

# A Study of the Book of Genesis

## Joined Together As One

### The Rib

God took one of Adam's ribs to fashion the woman. The term is better translated as 'side', but when we take that verse together with what Adam said in verse 23, "*bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh*", it seems that the "side" consists of both the rib and the flesh around it.

Rib is an interesting term in the Old Testament. It appears to be an architectural/structural word in some applications in the scriptures. Most everywhere else this particular word is used, it is referring to the side of a building; a necessary piece of the construction that holds the building together.

The Hebrew word for 'rib' refers to

- sides and corners of the ark of the covenant (Exodus 25:12).
- the sides of the tabernacle (Exodus 26:26).
- side chambers (planks and boards) of the temple wall (1 Kings 6:6,15).
- sides of the porch of Ezekiel's temple (Ezekiel 41:26).

The structural integrity of the building is in question if the essential sides (ribs) are not in place!

So what is the 'building' God is creating by using a rib? Because He is a God of order, we see that His joining of Adam and Eve together is the literal foundational building blocks of societal order: the family.



Remember, if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do (Psalm 11:3)?!

God made Eve from Adam's side to be his helper. She was indeed his companion, but so much more than that! She was his perfect complement, suitable for him. She was an integral part of what God was building through them. We could say she was the support system, perfectly adequate for his needs and completing where he might be lacking. Together, they would accomplish infinitely more than they ever could separately. Being joined together, they became more than the sum of their individual selves. The first husband and wife; the beginning of the first family in history!

### For This Reason

God's intent is for a male and a female to be joined together as one unit, using their different talents and intellectual abilities... sharing their ideas and their interests... impacting their part of the world in a unified manner to accomplish all that the Lord has commissioned them to do. This is the *reason* a man and woman leave their father and mother. In doing so, they will enjoy the pleasure of a physical and spiritual union. Under normal circumstances, they will be able to have children, multiplying and filling

the earth. And most importantly, a God-honoring marriage will be a vivid picture of Christ and his love for the church, on display for all to see.

The phrase "*for this reason*" in Genesis 2:24 is referenced in the New Testament in Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:7 and Ephesians 5:31. The status of Adam and Eve as husband and wife represents the relationship between Christ and the Church. Adam is a picture of Christ, Eve is a picture of the church. "*The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church*". Ephesians 5:23 is clear that the leadership and headship role in the church belongs to Christ. Similarly, the husband has the leadership role. It was this way from the beginning!

## When Are a Man and Woman Considered Married?

In a plain observation of the text before us, we see 'presentation' and 'consummation'. These two pieces working together constituted a marriage early in history.

In Genesis 2:22, God brought this newly fashioned creature to Adam. After God closed up the place where he took out the rib, Adam wakes up to find he's about to be married.

The passage says God "*brought her to the man*". This phrase is used at least two other times in the Old Testament (see Joshua 15:18 and Judges 1:14, referring to the same event). A father, Othniel, giving away his daughter Achsah as a wife to the one who attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher. There is a presentation aspect in play here. We see this sort of idea in other places where a man and woman are brought together:

- Abraham sent his servant to his homeland to find Isaac a wife (Genesis 24).
- Laban brought Leah to Jacob (Genesis 29:21-23).
- Laban also brought Rachel to Jacob (Genesis 29:28).
- Reuel gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses as a wife (Exodus 2:21).
- Michal was presented to David by Saul, albeit with ulterior motives (1 Samuel 18:20-21,27).
- The universal church presented to Christ as pure and holy and spotless (Ephesians 5:25-27).

In our passage in Genesis 2:22, God brought Eve to Adam, presenting her to him as his wife.

In addition to the presentation aspect, there is the consummation of the marriage through a sexual union, something we can conclude from Genesis 2:24-25 where we have a naked man and a naked woman joined together.

We see the idea of consummation in other parts of scripture as being the 'finalization' of something. In 1 Peter 4:7 it says, "*the end of all things is near*". The *end* is not a chronological *end*, but rather something that is finalized. It is something that has been accomplished or reached fulfillment. The sexual union between a man and woman finalizes (accomplishes) the marriage.

They were not ashamed, nor could they be, because marriage between a man and a woman is a beautiful thing in the site of God!

Quoted from an article on the Gospel Coalition website by Ray Ortlund

And they shall become one flesh. "One flesh" is essential to the biblical view of marriage. It means, one mortal life fully shared. Two selfish me's start learning to think like one unified us, sharing one everything: one life, one reputation, one bed, one suffering, one budget, one family, one mission, and so forth. No barriers. No hiding. No aloofness. Now total openness with total sharing and total solidarity, until death parts them. Moreover, Jesus explained that, behind the word "become," God is there: "What therefore God has joined together . . ." (Matthew 19:6). He also made it clear that the word "they" in Genesis 2:24 means "the two" (Matthew 19:5), thus establishing one man/one woman as the biblical norm. What we see then, is that marriage is not a product of human social evolution; marriage came down from God. And he defined it for us. He has the right to. It belongs to him.

What's more, the apostle Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 to take our understanding a step further – an amazing step: "We are members of [Christ's] body. 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'" (Ephesians 5:30-31). Notice his logic. "We are members of Christ's body. He loved us. He chose us. He gave himself up for us. He will present us someday in splendor. We are united with Christ now and forever. Therefore, our union with Christ is the reason why, a man and woman get married and live united as 'one flesh.' Human marriages are miniature social platforms on which the gospel is to be displayed." The final reason why men and women fall in love and get married is because the whole human story is, most deeply, a romance coming down from above.

Source: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/ray-ortlund/what-is-marriage-according-to-the-bible/>