

HEIRS TOGETHER

(Bro. Bakht Singh. Balance of Truth Sept, 1957)

“Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh” (Gen 41:14)

That was the happiest day for Joseph. The day of new beginning for him. All that God was preparing him for was fulfilled that day in the life of Joseph. From that time onwards his life was entirely different. God had been preparing him through many painful circumstances for a very important ministry. God’s training had led that man Joseph through all kinds of unhappy experiences to prepare him for a high position and for great responsibility; and when he passed every test and had been found faithful at every point, a day came when God gave him that authority and that responsibility for which he had been prepared. Thus he was able to carry out that charge faithfully.

Now, you must be wondering what has this to do with this marriage. Just as a day brought a great change in the whole of life of Joseph in Gen 41, so in the same way those who are being joined according to the will of God may also expect a similar change. God has a great and heavenly purpose for those who are joined in the heavenly plan.

On the occasion of a marriage people will be thinking of many things. As you attend a wedding and look at the wedding party, you think perhaps of your wedding day and of all that happened those many years ago. You think of how much money you spent on your marriage and of what expectation you had for your married life. Now perhaps you have to say that, with all your preparations and expectations, you are disappointed and the joy and happiness which you thought you would receive through marriage have been failure. Others think of their future and of what they can learn through the marriage to help them in their lives. No matter what our memories may be, we believe that on such occasions God has a message for all of us. For married life has been ordained by God and through it God purposes to reveal Himself in a new way.

Our thought will centre on the following passages of scripture: Ephesians 5:20-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7; Rev. 21:1-7. We shall see in these scriptures that God has intended to give joy to those who are joined by Him. There is something which they can receive by union which they cannot receive by otherwise. The Word is clear and plain on that subject. God has planned from eternity to give to those who are married much joy and happiness. Yet there are so few who have a really happy married life. In so many homes we find no such happiness, because they failed to understand the divine laws which govern a happy married life. That is why before a couple is joined together we draw attention to them through God's word to the divine laws of a happy married life.

When a marriage is arranged in the will and plan of God, we can be sure that it is His purpose to grant to His servants an abundantly fruitful ministry. All those years of preparation are towards that end, that one day; like Joseph, they may stand in the name of God even before kings and princes and show them the divine laws, and by divine wisdom and divine preparation be the means of saving many lives by supplying the bread and corn for many years to many people.

Such a fruitful life requires preparation and without that preparation, you can never expect from God a really fruitful life. That is a simple divine law of married life.

Before two persons are joined together as life partners, they must be prepared individually by God Himself through manifold experiences for their joint ministry and joint burdens. Only when they are prepared individually by God Himself for manifold experiences can they expect from God joy and happiness which God intends for their married life. Such preparation may go on for many years or for few years, but we can see from God's word that there is a period of divine preparation of the spirit, soul, and body. It does not matter what may be the earthly circumstances of life. There can be anything in life as human beings. Some of us have to live a life of poverty for many years, others have to live a life of loneliness for many years; some have to face sickness for many years and others may have to go through very hard places to earn their living; some have to live with hard-hearted relations and some have to live with neighbours who are unkind. But if your life is governed and controlled by God, then none of these things can take away the heavenly joy from your life. The heavenly joy does not depend upon your health, wealth, position,

possession or other circumstances. God has every right to keep us in any state He thinks best. But praise God we have the joy unspeakable and full of glory under any circumstances.

The three passages of scripture we have referred to reveal many divine laws for a happy married life. If these are understood and believed by the two to be joined together; then God Himself will lead them in the way that they should go.

Generally on wedding day those who are to be married are so tired and excited that they cannot remember what we say and so will not get the message of God. But remember that God's Word remains clear for all and in it these divine laws are so plainly written that if we read the passages again we will be reminded of the message.

"This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church" (Eph. 5:32). The Apostle is speaking of the relationship of husband and wife, and then he says this is a great mystery. This cannot be understood unless you are willing to obey the divine laws.

How can anybody understand the union of sinners with the Lord Jesus Christ? It is impossible, because on earth we do every thing under the sun to grieve the Lord. For how many years we go on grieving Him, by disobeying Him and breaking His laws. This very same body which has been given to us to be the temple of the Holy Ghost is so often abused and misused. In our sinful condition all of us misuse our body. We misuse our tongues, we misuse our eyes, we misuse our hands, we misuse our feet and every part of our body, and we misuse our wisdom and knowledge. Thus we go on grieving the One who has made us. Yet even though we grieve Him so much and wound His heart so much and give Him so much grief through our sinful condition, yet He is willing to forgive our sins. It does not matter how many our sins have been, in a second they can be forgiven and covered by His precious Blood. Moreover, because of sin, we were entirely cut off from God. We never knew how to speak to God, and how to hear His voice or to find out His will, but were entirely in darkness. Yet our God gives us much love. In spite of our falls and our sinful state He loved us and gave Himself for us. He not only forgives us, but

is willing to come and live in us, that we may be eternally joined to Him and be with Him together for Eternity.

When believer is born again he is eternally joined with the Holy, Mighty and Great God. Can you ever explain such a living union by human knowledge or human reasoning? Impossible. God did not love you because of your face, nor love you for your inward virtue. There is absolutely no virtue in any one of us. We are spoiled and ruined by sin, and yet by His grace, we talk to Him as our friend; we go to Him as our Heavenly Father. We call upon Him with great joy and boldness and we enter into His presence day and night and enjoy His life in a greater measure not because of any qualification of our own but because of inward union.

Now, the Apostle says, married life is a picture of this. Many think a happy married life depends upon face, wealth, position, family and other things. "Is he a Pillai? Is he a Nadar? Is he Madiga? Is he a Syrian Christian or Brahmin convert?" What darkness and blindness the devil has brought into mankind! As if these families can make a change in married life! Others ask: "What is his complexion? Is he fair or black? Has she a round face or a long one? How are her eyes and teeth and hair?" Some ask these things openly and some ask privately, as if outward appearances can give happiness! Some do not mind face but they want money. How much money will she bring with her? When we go to Travancore regarding this matter of marriage, the first thing they do is to bargain over the girl's dowry. She must bring Rs.5,000 or 7,000 or even 10,000. If the man happens to be a graduate he demands more. If a metric failed he can only ask half the amount. That is how they go on.

So man measures happiness by outward things- by gold and jewels. Thus mankind has been blinded by Satan. The happiness of married life does not depend on these at all but upon inward union and inward relationship. You will know happiness if you have that. But because very few understand the simple divine law that spiritual union must govern physical union, their union brings no happiness. Just as a sinner is joined to the Lord and receives God's life and fullness, so it is possible that a man and woman can receive richly from God in this life, provided they are joined by God. All are not joined by God. Some are joined by uncles, some are joined by aunties, some are joined by preachers, some are joined by professional match-makers. But whatsoever does it, apart from God, these men made unions cannot

bring happiness. Men only go by experience. But in God's Word there is provision made to seek God's face and know His will.

But thank God we can address this message also to those who know the Lord and know how to find God's will. When it is not through men's thoughts but after long prayer and through God's Word that a couple are joined together, we can say truthfully for God's glory that their union is of God's will and not man's will. If it has truly not been brought about for human advantage but because God has spoken, then we can say with additional authority that such a marriage depends upon their inward union in Christ. Those who are joined together may be guided by that fact. They must see that their spiritual union becomes stronger by prayer.

Then further, we see that there are several simple laws that govern a happy married life. It is because people are joined against God's will that there is no real joy in their hearts when they live together. Instead there is only attraction or admiration that goes away soon. Physical charm goes away after a few months. It does not matter how nice you may look now, one day you will lose your physical beauty. But divine laws do not depend on that. Divine love is given as a gift when His own are united in His will. Because of what God has planned to accomplish through such union He delights to pour out His love into the hearts of those who are joined in Him.

The third law is the law of oneness. Verse 31: "The twain shall become one flesh". God has joined them together to be of one mind, so that, in their eyes they are no more two, but see themselves as one person. Men may see two persons, but God only sees one person, provided they are joined by Him. They are to be of one mind in all the things they plan. Whether it is a question of place, money, or time, or children, or other questions, they must see that by love, prayer and patience, they find God's mind. Those who are not born again cannot be of one mind in that way. They cannot find God's will in that way. It is only applicable to those who are born again and who are "Partakers of divine nature." They are privileged to obey together God's law of oneness. If they want to enjoy God's grace then they must be of one mind in big or small matters. Those who do not find time to seek God's mind together, live in strife. But disagreement will give way when you are determined to

seek God's will. How simple and clear God's laws are! You have only to follow them and you will have blessing.

Fourthly there is the law of spiritual beauty. (1Peter 3.3, 4) You see so many wives are going on struggling to win and hold their husband's affection, by putting all kinds of powder, cream, jewels and beautiful sarees. They spend two or three hours beautifying themselves, yet they do not look beautiful. All these cannot give you the real beauty. Remember that the only heavenly beauty is that which comes through the virtue of Christ. Strong character and a pure heart are two such virtues. If husband and wife are true and loyal and faithful to each other in Christ, and have the spirit of meekness and humbleness, they will know a beauty which exceeds all earthly beauty. They have to see that they are adorned by divine virtues.

Fifthly, there is the law of partnership (1Peter 3:7). Men and women are brought together to be joint-heirs of the grace of life in Christ our Lord. They are to share together the joy which the Lord has given each of them during the past years. They are companions, they are friends; they are joint-heirs. Whatsoever God has taught them is to be shared by them spiritually. Alas how often you see in the married life that at first they share everything, but after two or three months there comes some distance between them. The husband comes home and the wife asks many questions but there is no answer from the husband, but the shaking of head. He is so occupied with himself that he has no time to share his feelings or have fellowship with her. So this brings distance, and they feel as strangers because they are not living as partners. For a happy married life they must be friends, partners because they are joint heirs with Christ.

Sixthly, the law of newness (Rev. 21:2). Here God speaks of the new creation. The apostle sees the Holy City coming down out of heaven. It is called the Bride of Christ. Why? Because it is entirely new. It is all according to Him in character. In verse 5 God says: "Behold I will make all things new," and here is His new heavenly Bride. It is entirely new in everything. And that is another law for a married life. Their life must be entirely new.

In all their friendship, associations, interests, and activities, all things must be according to God. God has spent many years preparing them. Now they are joined together and they must be entirely new in everything, new thoughts, new ideas, new affection, and new plans. "Behold I make all things new." Things they never enjoyed before will be enjoyed by them now. Thoughts they never had before will be given to them, not just for themselves, but for others. From now onwards their life must be entirely new, because governed by God. That is the law of the new creation.

Finally, the law of living together with God at the centre of life (Rev. 21:3). Even now the Lord dwells among us, but in the new creation, it says, the Lord will live among His people in His fullness. We have to acknowledge that there are limitations in our life here – and even in married life! But then there will be no limitations. God will be able to pour His life in fullness into His people and they will be able to talk with Him freely. They will be freed from human bondage and then we will live together without fear and with liberty. What is the law of living together today without suspicion, or fear and with perfect liberty of expression? It is to put at the centre of everything. This brings intimate love that springs from true and perfect confidence. Such a life is a happy married life. Blessed be God. God Himself lives and works in His servants. Their home is a happy home where the Lord Himself dwells in their midst and where God is all its glory. May this divine law be revealed to us all. (A message given at the marriage of Bro. Abraham Joseph with sister Beatrice Williams)