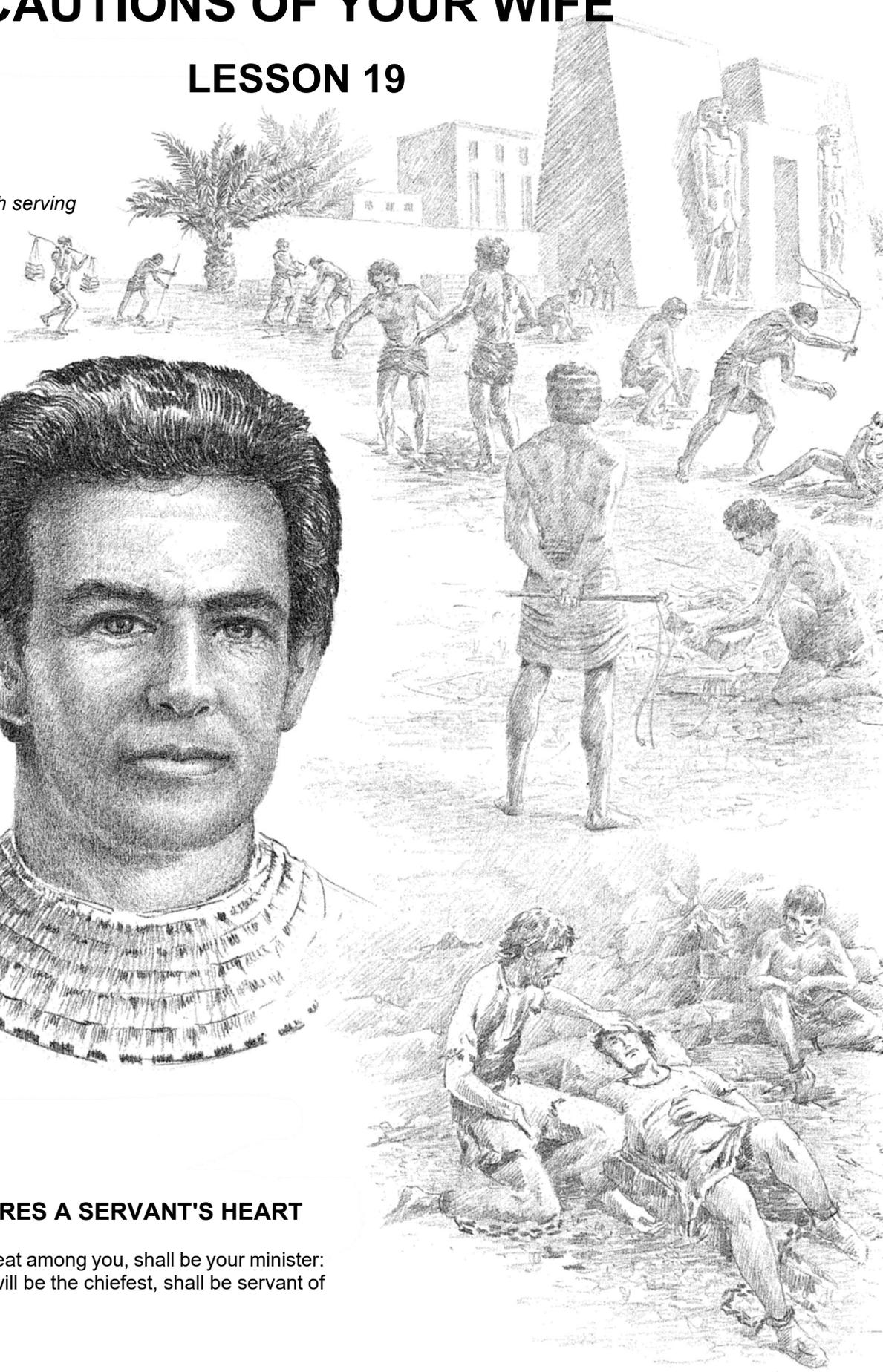
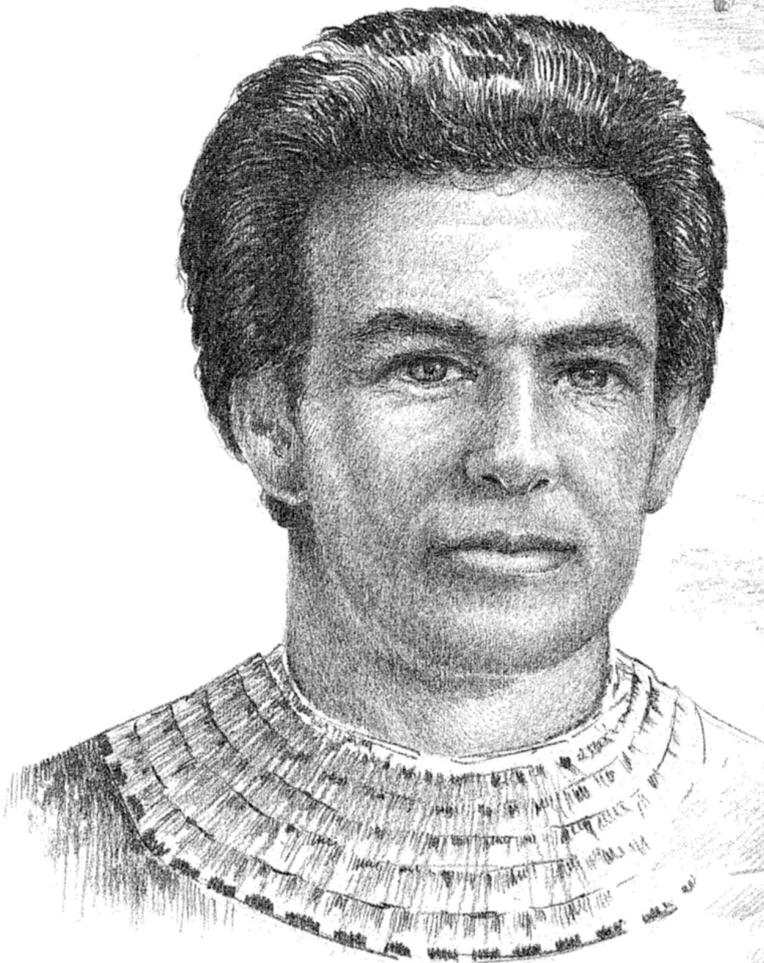


GOD'S BLESSING OF LISTENING TO THE CAUTIONS OF YOUR WIFE

LESSON 19

JOSEPH

A great achiever through serving



LISTENING REQUIRES A SERVANT'S HEART

"...Whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:
And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of
all" (Mark 10:43-44).

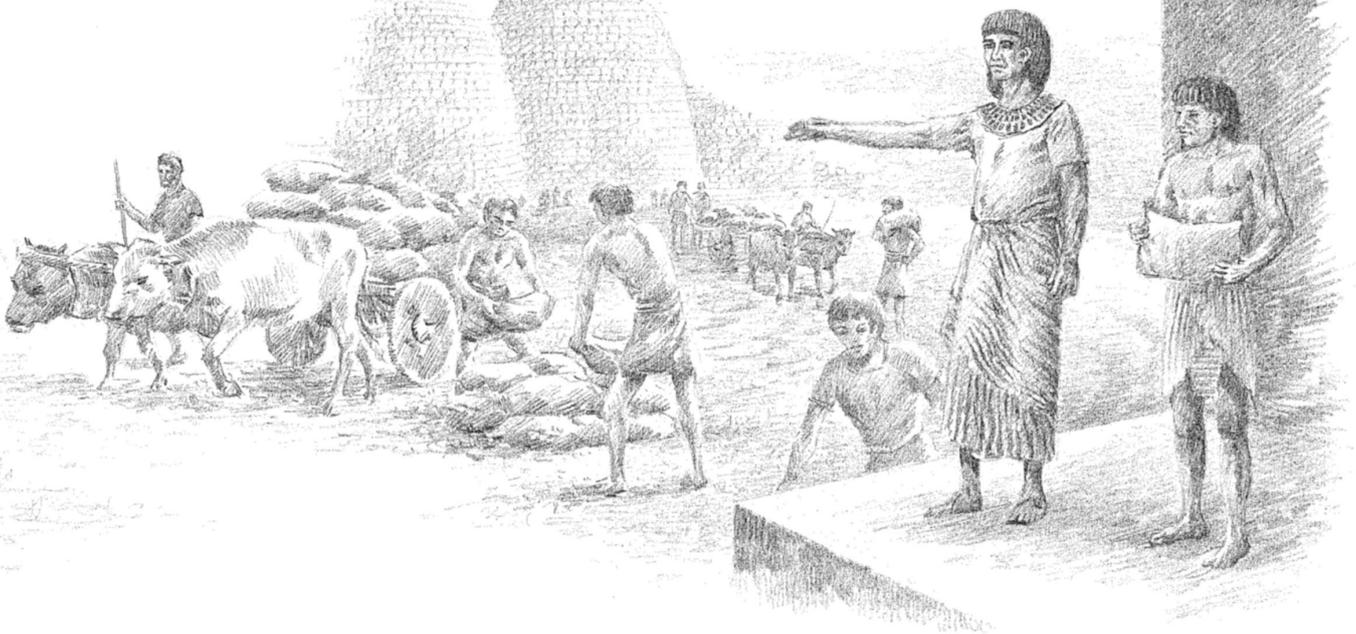
GOD'S BLESSING OF LISTENING TO THE CAUTIONS OF YOUR WIFE

LISTENING BRINGS CORRECTION

"As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear" (Proverbs 25:12).

A SERVANT'S REWARD

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels" (Proverbs 1:5).





DO YOU KNOW HOW TO LISTEN TO YOUR WIFE?

PERSONAL EVALUATION:

TRUE / FALSE

- 1. God expects you to get direction for all financial decisions from your wife.
- 2. Your wife's counsel on financial matters is usually more objective than yours.
- 3. The cautions of your wife are usually based on her intuitive understanding of business matters.
- 4. There are certain times when you should reject the financial counsel of your wife.
- 5. If your wife is out of fellowship with God or with you, you should not listen to her financial counsel.
- 6. Your wife expects you to know her needs without her telling you.
- 7. If you listen to what your wife says, you will understand her real needs.
- 8. If your income increases, your wife's security will also increase.
- 9. The primary motivation behind your wife's financial counsel is her personal security.
- 10. Financial security is not the most important need of your wife.
- 11. Your wife's reverence for you is proportional to your provision for her and for your family.
- 12. Your wife is usually more discerning of the moral character of your business associates than you are.
- 13. An angry, frustrated reaction from your wife usually indicates that her counsel is not of the Lord.
- 14. If your wife is more astute in business matters than you are, it would be wise to let her make the business decisions.
- 15. If your wife threatens suicide, it usually indicates that you are mismanaging your funds.
- 16. A thorough, logical explanation of a business deal will usually eliminate the concerns of your wife.
- 17. If your wife has no cautions, it is usually safe to proceed with a business decision.
- 18. It is always wise to have your wife meet and evaluate potential business associates.
- 19. If your wife is spiritually carnal, she may give unwise financial counsel.
- 20. The primary result of not listening to wise counsel from your wife is financial loss.

TOTAL CORRECT

EVALUATION SCORE:

- 20-18 correct =
- 17-15 correct =
- 14-10 correct =
- 9-0 correct =

ATTENTIVENESS

Being alert to God's warnings through the spoken and unspoken cautions of your wife

BASIC INSIGHTS TO UNDERSTAND AND ACT UPON A WIFE'S CAUTIONS

1. A wife often has inexplicable cautions regarding financial decisions

When God designed the husband and wife to come together in one flesh, His purpose was for the wife to provide valuable assistance in the basic areas of the husband's life.

Accordingly, God gives to the wife an alertness and understanding that He does not initially give to the husband. In this way, the husband recognizes his need for his wife and is motivated to maintain a oneness of spirit in order not to miss God's direction through her.

There are several Scriptural examples of God's giving vital information to the wife first. He told Manoah's wife that she would have a son, and how she was to rear him, before He told Manoah. (See Judges 13:1-15) He appeared to Mary before He explained Christ's birth to Joseph. (See Matthew 1:18-25)

2. A wife has special alertness to the moral aspects of a business relationship

The wife of a prosperous landowner in Shunem accurately discerned the Godly character of Elisha and urged her husband to assist him. (See II Kings 4:8-9)

The wife of a governing ruler in Jerusalem discerned the innocent character of Jesus and warned her husband not to deliver Him over to judgment. (See Matthew 27:19)

These Scriptural examples serve to illustrate the significant ability of a wife to discern the character of those with whom her husband is dealing.

A wife may not understand technical business procedures, but she can often discern the moral character of a business agreement or associate.

If a man is considering an important business decision, it would be very wise for him to explain it to his wife and, if possible, to have her meet the person or persons involved.

If a husband invites a potential business associate to have dinner with him and his wife, she will be especially sensitive to the following four areas:

- Moral impurity (by watching his eyes)
- Pride (by sensing his ambitions)
- Worldliness (by evaluating his appearance and attitudes)
- Insincerity (by listening to his words).

3. A wife can express her cautions from four conflicting viewpoints

If a wife sees that her husband is about to make a business decision, she has four possible responses:

- Mental ("It sounds logical; I think it will work.")
- Emotional ("I feel very nervous about the business decision that you are going to make.")
- Volitional ("I have decided to trust God to work through you in this matter.")
- Spiritual ("I am sure that God is wanting to teach me some lessons through whatever happens.")

Most husbands become confused when their wives switch from one perspective to another. However, God explains that counsel in the heart of a person is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out. (See Proverbs 20:5) To draw out your wife's counsel means that there is oneness of spirit, not just verbal approval.

If a husband relies on only one of his wife's perspectives, she will later blame him if the decision turns out to be incorrect. The classic illustration of this involves Sarah's response to Abraham.

Thinking that she would never have children of her own, Sarah told her husband to have a child with Hagar, who was Sarah's Egyptian handmaid. When Abraham followed her logic and conflicts arose, Sarah blamed him for an unwise decision. *"And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee..." (Genesis 16:5).*

4. A wife has a basic human need for security

God describes the wife as "the weaker vessel" in I Peter 3:7. She is to be protected and cared for by her husband. If in her later years her husband dies, she is to be cared for by family members and, ultimately, by the church. (See I Timothy 5:1-16)

This is what God intended. Unfortunately, family members and churches often fail to fulfill their God-given responsibilities toward widows. Many times they are not able to do so because of financial bondage due to unwise decisions.

The knowledge of this failure on the part of family members and churches puts the wife in an awkward position. Fearing the financial insecurity of widowhood, she tries to warn her husband of financial danger, or she may attempt to take financial matters into her own hands.

Abigail recognized the danger that was about to destroy her family because of her husband's rude response to David's messengers. Her husband was totally oblivious to the danger. (See I Samuel 25:3-38)

To express it a different way, a wife becomes alarmed when she sees cracks in the ceiling. A husband becomes alarmed when the roof caves in!

It is to a man's credit to listen to his wife's early warnings, thereby avoiding the greater damages. *"A prudent man foresees the evil, and hides himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished"* (Proverbs 22:3).

5. A wife is not as concerned about the amount of her husband's earnings as she is about his management of it

A doctor was puzzled because of his wife's concern over their financial status. Their attractive home was paid for, they owned two cars and several valuable properties, and he earned an annual income that put them into the bracket of being wealthy.

His wife finally explained the source of her deep concern. The doctor made impulsive business decisions. As long as ample funds were coming in,

bad investments were covered. However, his wife realized that one major unwise decision could wipe out all of the assets which they owned.

Her deeper concern was that her husband resisted her cautions and counsel and was confident that he alone was able to make all of the business decisions.

6. A wife loses her feeling of self-worth when her husband rejects her financial cautions

When a husband rejects the cautions of his wife, he is communicating any number of messages to her:

- You are not very intelligent.
- I do not value you as a person.
- Your judgment is not to be trusted.
- You are not very important to me.
- I do not respect you.
- You are not capable of understanding.
- Other people's ideas are more important than yours are.

Every one of these messages damages the self-image of a wife. They cause her to conclude that she is of no value when it comes to financial matters. In addition to damaging his wife's self-image, the husband is also rejecting her God-given role of being a helpmeet to her husband

The injury to a wife's self-esteem is made even more painful when she must share the consequences of her husband's poor judgment in financial decisions.

7. A wife's agreement with a business decision does not in itself make it right

There may be times when a husband should not follow the counsel of his wife. For example, any counsel that violates God's Word is wrong, even though the wife is fully in favor of it.

Sapphira agreed with her husband to misrepresent the sale price of their land, and both she and her husband were judged. (See Acts 5:1-11)

AS HE RAN PAST HIS WIFE, HE SHOUTED,

"HOW DID YOU KNOW?"



The following true account provides vivid reinforcement of the need for every man to listen to the God-given cautions of his wife.

The testimony of a businessman:

One day, a friend said to me, "I've got a great investment. Why don't we go into it together?"

It looked good, so I agreed and gave him several thousand dollars. That evening I told my wife about it.

"Oh, I wish you hadn't done that," she said. "I sense that he is not as Godly as he appears on the outside."

I reacted, "Now that's not right! This guy has been the chairman of the deacon board."

My wife replied, "Well, there's just something that a woman knows about a man, and one of those things is that he does not have moral freedom. I can tell by the way he looks at women."

"Well, I don't think you're right," I responded. "But even if you are right, and even if he does have a problem, that doesn't have anything to do with his investments."

"But how can God bless a man like that?" my wife asked. "And if you are in a partnership with him, how can He bless that partnership?"

Well, I just ignored her cautions. There was no way this deal could miss.

A few months later this man called up and said, "I've got bad news. The deal fell through and you lost your money. I can't understand why it didn't work."

* * *

Several months later, I hired a new man. I soon discovered that he was an alcoholic. Every once in a while he would disappear for three or four days after first calling in sick.

One day I said to him, "If you miss work like this again, you will have fired yourself." He agreed.

Several weeks later he didn't show up again. On Monday I came home and said to my wife, "Honey, he's doing it again! I'll bet he's on another drinking spree." Tuesday night I told my wife, "That guy is just an alcoholic. He's a bum. He's no good. I've just got to get him out of the office." While eating dinner on Wednesday night I said, "Honey, that does it. He has fired himself. I'm through with him."

My wife gently asked, "Have you called him?"

"No," I replied. "I'm not going to call him. I told him if he did it, he's through. I don't need to call him. I mean it's over, period."

"Why don't you go call him?" my wife asked.

"I'm not going to call him," I insisted. "I wouldn't call him for anything. He's through, and that's it."

We ate a little more, and pretty soon she said, "I really feel that you ought to call him."

I got all worked up and excited and said, "I'm not going to call him. Will you leave it alone? The subject is dead!"

My three-year-old daughter started crying. "Daddy, you are talking so ugly to Mommy. You need to ask Mommy to forgive you."

So I smiled and looked across the table and said, "Honey I'm sorry I talked so roughly to you. Would you forgive me?"

She said, "Yes, I will."

Then under my breath, I hissed, "And would you leave it alone?"

We continued eating. A minute later my wife bravely persisted, "I've just got to ask you — what if he's going to commit suicide?"

"Commit suicide? That's never been in the picture. It's never been talked about. He just loves alcohol." I got up and stormed over to the phone. "All right, I'm going to call him just for you." I dialed and let it ring. It rang about seven times. On the eighth ring, just to "rub it in," I yelled into the kitchen, "There's eight rings. There's nine. There's ten. See, he's out buying some more booze. I told you."

All of a sudden he answered the phone. In a deep voice that I could hardly recognize, he said, "Hello."

"What are you doing, drinking again?" I asked.

In a low, guttural voice he answered, "Yes, I am."

"That's what I thought," I sneered. "That's what you deserve."

"Oh, please!" he cried, "I just put a bullet in my gun and cocked it. I was waiting for the phone to quit ringing so I could kill myself, but it just wouldn't quit ringing."

Chills went up and down my spine! "Put the gun down! I'm coming right over!" As I ran past my wife, I shouted, "How did you know?"

"I don't know," she said. "It was just something inside of me. Something kept saying, 'What if he's going to kill himself?'"

I raced to his home with my pastor. We were able to help sober him up. Later, he received Christ as his personal Savior. Today he is a different person, living with his family, and doing very well.

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THE WISDOM OF LISTENING TO YOUR WIFE



A \$100,000 PROFIT!

A very happy smile greeted the president of a small company when one of his salesmen announced that he had just lined up a sale that would bring a commission of \$100,000. A few years earlier, the staff of this company had attended a Basic Life Principles Seminar and many of them had become Christians. Business was good that year; but by the following year, the changing economy had reduced their profits drastically. This sale was badly needed.

ENTHUSIASM DIMMED BY THE CAUTIONS OF A WIFE

That evening the company president excitedly told his wife about the deal they were making with an investment group. He explained that a large number of prominent Christians in their town were involved in it.

Later on that evening his wife asked, "Honey, would you explain again how that deal is going to be worked out?"

With a tinge of irritation he answered, "I explained it to you once."

"Honey, why are you angry?" she asked.

"I don't know why I'm angry," he replied, and then he thought, "Maybe I'd better check this whole thing out again."

For months he and his staff had sought to build every business decision on the principles of Scripture. They had been studying the book of Proverbs to find wisdom on financial matters. Now, as the company president looked more deeply into this business deal, he realized that there was a violation of some Scriptural principles.

The following day he approached his salesman and explained that he was not free to go ahead with the deal. Would the salesman be willing to drop it, even though each of them would lose \$50,000 of the commission? The president explained his wife's cautions; and then, to his surprise, the salesman reported that his mother and girlfriend also had expressed cautions about the deal. Both men agreed that they would not move ahead until they felt free to do so.

SCORNFUL LAUGHTER

Together they approached the director of the investment group and explained that they were not able to proceed with the deal. They told him that they wanted to return the \$100,000 note in exchange for a letter of release. The investment director scornfully laughed and assured them that they were making a big mistake.

About six months later that investment group, which was composed of Christian leaders and businessmen of the community, discovered that they had been swindled by their director. He had taken several hundred thousand dollars of their money and left town. He was an established businessman and leading church member, and his theft had devastating effects on his church and destroyed his marriage. Lawyers were hired and a complete investigation was made. Every company and person involved in the business deal became liable and had lawsuits filed against them. One lawyer told this company president, "It looks like everyone is going to be sued, except you. We are absolutely amazed that you got out of this when you did. How did you know to get out?"

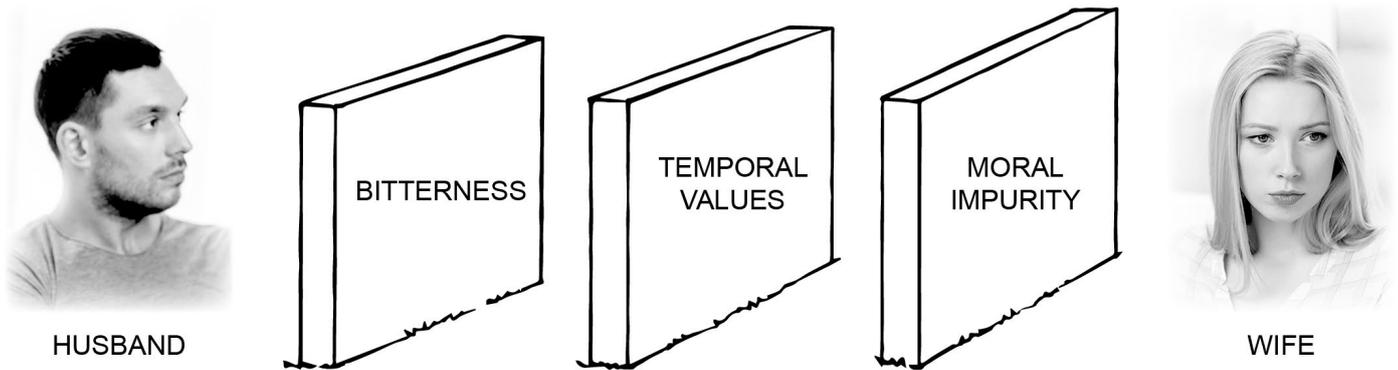
The president explained that he purposed to run his business entirely on the principles of Scripture, and that doing so also involved paying attention to the cautions of those around him, especially the cautions of his wife.

THE REWARD OF LISTENING

The law firm which conducted the investigation was so impressed by the honesty of this company president that they began giving him their business and referring others to him. Not only did he avoid a costly lawsuit, but he made more money on commissions from these references than he had lost in the other commission.

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LISTENING REQUIRES A ONENESS OF SPIRIT



The following offenses build barriers between husband and wife and hinder the wife from communicating God-given cautions.

1. Awareness that she is not first in his life

The purpose of the head of a family is to be aware of, and meet, the needs of his family. When a husband is preoccupied with other people, possessions, or activities, his wife begins to doubt his love. She then becomes insecure.

2. Failure to recognize and appreciate attempts to please him

A wife loses her creativity, or else she looks for recognition from other sources, when her husband is insensitive and fails to admire or praise her for the special little things that she does to try to please him.

3. Unfavorable comparison with other women

A wife is deeply hurt when her husband admires the appearance or abilities of other women. She is prompted to jealousy and self-rejection.

4. Lack of spiritual leadership

Every wife has a deep longing for her husband to show interest in the things of God. When a husband is lacking in spiritual leadership, his wife feels insecure and is motivated to seek spiritual leadership from others.

5. Rejection of her opinions

A husband tends to evaluate his wife's opinion through his frame of reference rather than through the immediate needs which she sees.

6. Lack of personal discipline

When a man fails to conquer anger and moral impurity, his wife loses her admiration and respect for him; and his attempts to correct her faults are met with silence or reaction.

7. Inadequate preparation for changes

When a man receives a job transfer and has to move his family, his wife needs to mentally and emotionally move before she actually relocates. Inadequate time to do this produces frustration and resentment.

8. Inconsistency in discipline

When a husband takes sides with the children against his wife, he divides his family and teaches them to be disloyal to him.

9. Attempts to correct in public

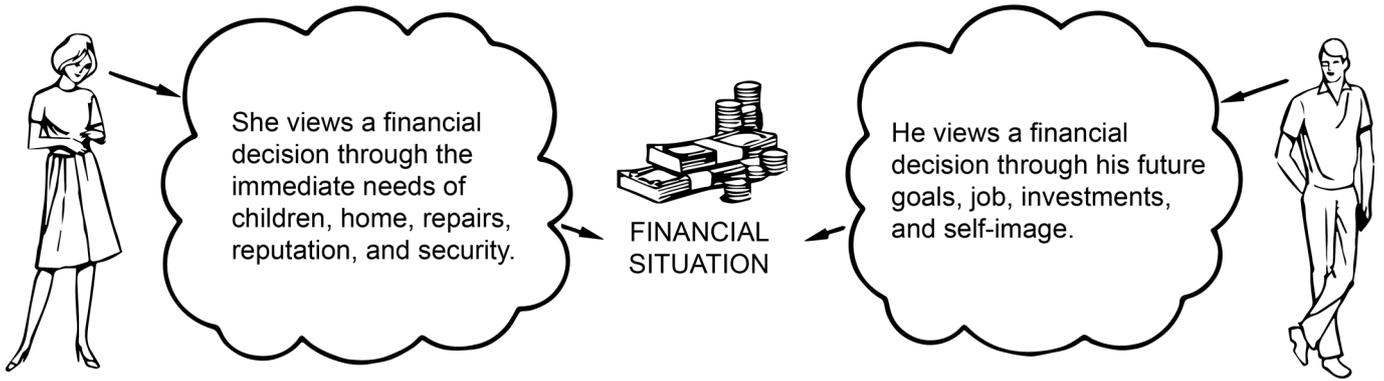
A wife's self-image is deeply damaged when her husband uses jokes or cutting remarks in front of other people in order to make some correction in her life. Rather than correcting her faults, his wife becomes resentful.

10. Unwillingness to ask forgiveness

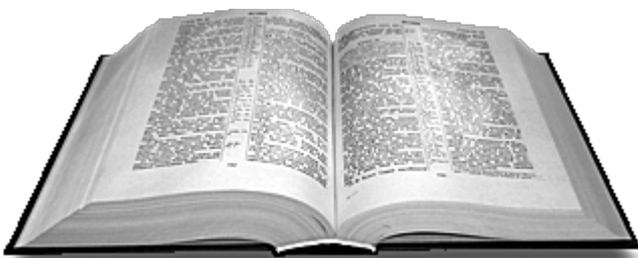
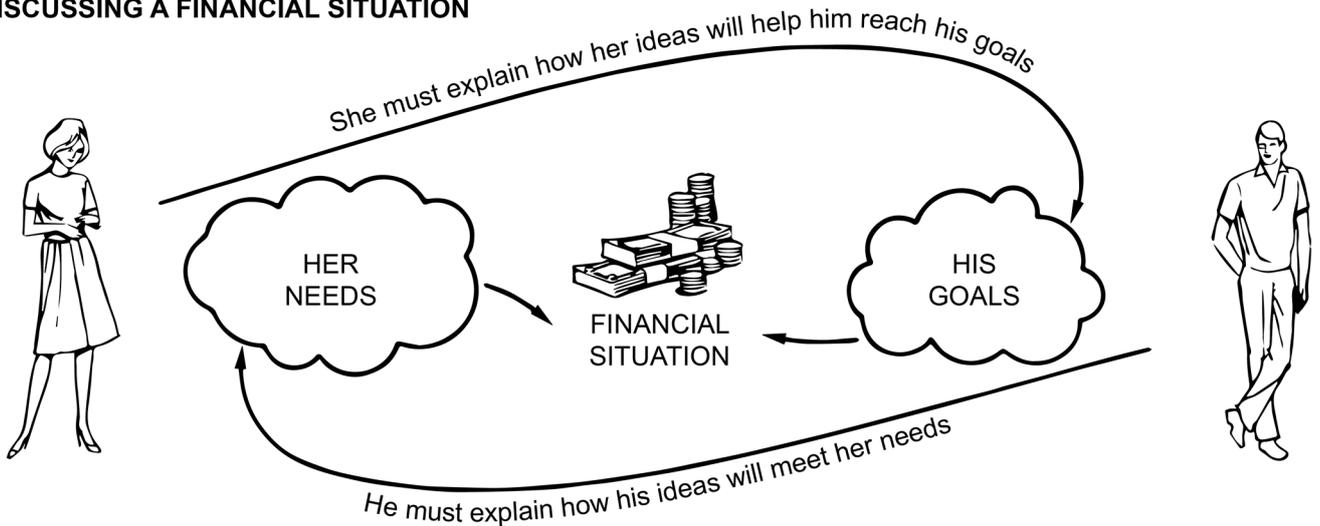
A wife reacts to her husband's pride when he refuses to admit failure or ask forgiveness when he knows that he is wrong.

MAKE FINANCIAL DECISIONS TOGETHER

VIEWING A FINANCIAL SITUATION



DISCUSSING A FINANCIAL SITUATION



Personal Commitment to Oneness of Spirit

I recognize that God made my wife and me to be one, and that God appointed her to be my helper and will therefore often give her cautions about business decisions that He will not give to me.

Based on this, I purpose to seek out and listen to her cautions and not to make decisions until there is oneness of spirit with her, as well as with God's Word.

Signature _____

Present decisions that need to be made: _____

WHO FOLLOWED THE WRONG COUNSEL OF A WIFE?

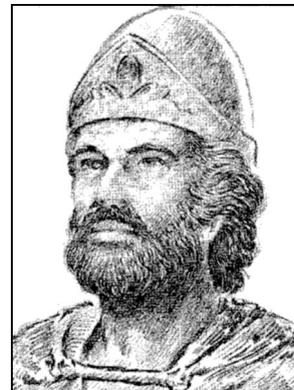
Just as the wife should never obey instructions that violate God's Word, so the husband should never follow counsel that contradicts God's commands.

Match each command with the husband who failed to obey it.

1. "So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers."



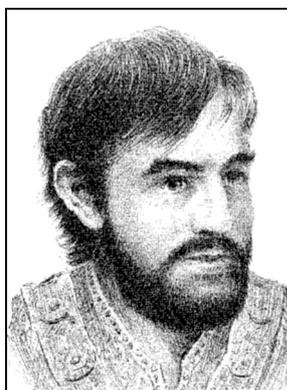
A. Adam
(See Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-7)



C. Solomon
(See Deuteronomy 17:17; I Kings 11:4-8)

2. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great..."

3. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou may freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it..."

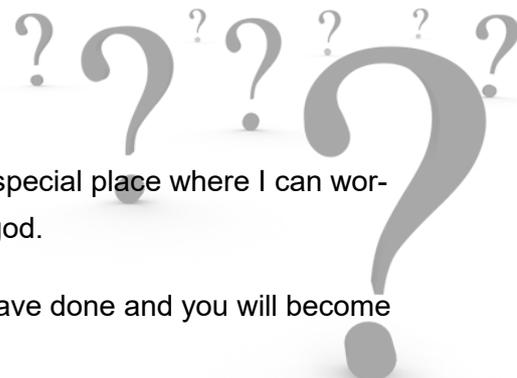


B. Abraham
(See Genesis 12:2; 16)



D. Ahab
(See Numbers 36:7; I Kings 21:7)

4. "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away..."



Match the wrong counsel of each wife to the husband who listened to it.

5. If you follow my plan, you can fulfill the promise that God made to you.
6. Get up and eat, and I will give you what you want.

7. I need a special place where I can worship my god.
8. Do as I have done and you will become wise.

WHO GAVE THEIR HUSBANDS WISE COUNSEL?

Match each warning with the wife who gave it.

- 1. Her husband had agreed to a very lucrative financial venture. He had complete confidence in his partner, but his wife wisely exposed his partner's evil motives.

- 2. He was politically ambitious and knew that a certain decision would bring him new popularity. His wife made a special effort to warn him not to make the decision, but he disregarded her warnings.

- 3. She gave her husband, a successful businessman, a recommendation for an investment. The result was that their home was enriched by that which money could not buy.

- 4. Her husband did not know how to resolve his marriage conflicts. She prayed fervently, and God answered miraculously. She then gave her husband recommendations on how to "re-pay" the Lord.

- 5. Her husband delayed making an important decision. Because of his default, a tragic situation was developing. She wisely and graciously reported the facts. Her words saved her life and put her son on the throne.

- 6. His wife shared with him precise instructions which she had received from the Lord on how to rear their son. The husband sought confirmation from the Lord and received it.

A. Pilate's wife
(See *Matthew 27:19*)

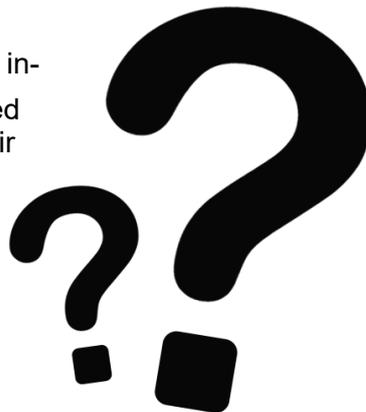
B. The Shunammite woman
(See *II Kings 4:8-9*)

C. Bathsheba
(See *I Kings 1:11-31*)

D. Hannah
(See *I Samuel 1*)

E. Manoah's wife
(See *Judges 13:2-23*)

F. Esther
(See *Esther 7*)



WHY WERE THESE WIVES UNABLE TO GIVE WISE COUNSEL?

Match each wrong decision with the reason which hindered the wife from giving wise counsel to her husband.

- 1. Abraham and Sarah**
Abraham decided to take his wife's counsel and have a son by Hagar. (See Genesis 16:1-3)
- 2. Isaac and Rebekah**
Isaac decided to show favoritism toward Esau, his oldest son. (See Genesis 25:23; 27:1-46)
- 3. Ahab and Jezebel**
Ahab decided to let his wife take Naboth's vineyard by whatever means she chose. (See I Kings 16:31)
- 4. Ahasuerus and Esther**
Ahasuerus agreed to slaughter all the Jews in order to enrich his treasury and rid the land of "dissidents." (See Esther 4:5-9)
- 5. Haman and Zeresh**
Haman took his wife's counsel and built a 75-foot-high gallows upon which to hang Mordecai (See Esther 5:9-14)
- 6. Herod and Herodias**
Herod decided to fulfill his wife's request to behead John the Baptist (See Mark 6:17-28)
- 7. Ananias and Sapphira**
Ananias decided to lie about the price he received for selling his land (See Acts 5:1-2)
- 8. Agrippa and Bernice**
Agrippa decided not to become a Christian after having the Gospel clearly explained to him by Paul. (See Acts 25:23-26:32)

WHY NO RIGHT COUNSEL WAS GIVEN

- A.** She was unequally yoked with her husband, since he was an Israelite and she was a Baal worshiper.
- B.** She was struggling with guilt over her immoral relationship.
- C.** She needed reassurance that she was not standing in the way of his spiritual goals.
- D.** She loved the pomp of public office.
- E.** She was focusing on the need for temporal security and public praise, rather than on God's provision.
- F.** She took up an offense for her husband.
- G.** She did not learn about the situation until a binding decision had already been made.
- H.** Because she did not see spiritual leadership in her husband, she took matters into her own hands.