

**L. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS**  
**LESSON FIFTY**  
**... ABOUT DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE**

**INTRODUCTION**

There is hardly an issue in our day as devastating and perplexing to the Christian and non-Christian alike as that of divorce and possible remarriage.

There are those who believe and teach, there is no divorce in the eyes of God, therefore, there is no remarriage. On the other extreme some believe and teach if two people for some reason become incompatible that its alright with God and therefore not a sin to get a divorce and marry someone more compatible.

The purpose of this lesson is to find out what the Word of God has to say about divorce and remarriage so that, we might have a right concept of this important subject, based on God's Word.

God hates divorce! There absolutely is no doubt about it.

**Malachi 2:14-16,"**. .The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously yet is she thy companion, and the wife of the covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of The spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit. and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he **HATETH PUTTING AWAY**: for one covereth violence with his garment. saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously."

Surely this leaves no doubt as to God's attitude regarding adultery and divorce.

Marriage is not a man-made institution that either the husband or wife can break at will.

Marriage was instituted by God.

What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."  
(Matthew 19:6)

**IS DIVORCE PERMITTED BY GOD?**

The answer is yes, if you mean by permit, that God allows divorce. But God in His Word does **NOT GIVE APPROVAL** under any circumstance for the putting away of a marriage partner. The one who puts asunder what God has joined together sins against God.

Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and put her away? (Matthew 19:7)

This Old Testament Scripture (Deut. 24:1-2) was quoted by the Pharisees in such a way as to seemingly set Moses against Christ. However, Moses in

Deuteronomy 24:1-2, did not say what the Pharisees accused him of saying. Rather, Moses gives three regulations governing divorce.

1. He must write her a bill of divorcement;
2. He must give it, the bill (certificate) of divorcement to her;
3. He must send her out of his house. He could not divorce his wife and still keep her in his house, so that, she may go and be another man's wife.

This clearly was not permission by God or Moses for one to divorce his wife. But, rather, was a law protecting the innocent wife, unjustly and unjustifiably dismissed, necessitating the issuance of a divorce certificate (a certificate of innocence) enabling her to remarry.

God in the Old Testament nor Jesus Christ in the New Testament in any way condoned the practice of men of putting away their wives for reason other than the wife's infidelity, no more than He condoned murder just because He made laws governing its punishment. It was man's choice in his sinful state. You see, God never violates man's free choice to sin. However, that sinful state had to be regulated for the protection of the innocent woman who was dismissed (divorced) unjustly by her husband. At least, the law said, give her a bill of divorcement, which would allow her to remarry.

God through Moses did not order the dismissing of one's wife; but rather required the granting of a certificate of divorce by the one who dismissed his wife. The divorce was contrary to God's will, but the provisions of the bill of divorcement by the one who decides to put away his wife was a requirement of God. There is a tremendous difference between this and God commanding divorce. He commanded what man must do to mitigate somewhat the evil perpetrated upon his wife by putting her away.

The granting of a divorce in no way affected God's attitude toward this sin. However, it did affect the attitude of society toward those who are put away. Without a bill of divorcement (certificate of innocence) the one put away was stigmatized/considered/declared to be an adulteress and anyone marrying her would be declared an adulterer.

This is seen in the correct rendering of Matthew 5:32b.

**Matthew 5:32b**, "...causeth *her* to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

In this passage, since the verb causeth, in the Textus Receptus and other Greek texts is in the passive tense, the correct rendering of this verb should be "to cause, or makes. The action of the verb is against her. She has done nothing wrong. Therefore the action of the husband in putting away his wife unjustly makes her/causes adultery against her - that is, to cause her, to be stigmatized/ declared an adulteress by his action against her. Likewise without her having a bill of divorcement (certificate of

innocence) the one marrying her is, also, made to/caused to bare that stigma of an adulterer.

#### **WHAT CONSTITUTES DIVORCE?**

From the following Scriptures determine what constitutes divorce and requires a written bill of divorcement to be given to the one perpetrated/sinned against and put away.

Deuteronomy 24:1 with Matthew 19:8

Matthew 5:32

Matthew 19:9

1 Corinthians 7:15

**Conclusions:** When one of the marriage partners commits an act of fornication (fornication being defined as any sexual immorality, including adultery) ; or deserts their spouse by either physically leaving or making the decision in their heart that they will no longer be responsible to uphold their end of the marriage; or makes the decision in their heart that something about their spouse is undesirable to the extent of not being able to live with that person, usually expressed by the statement, "I don't love you any more", they by their actions have put away their spouse, which then, constitutes the breaking of the marriage.

The getting of a divorce, or really, the bill of divorcement is simply the giving of the legal document which states that the marriage bond has been broken by one of the above actions on the part of one or both of the marriage partners.

#### **IS REMARRIAGE PERMITTED BY GOD?**

According to the Word of God is the one who puts away his/her spouse, permitted to remarry?

Matthew 19:9

1 Corinthians 7:10-12

What about the one who has been sinned against/put away?

Matthew 19:9

Deuteronomy 24:2

1 Corinthians 7:15

1 Corinthians 7:27-28

**Conclusions:** The one who sins against his or her spouse by putting him or her away **DOES NOT HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF RE-MARRIAGE.** The only

recourse they have is to be reunited with their spouse, or remain unmarried. If both the husband and the wife are guilty in the breaking of the marriage bond, then, they both are to remain unmarried or be reunited in marriage.

However, the marriage spouse who has been sinned against is set free from the marriage bond by the action of their spouse and being FREE THEY HAVE THE RIGHT AND PRIVILEGE OF REMARRIAGE IF THEY SO CHOOSE.