

Numbers 30:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These are the statutes, which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, between the father and his daughter, being yet in her youth in her father's house.

Analysis

These are the statutes, which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, between the father and his daughter, being yet in her youth in her father's house—This closing formula (אלה פקדים eleh hachukkim, 'these are the statutes') summarizes Numbers 30's comprehensive vow regulations governing relationships **between** (בין) bein, repeated three times) husband-wife and father-daughter. The phrase **being yet in her youth** (בנעריה בית אביה) vine'ureiha veit aviha, 'in her youth in her father's house') clarifies that these provisions apply to dependent daughters, not adult women.

The chapter's comprehensive treatment establishes that vows aren't private matters between individuals and God but involve community accountability through family authority structures. While specific patriarchal forms are culturally situated, the underlying principles remain:

1. vows to God are binding and serious
2. spiritual community involves mutual accountability
3. authority includes responsibility to protect from rash commitments.

James warns: 'Let not many of you be teachers, knowing that we shall receive stricter judgment' (James 3:1)—authority brings accountability.

Historical Context

Numbers 30 provided unprecedented protections for women in ancient Near East—nowhere else did legal codes allow annulment of vows made by subordinate family members. Most cultures held individuals absolutely responsible for oaths regardless of age, gender, or circumstances. Israel's law balanced personal agency with community protection.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How do Numbers 30's vow regulations balance individual spiritual agency with community accountability through authority structures?
2. What principles from this culturally-situated patriarchal structure apply to contemporary church accountability and discipleship relationships?
3. How can you cultivate spiritual community that honors both personal responsibility before God and mutual accountability within the body of Christ?

Interlinear Text

אֶת־יְהוָה אֲלֹהֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה־נָהָרָא
These are the statutes which the LORD commanded
H428 H2706 H834 H6680 H3068 H853

אֲבִיכֶם בֵּין־אֲשֶׁת־זָהָר בֵּין־אֲשֶׁת־זָהָר
between a man and his wife between the father
Moses H996 H376 H802 H996 H1
אֲבִיכֶם בֵּין־יְתִיבָת־זָהָר בֵּין־יְתִיבָת־זָהָר
and his daughter being yet in her youth house between the father
H1323 H5271 H1004 H1

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