

## LESSON 10

### ... DIVORCE AND RE-MARRIAGE

## WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT MARRIAGE - DIVORCE - REMARRIAGE

### PART I - What The Bible Says

#### ... ABOUT MARRIAGE

The purpose of this chapter is to give us the proper perspective of marriage as instituted by our Father God, as to its purpose and functions.

God ordained and instituted marriage as a life long union between a man and a woman. He made woman to complement and complete man 1 Cor 11:9.

"Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man."

One man to one woman and one woman to one man. Genesis 2:24 is absolutely clear:

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave (adhere/glue/ bond/fuse himself) unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Our Lord Jesus Christ confirmed this Old Testament verse and stated it to be His concept of marriage.

Matthew 19:5 "And (Jesus) said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain (the two of them) shall be one flesh."

In the Old Testament we read that many kings took to themselves many wives, but this was not with the consent of God, but rather in spite of His prohibition.

Deuteronomy 17:17a, "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away"

#### A. WHY DID GOD INSTITUTE MARRIAGE?

We see the answer in the following Scriptures.

Genesis 1:27,28, " So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

From this Scripture we see that the pro- creation of children is the first reason given by God for the institution of marriage. Not one man with just any woman or women, but one man with one woman, his wife. The union of a man and his wife is the only divinely approved context for pro-creation.

Any sexual relationship outside of the marriage of a man and woman is SIN. Paul

says **1 Corinthians 7:2**: "to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife. and let every woman have her own husband."

**Genesis 2:18**, "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."

The second function of marriage as instituted by God and revealed by this Scripture passage sees God putting man and women together to provide them with a unique companionship.

Question: Is this a companionship between two equals?

The answer is Yes & No. (NOTE - unequal does not mean inferior) We see this in the following Scriptures.

**Galatians 3:26-29**, " For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

**Ephesians 5:22**, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

**1 Peter 3:7**, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

**1 Corinthians 4:7**, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

**1 Corinthians 11: 9**, " Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man."

**1 Corinthians 11:11** "Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord."

**Conclusions:** We would note from the above Scriptures that the man and woman are equal as far as their position/place in the Kingdom of God and in their importance to the marriage relationship. However, in the creation, God in His wisdom did not create man and woman equal [no man is equal to any woman, nor is any woman equal to any man] God made/created them different, with each having a specific role in life and work. In the marriage union they are not to be regarded as co- equal partners. The one complements and completes the other simply because they are not equal.

The subjection of the wife to the husband, **Eph 5:22**: "wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands..." has the literally meaning of "find your place under", and was founded upon the original purpose and decree of God in creation, which could not be annulled. Woman's constitution was modeled upon that of man. It was not like his. The woman was created to complement and complete man, not to compete with him.

Man and woman are created to fully complement each other. This means that in the Lord a man needs a woman just as much as a woman needs a man. This

unique relationship where the man and women complete each other is found only in marriage.

## **B. IS MARRIAGE FOR ALL MEN AND WOMEN?**

The answer is seen in the following Scripture passages.

**Hebrews 13:4**, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

**1 Timothy 4:1-3**, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

**1 Corinthians 7:6-7**, "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. 7 For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that."

**1 Corinthians 7:39**, "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."

**2 Corinthians 6:14**, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

**Matthew 19:11-12**, "But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. 12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

**Deuteronomy 24:1-2**, "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. 2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife."

**Conclusions:** We would note from the above Scriptures that "Yes" with one exception marriage is for all men and women who have not previously been married or whose spouse has died, and for some who are divorced (refer to chapter 3, "What the Bible says about Re-marriage"). The exception being in the case of the one who is physically a eunuch.

## **C. DUTIES OF HUSBAND AND WIVES IN MARRIAGE**

### **1. Old Testament:**

The duties of the husband were generally recognized to include all that is involved in the support of the home. Exodus 21:10 enumerates as the minimum obligation the provision of food, clothing and cohabitation

**Exodus 21:10**, "If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish.

The practice of sexual morality for men fell far short of the standard of equality of treatment. The chastity of the wife was jealously guarded by the heaviest penalties, but custom and law recognized no parallel obligation of faithfulness as resting on the husband - provided he respected the rights of other men.

However, the prophetic conscience was possessed by a deep sense of the abomination of whoredome; and finally, a principle which was included in the Six Commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery", claiming absolute marital fidelity, was spelled out in **Malachi 2:14,15**.

"Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously (been unfaithful): yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy 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 treach erously (be unfaithful) 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 (be not unfaithful)"

The duties of the wife were not so specifically stated. The fundamental ones were chastity and submission - Genesis 3:16, with devotion to the husband's family and interests. And by general consent, the standard maintained by Hebrew wives was high

## **2. New Testament (Marriage under banner of Christ)**

Christianity began a new chapter in the history of marriage. The changes which it introduced were due primarily to the obvious implications of the fundamental Christian principles, which are seen in the following Scriptures

**Matthew 19:4-6**, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, 5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? 6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

**Matthew 20:25-28**, " But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

**Galatians 5:13**, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."

### **3. Duties of Husbands under Christianity**

According to the following Scriptures, what is the duty of the husband in the marriage relationship?

**Ephesians 5:23**, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body."

**Ephesians 5:25**, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"

**Ephesians 5:28-31,33**, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife and they two shall be one flesh. . . 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

**Colosians 3:19**, "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."

**1 Peter 3:7**, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

**1 Corinthians 7:3-5**, "Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. 5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

**1 Timothy 5:8**, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

**Conclusions:** The duties/responsibilities of the husband to his wife are irrevocably (that is to say, that cannot be revoked, recalled, undone or altered) bound up the Greek word translated love, *agapao*. A love which is a selfless, self-sacrificing love, which meets the needs of the wife (love, companionship, co-habitation, covering, protection, security, honor, respect, food, clothing and etc.), when exercised by the husband as God created him so to do.

### **4. The Duties of Wives under Christianity**

Even though Christianity brought improvement in to the status of women. however, the duties of the wife continued to be developed from the presupposition of her subordination to her husband and were summed up, not in love, but in what according to the following Scriptures:

**Ephesians 5:22**, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

**Colossians 3:18**, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord."

**Ephesians 5:23**, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body."

**1 Corinthians 11:10**, " For this cause ought the woman to have power on herhead because of the angels."

**1 Peter 3:1**, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;"

**Ephesians 5:33** "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

**Conclusions:** The duties/responsibilities of the wife as seen in the above Scriptures are summed up in submission to\* and reverence\*\* for her husband.

\* Note: The Greek word in the above scriptures for "submit yourselves" is hupotassas which has the meaning of "find your proper place (category) under?."

\*\* Note: that the Greek word for reverence is "phobeo" fear/reverential fear or fear of disrespecting/displeasing her husband because of who he is, as her head and covering. (Reverence and submission as unto the Lord, Ephesians 5:22.)

\*\*\*Note: Although submission and reverence on the part of the woman to her husband is not contingent upon her husband fulfilling his responsibilities toward her, however, men need to take into account that women were created by God to respond/answer to their husbands, therefore, if the wife is having a problem with submission and reverence for her husband, then the husband needs to examine his relationship with his wife, to see whether he is loving her by providing her headship, covering and honor (love, companionship, respect, consideration for her physical needs, food, clothing, etc.). Men as these basic needs of your wife are provided, she will then in return respond to you with love, companionship, tenderness, respect, honor, and reverence as your true help-mate; and then she will then in return receive your response of love, tenderness, companionship, attention, honor, respect and etc.

## **PART II - What the Bible Says**

### **... ABOUT DIVORCE**

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 chapter 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)

#### **A. 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 or considered or 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 Reseptus 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.

## **B. 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**, "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house."

**Matthew 19:8**, "He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so."

**Matthew 5:32**, "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

**1 Corinthians 7:10-11**, "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: 11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."

**Matthew 19:9**, "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

**1 Corinthians 7:15**, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace."

**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.

## **PART III - What the Bible Says ... ABOUT REMARRIAGE**

### **- 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**, "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

**1 Corinthians 7:10-12**, "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: 11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his

wife. 12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

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

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

**Matthew 19:9,** "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

**Deuteronomy 24:2,** " And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife."

**1 Corinthians 7:15,** "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace."

**1 Corinthians 7:27-28,** "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. 28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you."

**Conclusions:** The marriage spouse who has been sinned against by being wrongfully put away (divorced) is set free from the marriage bond by the action of their spouse and therefore may remarry if he/she so chooses.