

# THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR LIFE- PARTNER SELECTION

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# INTRODUCTION

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- The Holy Bible clearly elevates marriage as a human institution that is holy. (Heb. 13:4).
- “Marriage should be entered into only between partners who share a common faith and similar lifestyle” (*Seventh-day Adventist Believe*, p. 329).
- To keep it holy God has given guidelines to all who wish to enter marriage.
- Because of sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman should have her own husband (1 Cor. 7:2).

# SOME MARRIAGES IN THE BIBLE AS CASE STUDY

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- Samson and his wife Delilah: Could be referred to as ‘opposite attracts marriage’ and also ‘individual free choice marriage’.
- Isaac and his wife Rebekah: Could be referred to as ‘like attracts like marriage’ and also ‘arranged marriage’.

# TYPES OF SELECTION

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- An example of 'opposite attracts marriage' is when a Seventh-day Adventist marries a non-Seventh-day Adventist or if a Roman Catholic marries a Jehovah Witness believer.
- An example of 'like attracts like marriage' is when a Seventh-day Adventist marries a fellow Seventh-day Adventist or when a Moslem marries a fellow Moslem.

Note: "Never should God's people venture upon forbidden ground. Marriage between believers and unbelievers is forbidden by God" (Ellen G. White, 1952, p. 63).



# OBJECTIVES OF THIS PRESENTATION

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- To guide single young adults who desire marriage on the necessary steps to take, and to help ease the burden the choice of a life partner places on them.
- To examine the qualities one must look out for in a partner for a godly marriage.
  - E.G.White states that “Heaven looks with pleasure upon a marriage formed with an earnest desire to conform to the directions given in the Scriptures” (*The Adventist Home*, 1952, p. 70).



# THE CHOICE: KEY MUST DO

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- **Marry from the Same Religious faith and Similar Background**
  - Abraham's command to his oldest servant to choose a wife for Isaac from his (Abraham's) own country, and his own family (Gen. 24:2-4). Two principles are laid bare:
    - Endogamy: from a faith group that has similar background to his faith and values
    - Homogamy: from the same religious background.
  - Through Moses the Israelites were warned against marrying foreigners (Deut. 7:3-4,6)
  - Paul writes to the Corinthians to not be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2Cor 6:14)

# THE CHOICE: KEY MUST DO

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- **Value parental responsibility and support:**

Godly parents must help their sons and daughters in the choice of their life partners.

Greater success awaits a marriage sanctioned by parents.

- Abraham guided Isaac (Gen. 24: 3 - 4)
- Hagar guided Ishmael (Gen. 21: 21)
  
- Rebekah had good family support (Gen. 24: 50 - 60)
- King Saul loved David and was happy about the marriage between David and Michal (I Sam. 18: 20).

# THE CHOICE: KEY MUST DO

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- **Put it before God in PRAYER**

E.G.White advances the need for those who anticipate marriage to double their prayer life. “If men and women are in the habit of praying twice a day before they contemplate marriage, they should pray four times a day when such a step is anticipated” (*The Adventist Home*, p. 71).

Abraham’s servant prayed to God to help him find a successful partner for Isaac (Gen. 24: 12 - 14).



# THE CHOICE: KEY MUST DO

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- **Choose a matured partner. Also, a partner who is attractive to you and has good Character**
  - Isaac and Rebekah were both matured when they decided to marry
  - Rebekah was beautiful
  - Rebekah had good character evidenced by her sympathy for both human and animal suffering. (Gen. 24:18-20). She had also stayed as a virgin prior to marriage.
  - Paul's counsel is "not to keep company with anyone named a brother (believer), who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner – not even to eat with such a person" (1 Cor. 5: 11).

# THE CHOICE: KEY MUST DO

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- **Find a partner who is not lazy:**
  - Rebekah's service to Abraham's servant showed she was hardworking. From the Genesis account, she drew water for both the man and the animals (Gen. 24: 18 - 20).
  - Jacob had to work for seven (7) more years because he loved Rachel (Gen. 29:18).

# THE CHOICE: KEY MUST DO

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- **Growing love between partners**

- Growing love between partners is a great asset to a long, lasting and enjoying marital relationship. The servant of Abraham and the family of Rebekah saw some signs of developing love between Rebekah and Isaac who was not physically present.

# THE CHOICE: KEY MUST DO

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- **Request a special sign(s) from God**
  - According Gen. 24: 12 – 14, the servant requested a special sign from the Lord God before selecting one lady out of the lot for Isaac.
  - Marriage has the label *Made by God* and so if people accept God's leading, He approves such marriages.

# THE CHOICE: KEY MUST DO

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- **Abstain from pre-marital sex and fornication**
  - Paul counsels people to “flee sexual immorality” (1 Cor. 6: 18) and must “not keep company with sexually immoral people” (1 Cor. 5: 9). Marriage is honourable, therefore, men and women who avoid sexual relationship until they are fully committed to a partner in marriage, receive blessings from God.



# FROM MY EXPERIENCE:

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- Many marriages that follow the Samson-Delilah pattern of ‘opposite attracts marriage’ have many challenges and often do not enjoy satisfying relationships. Many of such marriages are not able to last and thereby result in divorce.
- Many young people erroneously think that after marriage their partners will change and join them in one faith.

# GOD'S PLAN FOR ALL MARRIAGES:

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- (1). A discipline, knowledgeable and God-fearing family members;
- (2). A stable marriage relationship and
- (3). A long and satisfying relationship.

To achieve the above-mentioned characteristics for a marriage that Heaven can be proud of, partners must have biblical foundation for their choice of life partners.



# CONCLUSION

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- Choosing a life partner is not an easy task, however the Holy Bible gives us guidelines towards having a godly, lasting marriage relationship.
- Marriages that last follow the 'like attracts like' pattern. Such marriages pay attention to finding a suitable partner that have good character, strong relationship with God, has parental support and is ready to grow in love.
- The case of Isaac's marriage with Rebekah is an example of the needed cooperation that must always exist between parents and the single young adults, when it comes to the time of selecting a life-partner.