Marrying a Rapist

Sometimes understanding the intent of our Creator's commandments is not always intuitive and requires some careful consideration and thought.

For example, Deuteronomy 22 appears to instruct a woman to marry her rapist.

Deuteronomy 22:28-29
> If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are found, then the man who lay with her shall give to the father of the young woman fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he has violated her. He may not divorce her all his days.

YHWH is hardly about letting a rapist off easy.

The consequence for raping a woman engaged to be married was stoning.

Deuteronomy 22:25
> But if in the open country a man meets a young woman who is betrothed, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die.

If the woman was not betrothed, the rapist was spared for the sake of the woman's security.

Having lost her virginity, she would have been deemed undesirable for marriage, and in Hebraic culture, a woman without a father or husband to provide for her would be subject to a life of abject poverty, destitution, and social ostracism.

Rape is bad enough, but rape was not just rape. It literally stole a woman's right for a future family, and introduced lifelong financial hardship and compromised her physical safety.

Even today, if we allow ourselves to look beyond our own western ideology, we find that men and women in eastern cultures today experience clear boundaries in gender roles. In many eastern cultures a woman's role creates a situation where providing for herself is not always possible outside of marriage. Because of this, YHWH's solution was to command the rapist to provide for the rape victim for as long as he lived, not only to provide for her, but to take her in marriage and love her all of his and her days. Thus, far from being barbaric, the law was a cultural means of protection and provision.

Now often enough, the positives of this commandment are overshadowed by the clear concern for the woman to be "forced" to marry her rapist. But, the rapist is commanded to marry her, which includes providing for her, loving her, and respecting her.

However, if this is all too much to consider and bear for the woman, there are ways out of the situation. Remember, the commandment is intended to be there to help her and provide safety and stability for her…but, she can reject the benefit if it is not in her interest. For example:

Exodus 22:16-17
> If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price for her and make her his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the bride-price for virgins.

That all being said, our Father's commandments are good, holy, perfect and just. We might not always understand them…but sometimes, that is where our trust in Him should take over.

Isaiah 55:8
> For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.

We hope that this teaching has blessed you, and remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

EMAIL: Info@119ministries.com
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/119Ministries
WEBSITE: www.TestEverything.net & www.ExaminaloTodo.net
TWITTER: www.twitter.com/119Ministries#