

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

Psalm 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

לֹא תַּעֲמִיד תְּתַחַת | בְּמִזְבֵּחַ וָבָת | לֹא
H3808 Neither shalt thou make marriages H2859 H0 nor his daughter H1323 H3808

לֹא תַּעֲשֵׂה | לֹא תִּתְּבַּרְבֵּר | וָבָת | תַּקְלִין
thou shalt not give unto his son nor his daughter H3808 shalt thou take H3947
H5414 H1121 H1323

לֹא תִּתְּבַּרְבֵּר
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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