

Deuteronomy 7:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

Analysis

The prohibition against intermarriage with pagan nations addresses covenant purity and spiritual protection. This wasn't racial prejudice but theological preservation—marriage creates the most intimate covenant bond, and spiritual unity is foundational (Amos 3:3, 'Can two walk together except they be agreed?'). The command recognizes marriage's formative power in shaping religious identity and practice. The New Testament maintains this principle, prohibiting believers from being 'unequally yoked' with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14). Marriage either strengthens or weakens covenant faithfulness. Paul's instruction (1 Corinthians 7:39, 'only in the Lord') applies the same wisdom to the new covenant community.

Historical Context

Ancient marriage was primarily a family and tribal alliance, often involving political and religious integration. Marrying into Canaanite families would have required participation in their religious festivals, household gods, and cultural practices. Solomon's later marriages to foreign women provide tragic proof of this principle—'his wives turned away his heart after other gods' (1 Kings 11:4). Ezra and Nehemiah later enforced this command when returning exiles had intermarried with surrounding peoples, threatening covenant renewal.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the principle of spiritual unity in marriage apply to Christians today choosing a spouse?
2. What other relationships or partnerships require similar spiritual discernment and boundaries?
3. In what ways can intimate relationships with unbelievers compromise your witness and faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹא	תַּתְּחִית	בְּ	וּבִתּוֹ	לֹא
H3808	Neither shalt thou make marriages	H0	nor his daughter	H3808
	H2859		H1323	
תִּתֵּן	לְבָנוֹ:	וּבִתּוֹ	לֹא	תִּקַּח
thou shalt not give	unto his son	nor his daughter	H3808	shalt thou take
H5414	H1121	H1323		H3947
לְבָנוֹ:				
unto his son				
H1121				

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 11:2 (Parallel theme): Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.

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