permitted, to marry her, after which he could never divorce her all his days.
- In case a man finds a girl, a virgin who has not been engaged, and he actually seizes her and lies down with her, and they have been found out. ([Deuteronomy 22:28](#))
- The man who lay down with her must also give the girl's father fifty silver shekels, and she will become his **wife** due to the fact that he humiliated her. He will not be allowed to divorce her all his days. ([Deuteronomy 22:29](#))
- Now in case a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, and he actually lies down with her, he is to obtain her without fail as his

wife for the purchase price. (**Exodus 22:16**)

- If her father flatly refuses to give her to him, he is to pay over the money at the rate of purchase money for **virgins**. (**Exodus 22:17**)
- While the position of the **wife** in Hebrew society was somewhat different from a **wifes** status in Western society today, the faithful Hebrew wife enjoyed her position and her work.
- She helped her husband, raised the family, managed the household, and found many things of satisfaction and delight, being able to express her womanly nature and talents to the full.

.. Description Of A Good Wife

- The happy state and activities of the faithful **wife** are described at (**Proverbs Chapter 31**). She is said to be of more value to her husband than corals. He is able to put trust in her.
- She is industrious weaving, making clothing for her family, attending to the buying of household needs, working in the vineyard, managing a household with the servants, aiding others who need help, clothing her family attractively, even bringing in some income by her handiwork, equipping her family against future emergencies, expressing herself in wisdom and loving-kindness, and, through fear of Yehowah and good works, receiving praise from her husband and from her sons, thereby honoring her husband and her family in the land.
- Truly he who has found a good **wife** has found a good thing and gets goodwill from Yehowah.
- Has one found a good **wife**? One has found a good thing, and one gets goodwill from Yehowah. (**Proverbs 18:22**)
- In the Christian Congregation. The standard in the Christian congregation is that a husband should have only one living **wife**.
- Yet, because of prevalence of fornication, let each man have his own **wife** and each woman have her own husband. (**1 Corinthians 7:2**)
- The overseer should therefore be irreprehensible, a husband of one **wife**, moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable,

qualified to teach. (1 Timothy 3:2)

- **Wives** are commanded to be in subjection to their husbands, whether these husbands are Christian believers or not.
- Let **wives** be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord. (Ephesians 5:22)
- Because a husband is head of his **wife** as the Christ also is head of the congregation, he being a savior of this body. (Ephesians 5:23)
- In fact, as the congregation is in subjection to the Christ, so let wives also be to their husbands in everything. (Ephesians 5:24)
- **Wives** are not to withhold the marital due, for as with the husband, so with the **wife**, she does not exercise authority over her own body.
- Let the husband render to his **wife** her due, but let the **wife** also do likewise to her husband. (1 Corinthians 7:3)
- The **wife** does not exercise authority over her own body, but her husband does, likewise, also, the husband does not exercise authority over his own body, but his **wife** does. (1 Corinthians 7:4)
- **Wives** are instructed to let their primary adornment be that of the secret person of the heart, producing the fruitage of the spirit, that perhaps through their conduct alone the unbelieving husband may be won over to Christianity.
- In like manner, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, in order, that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives. (1 Peter 3:1)
- Because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect. (1 Peter 3:2)
- And do not let your adornment be that of the external braiding of the hair and of the putting on of gold ornaments or the wearing of outer garments. (1 Peter 3:3)

- But let it be the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God. (**1 Peter 3:4**)
- For so, too, formerly the holy women who were hoping in God used to adorn themselves, subjecting themselves to their own husbands. (**1 Peter 3:5**)
- As Sarah used to obey Abraham, calling him lord. And you have become her children, provided you keep on doing good and not fearing any cause for terror. (**1 Peter 3:6**)

•• Figurative Use

- In a figurative sense Yehowah spoke of Israel as his **wife** by reason of his covenant with the nation.
- For Yehowah called you as if you were a **wife** left entirely and hurt in spirit, and as a **wife** of the time of youth who was then rejected, your God has said. (**Isaiah 54:6**)
- The apostle Paul speaks of Yehowah as the Father of spirit-begotten Christians, and he speaks of the Jerusalem above as their mother, as though Yehowah were married to her for the purpose of bringing forth spirit-begotten Christians.
- Now because you are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts and it cries out; Abba, Father! (**Galatians 4:6**)
- So, then, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, also an heir through God. (**Galatians 4:7**)
- But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. (**Galatians 4:26**)
- The Christian congregation is spoken of as the bride, or **wife**, of Jesus Christ.
- Because a husband is head of his **wife** as the Christ also is head of the congregation, he being a savior of this body. (**Ephesians 5:23**)
- Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it.

(Ephesians 5:25)

- **Let us rejoice and be overjoyed, and let us give him the glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has arrived and his wife has prepared herself. (Revelation 19:7)**
- **I saw also the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Revelation 21:2)**
- **And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls which were full of the seven last plagues, and he spoke with me and said; Come here, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife. (Revelation 21:9)**