

Numbers 30:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.

Analysis

Her father shall hold his peace at her (הֶחֱרִישׁ לָהּ אָבִיהָ, heḥerish lah aviha)—The father's silence constitutes legal ratification. Ḥarash (to be silent) here carries juridical weight: what is not vetoed is validated. This principle reveals God's care for order within covenant households while protecting young women from rash oaths.

Then all her vows shall stand (וְקָמוּ כָּל-נִדְרֶיהָ, veqamu kol-nedareyha)—The verb qum (to stand, be established) indicates legal validity. The father's headship includes authority to annul (hefer, v. 5) vows that might harm his daughter, but silence equals consent. This anticipates Christ's headship over the Church (Ephesians 5:23), where His intercession either establishes or removes our obligations.

Historical Context

In ancient Near Eastern patriarchal culture (c. 1400 BC wilderness period), a father's authority over unmarried daughters was absolute. Unlike surrounding cultures where women had almost no legal standing, Mosaic law provided protection mechanisms—fathers could nullify harmful vows, preventing exploitation while honoring women's spiritual agency to make vows to Yahweh.

