

## Lesson 3 | A Responsible Pact

**Objective:** Understanding that God regulates existing practices to stop abuses and form a good conscience and come into marriage as a responsible pact applicable to dating and everyday life.

**Bible Reading:** Exodus 21:10-11

**Memory Verse:** “If he takes another wife, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights.” **Exodus 21:10**

### BIBLE THEME

In the Moses’ era, God was dealing with people who were in process of change. They came from centuries of servanthood, having difficult customs, and a human mindset according to the Egyptian lifestyle. That is why when he gave the law, God not only taught his Will, but stopped abuse. He set boundaries to stop injustices and protect those vulnerable while forming the conscience of His people (**2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Corinthians 10:11**).

A key point to understanding this period is to understand that when regulating something it does not mean to approve something as ideal. Many directions were given for certain practices that already existed, and God put a stop to abuse, and governed the life of people who were imperfect direct them into the right path. Scripture records these things to instruct us to learn from the beginning without doing the same (**Deuteronomy 24: 1-4; Acts 17:11**).

Therefore **Exodus 21:10** is quite clear, that if a man takes another woman the Lord demanded that he shouldn't diminish the food of the first one, nor her clothing, or conjugal duty. This text nor promotes nor approves the practice of polygamy, instead, it imposes responsibility and avoids that a woman should be left abandoned or degraded in society were some men lived with several woman.

What do we learn from this ordinance even though today we understand and promote the ideal way in marriage is monogamy? For God, this covenant is not sustained by words or emotion, but with actions and clear obligations. These could be to take care of, provide, honor, and treat with dignity the person who has been united with us. Moreover, the seriousness of marriage begins when we are dating, confirmed in our daily interaction, not on empty promises nor impulsive decisions.

With this we understand that biblically, marriage is not to feel “something nice” but it is a responsible covenant. This responsibility is seen in genuine and shared care by a virtue that can't be measured by what we've promised, but by what we are doing. In scriptures, the children of God are distinguish by being persons that are trustworthy, firm, and of good testimony (**Proverbs 20:6; Philippians 2:15**).

This type of discernment is also applicable for dating, because in marriage, true seriousness is expected, therefore, in dating, we should not play or make it convenient. Healthy relationships are built on clear limits, honest communication, and actions that reflect what we say. This is why Jesus taught there are yes should be yes, and are no should be no, because our spiritual maturity is shown when our word is kept (**Matthew 5:37**).

Furthermore, the Bible doesn't approve a love that is based only on words and then it is abandoned. John said it directly, in that, to love is not just nice words, but to love is to act with truth. This confronts common behaviors like manipulating, playing with someone's feelings, promise without good intentions, or to cross the limits without responsibility (**1 John 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22**).

With all of this we can say that the law of God forms a good conscious. Moreover, when we read these regulations we can ask, what abuse are we stopping? And what principle are we protecting? By doing this we will be protecting what is right, just, honorable, care for others, responsibility, and should reject to justify what is wrong with the argument “this was the custom.” (**Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 10:11**). Let’s be a youth that keeps our promises, honest in what we say, firm on our limits and show consistency in our care.

### CHURCH ACTIVITY

Together with your group, the one in charge will read **Exodus 21:10-11** and will ask all to answer this question: what abuse does this law stop? And what principle was it protecting? Afterwards, each one will give a good behavior for dating: “When I treat others I should...” focusing on responsibility and respect and not emotions.

### HOME ACTIVITY

Answer and reflect on the following questions and share your answer in your next session.

- Why do you believe that God regulated practices that already existed, instead of allowing people to act without limits?
- What is the difference between “God regulates” and “God approves” and why is it important to read the Bible correctly?
- What does it mean for you that love is shown with “true actions,” and how will you show it when you treat others?