

Adornments

[Dear Sekel,

Here is the teaching about adornments that we talked about. I find them very useful for preparing the bride and the bridesmaids. The focus their thoughts on what a wife should be like and helps to lead naturally into talking about being the weaker vessel. I don't think it usually adds much to the wedding itself to speak a lot about the adornments unless it leads to prophecy of the result of the bride being prepared — that the king can come and they can rule. Somehow it seems to help the bride remember these qualities though when she keeps her adornments.

The headcovering, I think, is a little bit different because we wear headcoverings. Often that reminds us of being submissive. It takes so much time to make one for each bride that I wonder if it really worth it, if it adds so much for each bride to have one. I'd be more inclined to think that they could be a normal part of the wedding garments. Maybe a few different sizes or styles to become each bride. It means something to the bride but I wonder if it is more sentimental than spiritual. However, if someone desires to labor to give a gift of love I don't think it is inappropriate. I just don't want us to feel compelled to do it regardless of the time that is available to do it.

I love the beauty of the work that people do to make headcoverings so I may be wrong in thinking they are too much. It is hard to judge because I am very inclined to be sentimental.

I guess for me what is important is that I want the bride to feel loved and know she is prepared, equipped to be able to love her husband wholeheartedly (however we can do that). I think it is a difficult transition to make in the way you see yourself; holding yourself back because you are single, young (especially our children), and then suddenly thrust into all these feelings being good, usual, right. They long for it and are prepared all their lives to give themselves to it but it is an overwhelming change. I think all the attention they receive helps them realize it is true. They are ready to be a wife and they should devote themselves to doing that now with all their hearts. They are doing what they were created to do.

Well, I love you. I hope this stimulates you and we can become more pleasing to our God's purpose in preparing our brides.

Sarah]

The Bride adorns herself with what? Not mere outer garments to please the eye of man, but rather the inner adornment of the heart; a rested, submissive spirit. Yet ours is not a gospel of the invisible only, is it? No! We see that men show their inner priesthood in their hair. We see the king wearing a crown showing his rule in the royal headband. That is the proclamation of his royal authority over the Bride's body, soul, and spirit. That authority comes from the Word of YHWH that makes all things and holds them together.

Woman covers her head proclaiming her inner submissiveness outwardly. Men are circumcised, bearing the mark of YHWH's hand on their lives, His cutting in their hearts that makes them sensitive.

Necklace — Prov 3:3

A wife is a wife because she is a wife. She lives by kindness and truth. Nothing is to be valued above honesty. When the husband knows where he stands at all times he can be secure. When he has the full benefit of all the wife senses he will be wise and able to walk discreetly. There is no love that is with dissimulation — the happy face on the crying heart.

How blessed is the man that can rest securely in what his wife says, for it accurately reflects what is in her heart. Ah! But what is the truth without kindness. In the world there is something called the naked truth. (Truth unadorned with mercy, bare of compassion. It is cold, easily producing withdrawal and hostility.) No! Kindness clothes truth and allows it to come near.

In marriage and community, where we live so closely together with other weak and fallen human beings, we need kindness to soften the blows of unpleasant reality. Our sins and those of others must be faced squarely and honestly but with kindness so we can more easily remember the hope we share.

So we are called to bind kindness and truth on our neck. To write it on the tablet of our heart. In the Song of Songs, perhaps it was the hope of this wonderful sweet embrace where a man finds a welcome based securely

in reality that so excited the Bridegroom. That could be what the necklace meant to him.

Bracelet — Dt 11:18

In the law, Israel was enjoined to put the law on their heart and soul — to bind it on their hand as a reminder of the covenant made with their God there at Sinai.

The day of the wedding a covenant is being made. You are committing yourself to live with and let his word be law to you in every way for the rest of your life.

But what does it mean, this bracelet? Is it a binding restraint? Yes it is. A woman limits herself on this day.

She limits herself to the love of her husband, living always to please him.

Isa 57:10 — Our God here expresses grief at the stubborn refusal of his people to turn to Him. They kept finding renewed strength to go on. Literally they were finding hope in the life of their hands. On her wedding day, a woman proclaims that she will never find worth in what she can do. She knows now her value. She sees it in the eyes of her king. She needs no more to win his love. She has won it.

From now on her security and hope comes from His heart on that day. She can wear a bracelet to joyfully proclaim her welcome to that restraint. She must strive no more but — rest in his love. She proclaims her revelation that from this day forth her life comes from him. Never will her life come from what she can do.

Ankle Bells and Bands — Ezekiel 16:8-11

When Israel was young and tender; ready for love, YHWH proposed to marry her. He adorned her with ornaments (perhaps all listed in Is 3:18-20), including anklets that tinkled. But why?

The priest in Exodus 29:25-26 was commanded to wear bells on the hem of his robe, revealing his unseen ministry behind the veil to those without. This was revealed by the joyful twinkling of the bells. Holiness as men generally understand it is awesome, solemn, even distant. Yet our God is not so; He is warm and near to those He loves. In His presence is fullness of joy, at His right hand are pleasures. How apt to convey the reality of what it means to be with Him by the lively ringing of the tiny bells. By that merry sound the high priest could be heard performing his solemn duties.

The bride he chose was given bells to signify the joy at having Him as her husband along with the rest of her adornments.

The only reason to wear little bells on the ankle is that the bride is experiencing on that day a joy that cannot be limited or contained. Such a joy is not just seen or heard in peals of thunder, but a light merry ringing of bells, not quite visible to the eye. The ringing bell reminds her groom and all around that she has life and joy coming from within even when she is not conscious of it.

This joy isn't contained because this is the day she has waited for. Her KING HAS COME!