MARRIAGE IN PAST CULTURES

This is an informative document I compiled written by three different authors. Note them below each chapter. I feel this is good history and culture for us to understand.

It is important for you to realize that God began dealing with people as nations beginning with Babylonia. This is the first country God exalted, then they became arrogant and God left and went to Egypt. They became arrogant and God left and sent Moses to take the Jews and form a new country “Israel”. They refused to obey. They were “rebellious,” God said. So he gave them a King as they were demanding. Then God sent the Messiah to take God’s message and leadership to the rest of the world.

Following this Bible defined process, we can read the history and culture about marriage and sexual practices beginning with Babylonia.

Mikhail

Marriage in Ancient Mesopotamia and Babylonia
By Roberto Naranjo

In western society some aspects of modern family relationships and composition can be traced to ancient Mesopotamia and Babylonia. Ideas such as the wedding, marriage, and divorce began developing then.

These relationships started with a proposal, followed by the marriage contract, and ending with the wedding. The male had to decide whether to have another wife or a concubine.

Marriage, regarded as a legal contract, and divorce as its breakup were similarly affected by official procedures.

Finally, the bride would receive a present of gold, silver, lead or food for consumption at the wedding feast. After the wedding, husband and wife settled down to the routines of daily life. For the husband this was usually his only marriage, as long as the wife lived and provided children. It was not uncommon however, to have another spouse or even a concubine.

The father, as the head of the family, had complete authority over them. This authority extended to matters of adoption and inheritance.

Love, Sex, and Marriage in Ancient Mesopotamia
by Joshua J. Mark

In ancient Mesopotamia arranged marriages were the norm, in which the couple had often never met.
There were even bridal auctions where women were sold to the highest bidder.

Sex was considered just another aspect of one’s life and there was none of the modern-day embarrassment, shyness, or taboo involved in Mesopotamians' sex lives. Bottero states that “Homosexual love could be enjoyed” without fear of social stigma. And texts mention men “preferring the female role” in sex. Further, he writes, “Various unusual positions were used: standing in a chair, taking her from behind. Sodomy, defined as anal intercourse, was a common form of contraceptive.

An eccentric setting was chosen…instead of your bedroom. You might make love on the roof of the house or in the middle of the street, with any woman on whom you had ‘pounced’ or with a prostitute.

Every man – according to his whims, needs, and resources – could add one or more ‘second wives’ or concubines, to the first wife. The first wife was often consulted in choosing the second wives, and it was her responsibility to make sure they fulfilled the duties for which they had been chosen.

Kinky Sexual Practices Of Ancient Babylon

By Joe Duncan

Throughout the ages, different cultures have had vastly different sexual practices, ranging from mundane to bizarre.

Babylon was one of the first civilizations in existence. Even the wild and lusty Greeks viewed the Babylonians as a sex-obsessed culture.

Sex With Strangers

The Greek writer Herodotus describes a bizarre and unusual practice in which Babylonian women were sent to a temple, once in their lives, to have sex with a complete stranger. It could be viewed as a rite of passage for women in ancient Babylon. This was a very widespread practice, accepted and performed by every Babylonian woman.

Temple Prostitution

Temple prostitution was replete throughout the ancient world. Babylon had dedicated temples set up specifically for prostitution. These divine brothels were more than just a place where people bought sex. This was a truly religious experience for the ancient Babylonians. The exchange here wasn’t even sex for money; it was a communal, ritualistic practice to give thanks and worship to the gods of ancient Babylon. This was a unique practice for the Babylonians and similar cultures in the ancient Middle East and a staple of their religious lives.

The Sin Of Chastity

in Babylonian culture, it was sinful not to have sex. According to Herodotus’s account of women being sent once in their lives to a temple for sex, the first man to throw a coin into her lap got to have sex with her. Whether he was rich or poor, young or old, she was obliged to indulge him, irrespective of his or her social status. Herodotus also wrote of less formal prostitution outside of the temples, where a man would allow someone to have sex with his wife or children, if the sex was paid for.
If anyone wanted sex in ancient Babylon, it was theirs for the taking. While some sources today have referred to this as rape, it was widespread and socially acceptable in Babylonian culture. This was a deep part of their religious experience, acts of offering and worship to their sex goddess Innana (Ishtar). Think about that: There was a culture on Earth where it was considered a sin to turn down sex, proving, once again, that if humans can dream it, and it’s sexual, they will do it.

**Orgy Dinners**

Orgies and prostitution were common in the ancient world, and Babylon was no exception. However, free love and open sexuality weren’t restricted to massive annual or semiannual festivals. Sex would take place in common settings. Herodotus tells us of lavish, steamy dinner parties. Essentially, the ancient Babylonians would have orgies that started off as simple dinner parties but would progress into a sexual nature.

As the dinners proceed, Women would undress piece by piece, until they were nude. Wild nights ensued. Herodotus noted it was customary for dinner parties to lead to socially acceptable prostitution, which even the Greeks thought absolutely bizarre.

The Babylonians weren’t shy when it came to having sex; they would do it anytime, anywhere, with anyone, whenever they wanted. Babylonians would openly have sex in the center of town, go for a midday excursion in the country, or climb up a rooftop and have sex overlooking the city.

It didn’t matter and nobody minded, as they were an extremely sexually open culture. From temples to rooftops, to the bedroom, Babylonians did it everywhere. An entire city having sex all over the place.

**Adultery**

Adultery carried a high price in Babylon. Such a crime would warrant a punishment of execution, and not exactly a nice method of execution, either: A wife caught cheating on her husband would be forcibly drowned.

**Homosexuality**

Before the Judeo-Christian domination which took place after Constantine made Christianity the official religion of ancient Rome, the Babylonians felt no sense of social stigma about homosexuality, and like the ancient Greeks, they practiced it openly and freely.

**Bible: Child Marriage in Ancient Israelite times**

In Ancient Hebrew marriages, girls were recommended to be married at age 12. There are laws in the Mishnah that give approval that once betrothed you can have sexual intercourse any-time after the age of three years old.

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