OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

Matthew 6:9 “This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,’”

GOD-CREATED HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS THAT EXPLAIN OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

Matthew 19:4-6 “Haven’t you read, he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

Israel, the Unfaithful Wife of God

Jeremiah 3:20 “But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you, Israel, have been unfaithful to me,” declares the LORD.

Hosea 3:1-3 The LORD said to me, “Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes.” So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and about a homer and a lethek of barley. Then I told her, “You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will behave the same way toward you.”

Hosea 3:4&5 For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or household gods. Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD and to his blessing in the last days.

The Church, the Bride of Christ

Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water by the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Ephesians 5:28-30 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church – for we are members of his body.

Ephesians 531&32 “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Our Father in Heaven

Matthew 6:9 This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,’”

Malachi 2:10a Do we not all have one Father? Did not one God create us?

Luke 3:31b the son of Kenan, the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Hosea 11:1-4 “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. But the more they were called, the more they went away from me. They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images. It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love. To them I was like one who lifts a little child to the cheek, and I bent down to feed them.”

Galatians 3:26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith,

Galatians 4:6&7 Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, *“Abba,* Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

Romans 8:14&15 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “*Abba,* Father.”

Romans 8:16&17 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Luke 15:11-13 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.”

Luke 15:14-16 “After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

Luke 15:17-19 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of the hired servants.’”

Luke 15:20&21 “So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’”

Luke 15:22-24 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.”

Luke 15:25&26 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.”

Luke 15:27&28 ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound. The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.”

Luke 15:29&30 “But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I have been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him.’”

Luke 15:31&32 “’My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

Things to Remember

God uses the husband-wife relationship and the father-child relationship to teach us how He feels about us. People growing up in situations where these relationships do not exist as God established them makes it much more difficult for people to understand who God is and how He feels about them.

God compares His relationship to Israel primarily as how a husband feels toward and unfaithful wife. In one passage He compares His relationship to Israel to that of a father with a disobedient son.

The Bible compares Jesus’ relationship to the church to the relationship of a husband to his wife, and also to that of a groom and his wife-to-be.

The most common comparison is the relationship of the individual believer to God as his Father. It is intimate, *“abba,* Father.”

It is enduring even though the believer fails miserably.

The believer is always welcomed home when he repents.

We ought to mirror the Father’s response to believers who fail and repent.