

Numbers 30

Verses 1 - 2

Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying, “This is the word which the Lord has commanded: ²If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or takes an oath to put himself under a binding obligation, he shall not break his word; he shall act in accordance with everything that comes out of his mouth.

A vow is a personal commitment to God, while an oath is a commitment to another person, often with God as a witness.

A man should not make a vow to the Lord or make an oath to a person that involves a binding obligation before he has fully considered it because he will be held responsible if he does not keep his word.

See Deut. 23:21

²¹ **“When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for the Lord your God will certainly require it of you, and it will be a sin for you.**

²² **However, if you refrain from making vows, it will not be a sin for you. ²³ You shall be careful and perform what goes out of your lips, since in fact you have vowed a voluntary offering to the Lord your God, whatever you have promised.**

Verses 3 – 5

³ **“And if a woman makes a vow to the Lord, and puts herself under a binding obligation in her father’s house in her youth, ⁴ and her father hears her vow and her obligation under which she has put herself, and her father says nothing to her, then all her vows shall remain valid and every binding obligation under which she has put herself shall remain valid. ⁵ But if her father expresses disapproval to her on the day he hears *of it*, none of her vows or her obligations under which she has put herself shall remain valid; and the Lord will forgive her because her father has expressed disapproval to her.**

³ **“And if a woman makes a vow to the Lord, and puts herself under a binding obligation in her father’s house in her youth...**

There are three qualifiers if a woman makes a vow to the Lord:

1. If she is still living in her father's house and in her youth.
2. If her father hears her vow and her father says nothing to her then she must fulfill the vow.
3. If her father expresses disapproval to her on the day he hears *of it*, none of her vows or her obligations under which she has put herself shall remain valid

Verses 6 - 8

⁶ “However, if she happens to marry while under her vows or the impulsive statement of her lips by which she has obligated herself, ⁷ and her husband hears of it and says nothing to her on the day he hears *it*, then her vows shall remain valid and her binding obligations under which she has put herself shall remain valid. ⁸ But if on the day her husband hears *of it*, he expresses disapproval to her, then he will annul her vow which she is under and the impulsive statement of her lips by which she has obligated herself; and the Lord will forgive her.

⁶ However, if she happens to marry while under her vows or the impulsive statement of her lips by which she has obligated herself...

This applied to vows that a woman made before she got married. Once she marries, her husband has the same authority over his wife that her father had over her when she lived at home. This implies that even if her father had remained silent about her vow it could still be revoked by her husband if he disapproved of it on the day that he first heard about it.

Verses 9 - 12

⁹ “But *as for* the vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, every binding obligation under which she has put herself, shall remain valid against her. ¹⁰ However, if a *married woman* vowed *in* her husband's house, or put herself under a binding obligation with an oath, ¹¹ and her husband heard *it*, but said nothing to her *and* did not express disapproval to her, then all her vows shall remain valid and every binding obligation under which she put herself shall remain valid. ¹² But if her husband actually annuls them on the day he hears *them*, then no utterance from her lips concerning her vows or the obligation *she put on* herself shall remain valid; her husband has annulled them, and the Lord will forgive her.

⁹ **“But as for the vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, every binding obligation under which she has put herself, shall remain valid against her.**

In these cases there is no husband to annul her vow.

¹⁰ **However, if a *married woman* vowed *in* her husband’s house, or put herself under a binding obligation with an oath,**

The same rules apply for the wife that applied for the young woman.

Verses 13 – 16

¹³ **“Every vow and every binding oath to humble herself, her husband may confirm it or her husband may annul it. ¹⁴ But if her husband in fact says nothing to her from day to day, then he confirms all her vows or all her binding obligations which are on her; he has confirmed them, because he said nothing to her on the day he heard them. ¹⁵ However, if he actually annuls them after he has heard them, then he shall bear *the responsibility for her guilt.*” ¹⁶ These are the statutes which the Lord commanded Moses *concerning matters* between a man and his wife, *and* between a father and his daughter *while she is* in her youth *in* her father’s house.**

However, if he actually annuls them after he has heard them, then he shall bear *the responsibility for her guilt*

If a husband annuls a vow made by his wife but he does it after the day he heard them, then he will be held responsible. The penalty is not stated here. Perhaps a sin offering was expected.