

The Barren Woman



"He evil entreateth the barren *that* beareth not: and doeth not good to the widow." [Job 24:21] This verse of Scripture deals with an important subject to all Eastern people, and is referred to throughout the Bible many times. Let us begin with a literal translation of this verse: "The wicked one wrongs the barren wife; and to the widow no compassion shows."

According to Eastern culture, a wife is looked down upon if she has no children. Also the childless widow, who has no future chance of bearing children, is thought of as being cursed of God.

Widows seldom remarry in the East, unless there is an available mate within the family. The account of Ruth, the daughter-in-law of Naomi, is an example of such a case.

The barren wife and childless widows are kept separated from the rest of the family during the times of weddings and other ceremonies because it is thought that their presence may bring curses.

Job 3:20, 21, "Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter *in* soul; Which long for death, but it *cometh* not; and dig for it more than forbidden treasures." This is the very condition in which childless widows and barren wives find themselves. Many times the childless widows will simply go away: give their property to the temple and start walking. This is called a pilgrimage. They just walk, perhaps hundreds of miles, toward some holy city. They beg food along the way and lie down to sleep most anywhere, when they arrive at a holy place; they say a prayer and die. They are perfectly healthy, but there is nothing left to live for. They think that God has taken their husband as a curse to them, so they want to die. (Really only the devil could inflict

such a cause or be so convincing in an accusation.) If they die in a holy place they believe they will go to heaven.

In contrast, those who have children are thought to be especially blessed. In Psalm 127, it says, "...children are a heritage of the Lord: ... As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. "

Sara, the wife of Abraham, was barren, yet in her old age after ". . . it ceased to be with her after the manner of women," she gave birth to Isaac. Minoah's wife was barren, but by a promise of God she bare Samson. Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias was barren, yet bare a son by promise, John. Her comment after she had conceived was, "Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among men." [Luke 1:25].

You have a much better life here in the West on this point. If a woman loses her husband, she very often will marry again. If she does not desire to marry again, there are many worth while things she can do and still remain needed and acceptable in the culture of the West. God does not wrong the barren wife, neither does He lack compassion on the childless widow. God is Spirit, and loves and blesses the lives of all those who belong to Him.

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