

JESUS' DOCTRINE OF
MARRIAGE
DIVORCE
REMARRIAGE

John D. Keller

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Dedication

To the children of broken families and especially to that little Amy and little Tommy who long to live with their creation-marriage biological father or mother; and by all of God's love and righteousness deserve and have the absolute right to have it so. And to all the creation-marriage husbands and wives who have been betrayed by a spouse, some who have been divorced by the unfaithful spouse, and are being faithful to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by remaining alone praying and waiting with great long-suffering for the full repentance and return of their departed beloved spouse.

*What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put
asunder.*

(Matt. 19:6)

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Abbreviations:

NSRB - New Scofield Reference Bible

ANET - Ancient Near East Texts

CU - Code of Ur Nammu

CE - Code of Eshnunna

CL - Code of Lipit-Ishtar

AJA - American Journal of Archaeology

CH - Code of Hammurabi

KDOTC - Keil and Delitzsch, Old Testament Commentary

ISBE - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

JJS 17 - Journal of Jewish Studies

NT - New Testament

OT - Old Testament

LXX - Septuagint

KJV - King James Version

INTRODUCTION

God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. As men are at peace with their understanding of God's Law of Gravity, so they should be at peace with God's Doctrine of Marriage. Divorce must be subject to the doctrine of marriage; it will be seen that marriage supersedes the idea of divorce and in their struggle marriage obliterates her foe: divorce.

The King James Version of the Bible is the source of this dissertation. The hermeneutics of the author will be of the literal-historical-cultural school. One important law of interpretation which will not be violated is the law of "*common sense*". I join with Edward W. Goodrich (Professor of Greek and Bible Multnomah School of Bible): "If there ever was a place for common sense, it can be found in the rules for interpreting the Bible." The Bible's autograph languages may be referenced from time to time, and will be given their honor.

Sola Gratia, salvation by Grace alone, is the truth that is being contaminated by those who misinterpret the marriage doctrine. (You might consider that statement rather out of place, but please read on for it is the central theme of this dissertation.) If you do not teach salvation by grace alone, you inevitable teach salvation by works. The doctrine of works is always condemned by the God of Salvation, "but though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed, *anathema*." We are assured that God's love for man is long-suffering; He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; therefore any teacher who promises man salvation without repentance must be accursed. And since God's love calls upon all men everywhere to repent, it must be understood that God's doctrine of repentance, and God's doctrine of marriage apply to all men, all religions, all societies, all political institutions, and all nationalities. The first application of God's matchless grace is to lead a sinner to repentance: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness [Grace, my comment] and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness [Grace, my comment] of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4). Repentance for one's sin, and faith in the shed blood of Christ will cleanse the sin of any man; therefore

there is hope that every marriage can be saved from the complexities of marital sin, and His blood is the only salvation for marital sin—providing repentance and departure of the marital sin has been exercised.

In matters of controversy, the student will inevitably face a crossroad. His progress will require a step of faith. That crossroad will clearly be faced by each student of the marriage-divorce controversy, and I believe that the inevitable intersection is the "exception clause." This entire dissertation surrounds this one clause.

My prayer is that the reader will have the courage to study the entire text, and then consider the true meaning of the exception clause. As you will see the fate of marriage and perhaps the fate of mankind may depend on your interpretation of those five words: "*except it be for fornication*".

About The Author

John D. Keller is an independent fundamental Baptist; saved in 1960 and married Janet in 1962. Graduated in 1969 from Philadelphia College of the Bible and pastored two churches in Maine; presently at Calvary Baptist Church, Madawaska, Maine since 1980. Our 44 years of marriage have brought us five children and ten grandchildren.

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CHAPTER ONE

Who Hath God Joined Together ?

Has God joined together all marriages? Has God joined together the unsaved? Has God joined together the unbeliever with the believer? Has God joined together the divorced and remarried? Has God joined together the innocent partner in a new marriage? Has God joined together the guilty partner in a new marriage? Has God joined together partners of the same sex? Just who has God joined together?

Regarding the last question: same sex unions, be assured that God has nothing to do with such sin and debauchery. He has declared such an act, same sex union, as a capital crime equal to if not the same as bestiality; the word marriage cannot refer to homosexuality, as it cannot refer to bestiality. As a man or a woman cannot marry their, horse, dog, dolphin,¹ or any other beast, so they cannot marry partners of the same sex. In God's eyes homosexuality is a godless sinful act that is fit for the punishment of a capital crime in the nation of God that adhered to the death penalty:

If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them. Lev. 20:10

Thus the Word of God has confirmed that the act of homosexuality is a capital crime. The only salvation for such a crime is repentance with the total cessation of the sin and faith in the forgiveness through

the blood of Christ, or the death penalty—the death penalty will await God's final judgment day; then death may mean eternal death in the fires of hell. The Bible equally condemns lesbianism (Rom. 1:26). Thus if a woman lie with womankind, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death.—I once read that the definition of lesbianism is atheism.—The same death penalty was deemed proper for bestiality:

And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast. And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.

Lev. 20:15,16

The Remaining Questions

The remaining initial questions will be answered throughout this dissertation, and their answers will provide the solution to the entire marriage-divorce-remarriage confusion. The dilemma is that men refuse to permit God to rule marriage. Man has the idea that man is the sovereign judge and ruler of marriage. But we shall see that man is not the king of his own castle; he has no sovereign right over his wife or family. It must be mentioned that the woman also has no claim to sovereignty; she is also subject to the Creator of the *Single Pair*. Marriage is literally the creative act of God, and man cannot alter that act: an act where God created one man and one woman and joined them together in a marriage. At this point in creation, marriage was completely defined.

Two thousand years ago, when the Pharisees came baiting Jesus with the inquiry, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" the marriage-divorce-remarriage question was in the eyes of that generation as murky and muddled as it is to the children of the twenty-first century. Their question smacked of male sovereignty, although it was intended to test Jesus' understanding of the Law of Moses; but more than that, it actually raised the vital subject: marriage. Divorce is a sub-article in the doctrine of marriage, and Jesus clearly identified that fact. At the heart of Jesus' answer were those profound words, "What, therefore, God hath

joined together, let not man put asunder.” The only question man can propose from this immortal statement is, Who hath God joined together? To answer this question we will follow the Preacher Jesus’ guiding hand. He began his answer to the Pharisees question by sounding the original Genesis marriage text.

Genesis 1:26, 27

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Gen. 1:26,27

"Have ye not read that he who made them at the beginning, made them male and female. 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? Wherefore, they are no more twain, but one flesh." By these words Jesus drove His hearers and now you, the reader, to the actual creation of man. Marriage is to be defined in the context of first two chapters of Genesis. Jesus does not proceed beyond the Genesis text to define marriage. Therefore we can conclude that the definition of marriage can be defined within that textual limit.

Jesus immediately introduces the person of the Creator God as the engineer of marriage. He links marriage with the actual creation of man, stating that the act of creating man male and female is the basis of marriage. Some interesting comments surround this text, with one author, Ziegler, stating that the male did not possess *complete sexual distinction* without the creation of the female. Adam was a male in *simple potentiality*, out of which state he passed, the moment the woman stood by his side.² Much has been said regarding the concluding statement of the Creator, "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." It should be pointed out that before He said it was very good at one point He stated that something was *not good* in the primary creation of man.

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone,” man was not malformed, he was just not completely formed being one. Ziegler's thoughts coincide with Laney's comment that the two Hebrew terms male and female literally mean the piercer and the pierced.³ Would the male plug of an electrical extension cord have a definition without the female receptor. Now if a male electrical connector cannot be defined without its antithesis, can man be defined without a woman? Some have suggested that man was created androgynous (both male and female) but Kiel and Delitzsch are correct and overthrow this theory by stating that God referred to man with the pronoun *them*,⁴ "male and female created he them." The revelation which we must see here is not that God created man androgynous, but that he created man *married*. The purpose of removing a rib from Adam in the creation of the woman was not to form a biologically compatible creature, for that could have been accomplished with more dust; the purpose was to create *kinship*.⁵

Isaksson, the author of this idea, concentrated on Genesis chapter two. However, if we examine (Gen. 1:26) with his concept we will discover the meaning of the text. The mystery of the Godhead is suddenly revealed in this marvelous conversation: "Let *us* make man in *our* image." These words have delighted the spiritual mind since their inscription, but most commentators agree that we have never savored their full flavor. However if we concentrate on the kinship concept and meditate on the Triune God for a moment a greater light shines through.

Man was created a *single pair*, apparently in contrast to the animals. Kiel and Delitzsch translate Genesis 1:20, "God said; Let the waters swarm with swarms, with living beings, and let birds fly above the earth in the face of the firmament." Their comment, "The animals were created, not only in a rich variety of genera and species, but in large numbers,⁶ reflects the opinion that there were many pairs of animals. That is in remarkable contrast to man, the *Single Pair*. Before the Fall the animals only benefit would be in the rapid advance of their numbers, but afterwards their advantage was in marked contrast to the disadvantage of man.

Since man and beast were by creation herbivores (Gen. 1:29,30), we can confirm that there was no competition between them since neither was the hunted; a remarkable contradiction to Darwin. However after the *Fall*, man was immediately faced with the dangers

of death from: fellow men, beasts, insects, storms, disease, even the possibility of an accident. The odds favored man's extinction. The initial survival of the many paired animals, on the other hand, was a sure thing. Man, the *Single Pair*, was in a peculiar strait. Man lived in fear of extinction until he could produce a sufficient population to ensure his immediate survival. Man's only prospect for existence was bundled in a single relation with the only other man, woman. This relationship was the most delicate alliance in the history of the human race. By faith Adam would build a relationship of hope between his family and his God. It must be remembered that Adam walked away from the tree with God's condemning words ringing in his head, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The Apostle tells us in Hebrews (2:15) that Adam lived out his days in the fear of death. He would have to hope where he saw little hope. Could he survive to procreate mankind? Would he have faith in the God of Salvation. His fear would have to be conquered. It was imperative that he find the faith which would permit him to cultivate his marriage with love, peace, and promise. He would have to lead his lady in a life of hope and faith. Conjugal love depends on security and hope; thus seeking out the promise that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent; Adam would have to learn to pray. We do know that he and his wife prayed earnestly, for Eve's testimony declares where she believed her first born came from, "I have gotten a man from the Lord"; obviously an answer to prayer.

The creation-marriage, and the birth of Cain bring a bright new meaning to the truth of man's creation as being in the *image and likeness* of God. The Biblicist believes that God's image and likeness is a united diversity, a tri-unity, a trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Many commentators have attempted to define this quality in man; some calling it a trichotomy, (body, soul, and spirit), others attribute it to personality (intellect, emotions, and will). The failure of the traditional interpretation is that it has failed to see the woman in the text. By placing the woman properly in the context a wonderful truth bursts into bloom. God's image was an image of kinship. The three persons of the Godhead were equally related and were one. Jesus clearly revealed this:

That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me,

and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.

(Jn. 17:21, 22).

When God removed a rib from Adam he did more than just create another man, he created a man with the same genes, blood type, DNA and physical characteristics. He created kinfolk. God's existence is an eternal kinship. God's image and likeness would be an earthly kinship; man's existence would be dependent on kinship. With the birth of Cain man reached the ultimate kinship, family. Man was created family. Trinity and Family are divine synonyms. God is a family (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Man is a family (father, son, and mother).

Man and Woman - The Definition Excludes:

I am quite sorry to include this paragraph in this dissertation, however considering the decline of human civilization that we are witnessing in our so called *modern age*, I have no other choice but to do so. The definition of man and woman excludes any person who chooses to alter their natural born gender in attempt to become the opposite sex: medically, psychologically, or by any other conceivable method. Remember the word *alter* means to make different without changing into something else; a man will always be a man and a woman will always be a woman—they say you can tell them by their hands.

Genesis 2: 23, 24

And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Gen. 2:23,24

The details of the first wedding were planned in heaven, and Gen.

2:23,24 reveals that all went exactly as planned. God is love (1 Jn. 4:8b), and with this adhesive God bound the first couple, the single pair. Jesus knew this binding love:

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made
perfect in one; and that the world may know that
thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast
loved me. Jn. 17:23

Adam was taught love. First he was introduced to the agony of aloneness; loneliness. He was permitted to explore the satisfaction of nature. He is obviously befriended by the animal kingdom to whom he affectionately awarded to each creature a name. His home was a marvelous garden. The beauty of flora and fauna, the majesty of nature, the friendship of every creature, and the companionship of the triune God did not meet man's most inner need. Even God concluded that it was not good for man to be alone. The loneliness of man was broken during the silence of his deep sleep. This is further evidence that man is not saved by works, but by faith. Man's heartfelt emotions cried for fulfillment even in his sleep. Carl Laney hears a song from Adam as he expresses his delight with the gift of the woman; with sleepy eyes Adam beheld the most beautiful creature of God's creation, and with ecstasy in his voice he declares literally:

This one at last
Bone - my bones!
Flesh - my flesh!
This one shall be called woman
Because out of man this one was taken. ⁷

The dawn of human love was born in marriage, a marked contrast to the opinion of modern men who have been deceived to believe that marriage is the end of love. Marriage owns love, marriage is the instructor of love. Marriage was God's love gift to the lonely man. Marriage made God's creation *very good*. Man was created married. Man was created in love. It is no wonder that since the garden love scene all creation has been filled with reports of the same; it seems as though the famous English lover was in the Garden:

What lady is that which doth enrich the hand of yonder knight?
 O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
 It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night
 Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear;
 Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
 So shows a snowy dove romping with crows
 As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
 The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand,
 And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.
 Did my heart love till now? forswear it, sight!
 For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.⁸

"I ne'er saw true beauty till this night", was the cry of the romantic. The soul of Romeo saw the torches burn bright because of the lady. She stood out as a dove among crows (this would have been literally true in the case of Eve). Adam could have easily said, amen! to William Shakespeare. The spectacular beauty of creation, especially seen in the symmetry and color of the birds, insects, fish, flowers, and sunsets ensures the knowledge that Adam was a creature of excellent handsomeness. His song raises the woman to his equal. Her silence speaks of a breath taking experience as she was enraptured with her lover; Adam was irresistible. Her thoughts were expressed by the Shulamite:

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.
 Song of Sol. 1:2

Eve's passiveness speaks submission and permission. The male announces his intentions with forwardness, the lady submits and signals permission to her lover. Kiss is plural; it requires two players. One alone cannot kiss. The act can only be accomplished with two sets of lips. Each person's lips must desire the others. Kiss is irresistible. Each person is drawn by an energy of love which each cannot resist. Kiss is promise. Each person promises admiration, trust, faith, and sacrifice in the kiss. The drawing power of the kiss has been quaintly explained by our English lover:

Love goes toward love as school-boys from their books
 But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.⁹

The Loving God created man in love. Man was created a plurality of being. He was created married. He was created kinfolk. He was created family. He was created with the cement of love. He was bound with the lady with this love cement. The twain “was” one. Man was created a *Single Pair*. Where the animal’s dependence was upon their numbers, man's survival was dependent on his love. His love was victorious. The *Single Pair* could have joined with Solomon:

I raised thee up under the apple tree. There thy mother brought thee forth who bore thee. Set me as seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death. Song of Sol. 8:5,6

Leave His Father and Mother

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. Gen. 2:24

Although these words initially appear to be those of Adam, Laney points out that Matthew clearly explains that they are the words of God: “Have ye not read that he who made them at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh.”¹⁰ The reason they shall leave mother and father is bound in the fact that they are male and female. G. von Rad suggests that the drive behind Edenic love was bound in the physical nature of the rib:

Whence comes this love 'strong as death' (Song 8:6), and stronger than the tie to one's parents, whence this inner clinging to each other, this drive towards each other which does not rest until it again becomes one flesh in the child?

It comes from the fact that God took woman from man, that they actually were originally *one* flesh.

Therefore they must come together again and thus by destiny belong to each other. The recognition of this narrative as etiological is theologically important. Its point of departure, the thing to be explained, is for the narrator something in existence, and not something 'paradisaal' and thus lost! ¹¹

The creation of the woman removed a physical part of man, the loss of which compels man to be rejoined with his missing being. While visiting a nursing home, the author often witnessed to a elderly gentleman who in his youth, lost a leg in an industrial accident. The man was usually sad and melancholy since the early death of his dear wife and only daughter. He was usually unresponsive to the Gospel, however when it was suggested that his missing leg would be returned to him in the resurrection, he was startled. He sat up at attention as if he was preparing to take up arms and march into battle. He yearned for his limb as he yearned for his wife, and daughter. Adam yearned for his missing rib from the moment the heavenly anesthetic wore off. Adam's missing rib caused his heart to explode with affection, as his eyes beheld his lovely lady. His song begs her love.

The *Single Pair* were created on the sixth day. God created them male and female. God created them married. Creation married Adam. Marriage is man. Marriage is the natural state of man. The natural must be considered. The English word is derived from the Latin *nasci* > *natur* > *natura*, to be born. As natural as it is to be born, so is marriage. Chaucer said, "The day natural, bat is to seyn 24 houris," (as 24 hours is natural to the day).¹² As the hours of a day cannot change, marriage cannot change. Marriage was born on the sixth day of creation and the truth of marriage is the same today. The New Testament word for *natural* literally means the face of ones birth, (the idea is that the natural is present from birth). It is no wonder that God cursed the women and the men who changed their natural use:

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use unto that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the

women, burned in their lust one to another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. Rom. 1:26,27

The natural is honorable, the unnatural disgraceful. The AIDS epidemic is a fitting recompense for unnatural lust.

The familial relationship satisfies each member's need for security and fellowship, but it is prohibitive for the family to satisfy man's sexual needs. Incest, consanguineous marriage, is forbidden. Should kinfolk, by some unusual circumstance, find themselves in an incestuous relationship, that relationship must be put asunder. Incest is the most unnatural of all sexual acts. Other unnatural acts take place outside of marriage, but incestuous marriage defiles marriage as no other act can. The unnatural lust of women with women, and men with men is cursed with the judgment of hell fire and earthly AIDS, but the judgment of incest is immediate, it must be *put asunder*. Marriage is a sexual union outside the family of kin.

This union is a totally different nature from that of parents and children; hence marriage between parents and children is entirely opposed to the ordinance of God.¹³

The tragedy of human history is that it seems to follow a Murphy's Law: If man can do anything wrong, he will. Shortly after the Lord God rescued Lot from the sodomites and the destruction of Sodom, Lot gets drunk and commits incest with his two daughters. Today the world continues this record of porn.

Sons depart to military duty or academic studies, daughters the same, but no living departure should be as acute as the departure to cleave unto a spouse. The *nuclear family* is the natural family. All other unions are unnatural. Families are nuclear or they are not families—the family includes adopted children. The nuclear family can only be severed by the departure of the child in marriage; thus permitting its members to join in a new family. Man never ceases to be family. Those born through unnatural union like the leopard cannot change their spots; although they can be adopted into a new family—salvation and the new birth will make them completely the

children of God. But the naturally born are seen to be with their parents till the time of departure, marriage. This speaks of marriages that last. Broken families do not permit their off-spring to depart naturally. Natural families help produce sound marriages. Although the departure of the son and daughter produce some trauma, the presence of the parents and their approval of the new union nevertheless speak of something wonderful.

Cleave Unto His Wife

There be three things which are too wonderful for me
Yea, four which I know not
The way of an eagle in the air
The way of a serpent upon a rock
The way of a ship in the midst of the sea
And the way of a man with a maid
Prov. 30: 18-19

Since Eden there would never be another as lonely as Adam, the *single man*, and the moment his loneliness was removed creation was complete. Creation is marriage. Marriage is a living organization that was ordained by God. Marriage is an ordinance of God. Marriage is an institution of God, ordained and instituted before the fall. This ordinance requires man to leave and then to cleave. Many have commented on the Greek *proskollao*, to cleave. The idea is to bind together with glue. As a boy, the author learned the adhesive strength of resin glue when joining wood projects together. At times, after the glue had cured, attempts would be made to undo the glued joints and divide the wood only to realize that the wood would freshly break rather than permit the glued joint to separate. Contemplate this while you consider the words of the Lord Jesus, "What God hath joined (glued) together let not man put asunder."

Jesus the master of language exhausts all possible definitions of the dimensions of marriage with a singular defining thought. He expresses that definition mathematically. He claims that when man was created he was created male and female and that plurality was singular. And for this reason, the groom and the bride must leave mother and father, because they must again be one.

Have ye not read that he who made them at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. Matt. 19: 4-6

Jesus explicitly states that the man and the woman are not two, but that they are *one*. One is the smallest indivisible particle. William J. Hopewell makes this fitting comment:

One is the smallest indivisible unit that there is, so it is impossible to divide the unit of one flesh once it has been glued together. Man and woman are two entities before marriage, but following marriage they become an indivisible unit of one in marital status. *Thus they cannot be divided.*

Hopewell goes on to enforce his comment:

Tertullian (200 A.D.) said, 'Again He [Jesus] said, They shall be two in one flesh.... not three or four. But if they marry a second time, or oftener, their oneness no longer exists; there will not be two in one flesh, on the contrary, many in one.'¹⁴

The clarion call of marriage throughout eternity is, *No more twain but one*. The consequent command that resounds back throughout eternity is, Quod DEUS conjunxit, homo non-separet, (What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder). To disobey God is violence. Adultery is violence. Divorce is violence. Hatred is violence—Man was created in unity however this blessed unity was broken when he and his woman ate the forbidden fruit; leaving the vicarious sacrifice of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as man's only hope for unity and salvation.

Why do men commit vicious acts against man and God? Violence speaks of disunity. Man is capable of violence by the nature of his disunity. Jesus is the Prince of Peace because of his perfect

unity. The foundation of monotheism was founded in the text: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4). This attribute of God, unity, is in contrast to the disunity of man, and man is fully aware of his weakness. Driven by his inability to conquer his disunity and be like God, man has determined to hate the Unified God and His Son; man's supreme act of violence. Jesus pointed this out, "And the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended [overcame] it not." Jesus indicated that man's act of trying to overcome the light, actually consisted of an open hatred against Him and God, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you", and "He that hateth me hateth my Father also." During one particular confrontation, Jesus asked the mob, "Why go ye about to kill me?" The Apostle states that all men were, or are the "enemies of God" (Rom. 5:10). Marriage is a God ordained unity, therefore any doctrine which propagates the unity of marriage will be hated by the creature of disunity, man. It is natural for man to hate, to war, to kill, for man is naturally violent.

Unity

Many factors are uniting to attack the unity of marriage and the family. Pornography, the literature of prostitutes, is intended to create in the imagination, the violence and gratification of instant sex. Science in the latter half of the twentieth century has permitted the propagation of porn with life-like electronic internet media. The selfishness of man has feed on the bait of pornography, and has strengthened itself in the violence of sex. The exploitation of man's selfishness is profitable; some say prostitution is the worlds oldest business. The prostitute, however, cannot be blamed for man's selfish nature.

Science has come to power in the twentieth century. The question is, Has science exploited the selfishness of man? Has science offered man a justification for his selfishness. Science is an instrument of disunity. Its most famous trophy is the Atomic Bomb. Its authority is rooted in its disunity. Science is the Paradox, its greatest equation, $E = mc^2$, has given us Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and the fear of the destruction of mankind. Its concepts of disunity, and its glory in the same, seem to have endless consequences. Vincent Edward Smith, a philosopher-scientist, who survived World War II,

wrote a delightful little book entitled, *Footnotes for the Atom*, in which he chides modern man for abandoning philosophy/religion for the strict science world model.

Modern physics has had no monopoly on the empiriological method. Liberal economics took it over and found men to be only atoms, closed off from one another and mechanically united under the state solely for the protection of property and the preserving of public order, [Marxism, my comment]. Sociology, at least when it began, felt that social and political affairs could be run off with the ease of experiments in the physicist's laboratory. Psychology got a later start than other empiriological studies of human affairs, but it grew very rapidly to the extremism that man is only a bundle of atomic reflexes (behaviorism) or an aggregate of atomic drives (Freudianism).

All of these views, which tend to copy the method of empiriological physics, are powerless of themselves to solve the pressing human problems which the atomism of matter has heightened. They only atomize men. On the social plane, atomism or individualism cuts men off from one another. "Bundle Theories" of man scatter his personality into disorganized and warring atoms, differing from matter only in complexity. The atomic bomb is dangerous because of the atomic man. It is unity that alone can organize.¹⁵

Smith admits that pure science will increase man's power; but warns that it will kill his love.¹⁶ He continues, "It is already quite clear that physics is atomizing matter and then atomizing the atoms. It aims to explain all physical structures by smaller ones and then resorts to a third particle, like the meson in the nucleus, to show how two others are united. It is analytic even when it wants to synthesize. But where does the division stop? The answer is nowhere: it just keeps going."¹⁷

The killing of man's love is almost prophetic, as we look

about our land. There is a twofold nature to mistreated love. Jesus taught that the true lovers of the future would have their love wax cold because of iniquity, and Paul predicts that the self-lovers would wax hot. The latter predicted the perilous days ahead, when men would be selfish (lovers of their own selves), without natural affection, and beside other things *trucebreakers*. A.T. Robertson identifies covenant breakers in Romans 1:31 with trucebreakers in II Timothy 3:3. Therefore the prediction of II Timothy: "This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers (those given to divorce).

The destruction of unity contributes to the progress of physics, but when applied to the walk of man it has produced a modern paganism. "Society has been atomized into individual units, and pagans, seeking nothing but themselves."¹⁸ Smith completes his admonition with the judgment that Science is a false-messiah.¹⁹ Existentialism is the religion of physics. It is the religion of the individual atomic man. "Chiefly a Twentieth Century philosophy, Existentialism centers on the analysis of individual existence and the plight of the individual who must assume ultimate responsibility for his acts of free will without any certain knowledge of what is right or wrong or good or bad."²⁰ Selfishness is certainly a false-messiah. When Judah, the son of Jacob, discovered that Tamar played the prostitute, and that he was the father of his daughter-in-law's child, he confessed that Tamar was more righteous than he (Gen. 38:12-26). Like Tamar, science may be prostituting mankind with its offer of a philosophy of selfishness.

Selfishness or Sacrifice

A comment from almost a generation ago may be worth noting: A 1980 (AP) news article headline read, "Population Decline Expected in Europe". A Dutch population specialist (Dirk J. van de Haa) reports that a fertility rate of 2.1 per family is necessary to maintain a constant population. He then states, "The statistics recorded in Europe indicate that they will realize a population decline should the present marriage practice continue." Van de Haa claims that the prime factor contributing to the present low fertility rate is

individualism.

Marriage and family place heavy demands on individuals, especially women, and tends to limit the freedom of both partners, he observed.

For a couple, having children imposes limits on opportunities and activities, in addition to the direct costs, van de Haa said, At the same time, he said, children's utility has declined. They are no longer either expected or legally required to support their parents in old age or help with family finances, he said. The emotional satisfaction of parenthood can be achieved most economically by having one or perhaps two children.

Many sociologists consider the movement toward greater self-fulfillment, available at a time when fertility is relatively easily controlled, a major factor. Cohabitation is increasingly accepted as normal, and as many half of the men and women in Northern Europe may never marry, he suggested.²¹

Individualism of marriage partners is a form of marriage hatred. Cohabitation without marriage is violence. The scientific generation is viewing the intricate relationships of life through the prism of the empirical method. William Kirk Kilpatrick makes this observation:

The words *mother* and *father* remind us of what a family ought to be and that without one we are incomplete. But this idea isn't a fashionable idea. Autonomous individuals have a higher priority than families in the social science world.²²

The social science world is one of unbridled selfishness. Eric Fromm has aptly entitled his volume, *Man for Himself*, and then places this crowning statement on the subject:

Modern science holds the doctrine that the most powerful and legitimate drive in man is selfishness.

It is no wonder that the epigraph to this volume reads;

Be ye lamps unto yourselves
Be your own reliance
Hold to the truth within yourselves
And to the only lamp
(Buddha)

It is fitting that Fromm should quote Buddha, since the psychologist-scientist has chosen to embrace Eastern Mysticism in its quest to define individualism. The Eastern Cults have relied on the *inner solitary light* as the truth which man must seek as the rock of their religion. Science required a prostitute to convey its message, and Eastern Mysticism is that prostitute; included here is the New Age movement, and the so called Individualistic Society. "It is in the age of the individual that the revolt against marriage has risen to its present irresistible tide." Will Durant made this statement in, *The Mansions of Philosophy*, written in 1941. In the same year America entered the Great War, she was in the mist of the new civil war, the divorce war, the family war.

But Christ taught us to march to the tune of a different drummer, the drummer: sacrifice. "This is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatever I command you" (Jn. 15:12-14). Sacrifice is at the heart of the Christian philosophy. Sacrifice is diametrically opposed to the individualism of empiriological physics. The Apostle Peter is a witness to the Christian doctrine of sacrifice:

For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously; who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins,

should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed. 1 Peter 2:21-24

Sacrifice is the glue that bonds marriage and the family; selfishness fractures that bond. When that splitting occurs: it is usually the new twigs that have sprouted from our sides that suffer the greatest, those twigs are our children.

The family glue may even reach the supper table. The author had the pleasure of learning the power of a mother's sacrifice as a young lad. In the year 1949 my dad died at thirty-six years of age leaving my mom, Helen Keller—for that is her name and to me she is as famous as the historical lady—a mountain to climb; that mountain: to raise us five children. For several years following we struggled, and this struggle often reached the supper table. Mom was seen eating the meanest portions of the meal. When we were fortunate enough to have a whole chicken in the pot, (that means a chicken including the yellow feet) mom would be seen reaching for the neck portion, and the yellow-feet. Several years passed and one day we saw more food on the table. It was this day that I saw my mom reach into the pot and retrieve a whole chicken thigh. She proceeded to eat the thigh with relish. It was at that moment that as a young lad I began to blurt out, "Mom, I didn't know you liked ...", and I caught myself and suddenly realized that mom sacrificed those many years and now she was able to relax and enjoy a single meal. The author was overcome with emotion and had to hold back the tears. It has been fifty years since that night, and that moment still brings tears to my eyes. Had mom chose to satisfy herself all those years, her children could have perished. "Love seeketh not her own" (I Cor. 13:5).

It is noteworthy that among some so-called uncivilized tribes as noted by Durant in *The Mansions of Philosophy*, some mothers nurse their children for twelve years, and that among the New Hebrides some mothers kill themselves to take care of their dead child beyond the grave. But the greatest sacrifice the world will ever know took place on an old rugged cross called Calvary. We should love as He loved us. This is where the now disdained clause originated, *till death do us part*. Again the Apostle declares, "Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). The glue of marriage is sacrifice.

Choice

W. Fisher-Hunter is wrong regarding the origin of marriage:

The idea that marriage is made in heaven is false. The truth is, marriage is a divine institution that pertains only to the earthly existence of mankind (Matt. 22:30). As constituted in the beginning it is a contract which one man and one woman voluntarily enter into; nevertheless God will hold them responsible in it.²³

He is partially correct by stating that marriages are made on earth, however marriages are made in heaven and earth. Adam required the Creator of the universe to intercede and find him a wife. Eve was made on the earth, but who would deny that the first marriage was not also made in heaven.

"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. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and his church" (Eph. 5:31,32). The mystery is the awesome merging of the heavenly with the earthly. The romance of this merging event gives birth to our songs and poems. It has been said that the pure sexual act is 99% spiritual (heavenly), and 1.0% physical (earthly). This mixture of heavenly and earthly aroused in Adam the aggressiveness to bond to the woman, exuberantly surrounding her with his masculinity. Her attraction is both spiritual and physical. He senses her promise of companionship as well as being attracted to her physically. Using physical terms he claims the woman is his bone and flesh. Adam's words speak of the woman as irresistible. Her silence speaks of approval. She was created with the power of speech and could have rejected Adams's advances, but passively and with a sense of delight the woman joins the man and is not ashamed. She immediately consents to his proposal, and in that sense (proposal/consent), I agree that marriages are made on earth.

One major factor that must be established before any

successful solution can be found to the marriage/divorce/remarriage question that is addressed in the title of this chapter, "Who hath God joined together?" Mr. Hunter is again incorrect with his assumption: "Moreover, the idea that God is responsible for having united every man and woman who are married is also untrue." Hunter admits by his statement that God is responsible for uniting some marriages. My question to Mr. Hunter is, "Which marriages has God not united?"

When discussing this issue we must not lose sight of the element of *choice*. This element is a divine element which may be the actual heavenly activity joining the partners in marriage. E. Neufeld lists two defined lines of marriage: (a) intention and, (b) actual consummation.²⁴ Heth and Wedham list four lines: (a) consent and intent, (b) ratification of parents, (c) ratification of public witnesses, and (d) physical consummation.²⁵ Atkinson following Dunstan lists five marks of marriage: (a) the initiative of love, (b) vow of consent, (c) obligation of faithfulness, (d) promise of blessing, and (e) the centrality of sacrifice.²⁶ Although all these points must be considered, the definition of marriage can be summed up in three points: (a) choice, (b) consent, and (c) a public wedding.

Creation dictates the aggressive nature of the male, the passive yet thoughtful nature of the female. The Shulamite speaks, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth." She anxiously awaits her aggressor with a permissive spirit. Jacob approached the well, rolled the stone away, and kissed Rachel. Consent must be won. The man must be gentle, strong, romantic, and practical. When the prerequisites have been satisfied the stage is set for the drama of love. The verbs *to have* and *to take* have a special place in marriage. They are terms of common law. The Baptist, when speaking to Herod said, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." And the Apostle reported, "It is commonly reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife." Abraham told his eldest servant, "Thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: but thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac." Even our children's nursery rhymes carry the thought of to take: *The farmer takes a wife, the farmer takes a wife, hi ho the dairy-o, the farmer takes a wife.*

There is something very final about the idea of taking a wife. Choice has been propitiated. Decision has been exercised. Contract

has been negotiated. The wedding has been celebrated. What God has instigated in marriage is the act of choice/consent. I will address *arrangement marriage*, but for the moment we must realize that God aggressively guards man's right to choose the bride, and the ladies right of consent. This is the mystery of love. Add this concept to the finality of man's word and vows especially in the Old Testament, and one realizes the power of choice/consent. The definition of marriage begins to take on this general meaning: *God has joined together the (never been married or widowed) man to the (never been married or widowed) woman of his choice, and the woman to the man of her consent, when celebrated with a public wedding; and forbid man to put asunder that which He has joined together.*

Consent

The man's choice is contingent upon the acceptance of the lady. Both are contingent upon social interaction. To leave father and mother, and to obey the command to honor father and mother, implies that parental blessing will be sought by the pair. Note that Heth and Wedham have included parental consent in their definition of marriage, but as mentioned parental consent is bond up in the pair's choice/consent. Nevertheless, should the pair make a choice/consent which does not receive parental blessings the union is still defended by the Creator who aggressively protects choice/consent. Some may object to choice/consent claiming that social *arrangement marriage* annuls it. It must be conceded that in a culture where the parents arrange the marriage that the groom agrees to the custom and thereby knowingly concedes his right of choice. Even where parental arrangement is the norm, should the groom step out of line, his choice is still a binding marriage. Samson ordered his parents to take him a wife of the daughters of the Philistines; and they did so (Jud. 14).

Western culture understands parental blessing as a secondary concern, whereas eastern culture looks upon it as a primary concern; but keep in mind that both seek parental blessing. The parent in the east is laboring to ensure the child's happiness, as is the western parent, probably with the same energy and interest. Both customs culminate in the wedding, regardless of eastern or western influence. The wedding is a peculiar cultural custom. There are as many different wedding ceremonies as there are different cultures. Custom

precedes law. Customs are created by people. Groups of people design a common practice which is acceptable by the many and that practice is refined to an acceptable custom. The custom is protected and cherished and becomes a tradition. Children in their games act out particular customs which they will mature to experience in actuality. The wedding is a common game among the young girls. Regardless of the culture the custom is honored. Isaac was overwhelmed with the joy of Rebekah, "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her." Here the public wedding consisted of the public offering of the parental tent.

Wedding

Public testimony is a vital element to any social contract, and marriage is a social contract. Marriage is a public social act, a wedding. The strongest customs on earth are religious customs, and the public wedding is the most universal custom; and I might say the strongest of all customs at that. This is only fitting since marriages are made in heaven and on earth. The details of the wedding custom are not significant; the historical event is significant. The verbal and written contract is complete in the public testimony. The wedding event is climaxed in the conjugal act of physical consummation, the private physical contract. Thus the physical consummation is totally part of the wedding.

Marriage is a legal act, not based on the state, but based on the law of creation. Jesus said, "from the beginning it was not so." He was questioned regarding the meaning of the law of Moses, but Jesus answers to the meaning of a higher law; the Law of Creation-Marriage. More than the Sabbath Day was established in creation; the common laws of God were created. Blackstone concludes that common laws are doctrines "not set down in any written statute, but depending upon immemorial usage for their support."²⁷ Marriage is now universally under statute law, but one must confess that since marriage is the oldest corporate act that it furnishes us with an immemorial source of common law. Antiquity has produced several ancient codes, and most, if not all, contain marriage regulations. But prior to the written codes, marriage was controlled by the common law of Creation. Christ invoked the creation-marriage code which

was written in the epistle of the Creation: Adam and Eve—please note I did not say Adam and Steve. The common law of marriage was written in the creation and existence of the *Single Pair*. All that Christ had to decree regarding the marriage doctrine was imbedded in the *Single Pair*. "From the beginning it was not so".

The common corporate act of Eden was the basis of God's relationship to Israel. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave" (Deut 10:20). "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord: for I am married unto you" (Jer. 3:14). "Thou shalt make no covenant with them, or with their gods" (Ex. 23:32). The Israelites understood the terms of covenant because those terms were marriage terms. This can be seen in the delightful story of Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi. It cannot go unnoticed that Ruth clave unto Naomi, not merely remaining her companion but remaining a companion till death due her part; "Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me" (Ruth 1:17). We find Ruth understanding the covenant terms of marriage with keen accuracy: *cleaving till death do us part*. Did this concept generate out of the Genesis marriage? This author believes so. Is not this the idea Adam had in mind when he proclaimed *bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh*. The simple question is, "When would her bones and flesh cease to be his?" Her flesh would be his flesh till death. Their relationship was bound in blood; life is in the blood. Blood is generated by the bone, therefore we are assured that Adam and Eve were kinfolk. The *Single Pair* was family. The only way to cease from being family is to cease in death. Till death do us part.

Therefore marriage is complete when: (a) the man makes a choice, (b) the lady consents, and (c) the wedding is complete. For centuries laws have regulated this act. Even in Eden there was a condition placed on marriage; that it must be sought outside the parental relationship; incest was forbidden. This was not the case of the fornicator of Corinth, who had taken his fathers wife. The condition was clearly commanded, that the pair would have to leave father and mother. The Mosaic Law would clearly define the forbidden degrees of marriage within the limits of family.

Before we leave the definition of the wedding let us consider a discussion about of the act of physical consummation. Is it possible that consummation may be delayed to a time beyond the wedding

night? If so, is the wedding complete? Has there been a marriage? There are many reasons that may cause the consummation to be delayed, but nevertheless the public wedding is complete, and there was a marriage. For whatever reason consummation in its normal definition can be delayed if both parties previously agreed to its absence. No one would deny the war veteran, or the lame the right to marry. Where each party is in agreement the consummation could be defined as the maximum possible physical expression that could be corporately expressed. Delay on the other hand can be caused by many human activities: perhaps a war departure, or some other foreseen or unforeseen departure after the public wedding. Where fraud or the unknowing inability to offer physical consummation exists, most states permit annulment. The church has no doctrinal position in these matters. Could the law be exercised in such matters? Where fraud is the question, the law should be exercised, unless repentance exists. Impotence on the other hand could be overcome by love.

God's full doctrine of marriage existed in the Garden. Moses did not define marriage; God did. Jesus said that Moses had to compromise God's will regarding marriage, because man's heart would not permit the creation doctrine of marriage. It actually appears that had Moses codified the Creation-Marriage Law he would have caused some men to kill their wives. The idea of hardness is all inclusive, indicating that some men were prepared to commit the violent act of wife-murder if they did not get their way in their absolute will to expel (divorce) their wives. Even today, the courts award divorce readily in fear that if they refuse the woman will be subject to abuse and death. During the decades of the mid-twentieth century the abuse of women was well documented. Strong laws were promulgated to defend the women, and consequently today these laws are still in the books. This in spite of the fact that the table of abuse has in many cases turned and today women have become the violent aggressors, recording many criminal cases of abuse against the man; husband abuse. If this continues the state will most likely reverse the laws that now support women.

God's will regarding marriage, preceded the State, Israel, Moses, and the Church. The garden marriage fully expressed God's will. "The idea that God's will is not to be obeyed is an idea quite alien to Jewish thinking".²⁸ In Matthew's divorce logion, Jesus was

answering two schools of thought. The conservative element granted divorce for adultery, while the liberal permitted a man to put away his wife for burning his soup, or even if he found a more beautiful woman than his wife. It is in this context that Jesus teaches His doctrine of indissoluble marriage. The foundation of His teaching was the Garden marriage. Isaksson comments on the relevance of God's will:

The distinction between the sphere of the law and a sphere in which God's will is expressed but mankind is not bound to try to obey it, is a distinction foreign to the N.T... In other words, to make a distinction like this is based on conditions derived from a different period and a different environment than those of the N.T. ²⁹

The Old Testament saint believed that any revelation of God's will had the binding force of law. Jesus called the Psalms God's law in (Jn. 12:34) when quoting (Ps. 82:6), "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods." The Jews answered him likewise, "The people answered him, "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, the son of man must be lifted up;" a reference to (Psalm 102:26, 27) being understood to be the Law of God. Again in (Jn. 15:25) Jesus said, "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law: They hated me without a cause", a reference to (Psa. 35:19, and 69:4). Merrill F. Unger in his dictionary defines the law of God as:

A term employed almost 200 times in the Bible and signifying the revealed will of God with respect to human conduct. It includes all the Divine commands and precepts for regulating man's moral life without and within.

Dr. H.L. Willmington in his *Guide to the Bible* lists a total of 613 commandments in the Old Testament which Israel believed consisted of God's law. The Biblical term *law* has a broad range of significance.

Creation-Marriage, therefore, is God's law; a law that was

revealed in the very creation of man. It is a law of creation as is the law of gravity, or the law of thermodynamics. By nature the *Single Pair's* creation-marriage was indissoluble. God's revealed will was that marriage is indissoluble. Indissoluble marriage is the law of God. To change that law would require the same force required to change the law of gravity, or the law of thermodynamics. It would literally require God to dissolve heaven and earth and create a new universe with different natural laws. This is the essence of Jesus' words, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:18). Thus creation-marriage is with us today 6,000 years since its inception; listen to these definitions from Black's Law Dictionary:

Leave: Willful departure with intent to remain away, and not merely a temporary absence with intention of returning.

Join: To unite; to come together, to combine or unite in time, effort, action, to enter into an alliance.

Marriage: As distinguished from the agreement to marry and from the act of becoming married, the civil status, condition or relation of one man and one woman united in law for life, for the discharge to each other and the community of the duties legally incumbent on those whose association is founded on the distinction of sex.

The wedding is interpreted by culture and custom and these dictate the dreams and fears of the event. Youth of all cultures past, present and future gather and will gather from society those activities that are honored as wedding ceremonies. These customs are deeply ingrained in our social mores. Likewise the creation-marriage wedding must be embraced by all Bible believing pastors, teachers, evangelists; all of the members of the Body of Christ. This is one of the most important soul-winning doctrines neglected by the evangelist of our day. Heresy will hinder both the soul-winner and the lost he was sent to win.

Heresy

Creation-marriage, indissoluble marriage, is an absolute literal commandment. The majority of modern commentators flatly reject this idea. Lost souls and most saved alike are repulsed by the indissoluble union; their chorus: "Let us break their band asunder, and cast away their cords from us." The scholar's objections include a form of semantic confusion. Edward G. Dobson, leads us to believe that God approved of divorce by actually commanding divorce in the Ezra text. Taking his lead from Jay E. Adams—although Dobson does not acknowledge Adams—he goes on to persuade that since "the Lord God threatened to divorce Israel, divorce is not an act of sin; because God cannot sin."³⁰ Adams is bold when he persuades for divorce claiming that, God is in our understanding a divorced person, because He divorced Israel.³¹ In this dissertation I will prove these gentlemen wrong. We have not heard the last of the Adams/Dobson doctrine, it is full of radical ideas which will be discussed in full. The commandment of creation-marriage is foreign to their dissertations. I have chosen to persuade for the commandment of permanency; they for a false commandment of divorce.

The fundamental Bible believer embraces a grammatical-historical, literal hermeneutics. We boldly claim the way of truth. We spurn the allegorist and separate ourselves from the modernist-liberal. Vain philosophy is far from our door. But dear reader, are you prepared to measure marriage with the literal grammatical-historical method? To teach the literal interpretation of Edenic marriage to the Church of Christ is the most difficult task facing the evangelists and pastors of our day. It is difficult because the saints refuse to hear God's command. "Oh yes", they say, when asked if they believe the literal teaching of Genesis. "Yes", the Edenic marriage is a literal permanent indissoluble marriage. But when this preacher translates this doctrine into a commandment for modern man, they say, "No!" And then go on to philosophize the truth away. Rigid rules or absolute commands have a way of exposing the narrow minds of the Modernist-Liberal. They immediately respond to the absolute with intolerance and rebellion.

Immature children have a like reaction, always interpreting limits as confinement rather than safety. Liberals like children demand thoughts that permit them limitless activity. When confronted with an absolute command, they resort to philosophy; thus paving the way to liberalism which usually includes sinful conduct. Therefore when confronted with the doctrine of creation-marriage man is faced with a dilemma. The predicament is obvious. Creation-marriage is sound doctrine. It is simple. It is unobjectionable. It is literally solid as concrete. Therefore it leaves all men with one of two alternatives; man must believe it or he must philosophize it away. The philosophy used is as old as sin. It simply teaches that creation-marriage is true, but is only an *ideal*. This simple philosophical maneuver has succeeded throughout the history of man. It has succeeded as a most fierce cruel weapon of Satan, a weapon designed to destroy the children of men. Let us study the *ideal* deception of modern philosophy.

Immanuel Kant—his first name should accord him no spiritual honor since his only resemblance to our Immanuel ends there—must be credited with the invention of the *ideal* scheme. Perhaps he could qualify as one of the false-Christ's who would come in Jesus name? Kant's parent's were members of the Pietist sect, devoted to the strict teaching of New Testament principles, "The new birth must always be preceded by the agonies of repentance and that only a regenerated theologian could teach theology"³², is a sample of their belief. Immanuel attended a strict school where as he said, he was exposed to the fearful teachings of an everlasting hell as well as solid Bible courses and was obligated to practice austere piety. Kant later resented this heavy dose of piety and terror; "fear and trembling," he said, overcame him when he recalled those days.³³

Note that resentment was the reaction of this lad to the rigor of a strict disciplined Christian school. It is regrettable that after a life as a philosopher, Kant at the age of sixty-nine in an attempt to redeem his religious heritage entered into the field of theology. His famous essays, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, have made him famous to the world and infamous to Biblicists. He preached the innate goodness of man, universal morality, morality does not need divine revelation (Scripture), Christ was the most godlike of men (the ideal man), and that it should not be necessary for a Christian to believe in miracles or in the divinity of Christ.³⁴

Reason was his god and savior, and reason gave him those glorified ideas and ideals. His most notorious convert was the wicked, George Wilhelm Friedreich Hegel.

Hegel was also born into a family steeped in piety. His godly parents mortgaged their property to send George to study theology at Turingen Seminary. After graduating, Hegel disappointed his parents by refusing to enter the ministry. He later denied the virgin birth, rejected miracles, pictured Christ as a crucified rebel, and he did not mention the resurrection. His definition of God: "Pure reason, incapable of any limitations is Deity itself,"³⁵ certainly identifies him with Kant. Hegel became a political idealist and invented "Dialectic Logic". It is surprising that Hegel would have been read by anyone, considering the remark of Schopenhauer:

The height of absurdity in serving up pure nonsense, in stringing together senseless and extravagant masses of words, such as had previously been known only in madhouses, finally reached in Hegel, and became the instrument of the most beautiful mystification that has ever taken place, with a result which will appear fabulous to posterity, and will remain as a monument of German stupidity.³⁶

Nevertheless, after his death, two schools of Hegelian thought evolved. The Hegelian Right with its contribution, *Higher Criticism*, and the Hegelian Left with the political philosophy of the atheist, Carl Marx.

Hegel concluded that the true essence of Christianity resides in its great *Ideas*, not in the historical events that gave birth to them.³⁷

These great ideas, to the mystical idealist, are mere visions of hope, unattainable but truly honorable goals. Targets higher than anyone can reach; literally impossible dreams. The meaning of a standard capable of existing only as a mental concept by virtue of its unattainable perfection, *ideals* is the meaning the Liberals need so they can escape the demands of absolute commands. The philosophy of Kant and Hegel would not only produce Higher Criticism and Marxism, but would go on to inspire Ritchl, Schleiermacher, Troeltsch, Darwin, Fosdick and the spirit of Liberalism. Kenneth Cauther makes this observation of Liberalism:

Liberalism is a certain attitude toward all of life and the world as one great process with God at work in it to give purpose with man at the center in the image of God. This divine deposit is to be developed to the highest extent through the rule of love. When it is widespread we will have a world brotherhood living up to the highest *ideal* [emphasis mine] even as Jesus did.³⁸

Idealism is the father of Liberalism. The Modernist-Liberal Church has proposed this philosophy since its inception. Then Evangelicalism embraced this false teaching; but today some professed Fundamentalist have embraced this heresy, preaching and teaching dissoluble-marriage. Ambrozic has clearly stated this matter:

When Paul gives the Lord's teaching on indissolubility of marriage, he is not offering advice; neither is he counseling or exhorting his readers to strive for a beautiful ideal. For him, Jesus' teaching is God's will which must be obeyed.³⁹

The ambiguity of the debate is the fact that Jesus' teaching of indissoluble marriage is almost a universally accepted conviction. The liberal, moderate, and conservative commentators all agree that this is the definite doctrine of Christ. Thus in order for the liberal and moderate to think of a dissoluble union they must reach out to the drug of idealism to permit their infraction. But when the Fundamentalist Biblicist employs idealism to support his compromise, one can only look down with sadness and despair. While refusing to believe and teach the literal truth of the Garden Wedding, the brethren have accepted the poison drug of idealism and commit heresy. God has clearly posted his warning concerning this danger: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of man, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2:8).

The leaven of idealism regarding creation-marriage is so subtle that many of the current authors, both liberal and conservative,

employ the idea in their writings:

P.E. Steel and C.H. Ryrie, *Meant to Last*, (Victor, Wheaton, Ill. 1983) "He forced them to view the divine ideal in Genesis 2. (p. 88) "This is, without question, the ideal that God declared in His Word.. (p. 88)

R.W. DeHaan, *Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage* (Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1979) "There are exceptional situations where steps less than ideal are taken." (p. 7)

Edward G. Dobson, *Fundamentalist Journal*, "God's ideal for the permanency of marriage has not changed." (Oct. 1985, p.39) "In Luke 16:18 we find the general teaching of Jesus that presents God's ideal."; "In Luke 16 and Mark 10, Jesus is giving the ideal." (Dec. 1985: p. 35) "Jesus encouraged God's ideal for marriage," (Jan 1986 p. 39)

Guy Duty, *Divorce and Remarriage*, (Bethany House, Minn. MN, 1967) "Jesus is reverting to the original, gave affirmation to the Creator's intent and purpose of marriage. The divine ideal of the New Testament law has its basis in the original." (p. 69) Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas Sem. Press, Dallas TX, 1948) "It was clearly taught in the New Testament that, because of an advance in the relationship between God and His saints, there should be the most careful recognition of this more exalted ideal of one wife and one husband." (7:234)

A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures In the New Testament* (Broadman, Nashville, TN, 1930) "The present perfect active of *ginomai* to emphasize the permanence of the divine ideal. (10:154) Bruce quoted in Ibid. "How small the Pharisaic disputants must have felt in presence of such holy teaching,

which soars above the partisan view of controversialists into the serene region of ideal, universal, eternal truth." (Ibid. 10:54)

A command is not an ideal. Men who refuse to obey a command will gladly believe in an ideal. The pulpits of our land are filled with pastors who employ the heresy of philosophical idealism while teaching the saints to compromise God's creation-marriage command. The sermons of these pastors refuse to preach the command, they employ the following terms: God's intention, God's plan, God's desire, God's institution, God's principle, God's ordinance, and God's ultimate desire. Their language betrays their stubborn refusal to teach God's marriage *command*. One can understand the rebellion of the Liberal-Modernist and the Evangelicals, but when the true Biblicalist's participates in this heresy one exclaims, "His coming draweth nigh", for he said, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth."

Marriage

We are now ready to define marriage. The definition of which will answer the question, "Who hath God joined together"? Creation-marriage is the axiom of all marriage. Creation-marriage was the emotional/physical joining of one man and one woman (monogamy) to form a new single unit. The two literally became one. This unity was indissoluble and inseparable. It was literally an act of creation. On the sixth day, male and female created *He them*. Man was created married. Marriage requires the severance of the familial union and the joining of the marriage union. Man was created a plurality, a family.

Marriage has been manifested when one (never been married or widowed) man, and one (never been married or widowed) woman consent to and complete a public wedding ceremony.

Therefore God has joined together every man and woman who meets the above definition—the only exemption would be marriages of Jewish couples during the dispensation of the Law; there both partners were required to be Jewish. Although God advises against the believer marrying unbelievers He nevertheless will honor such Church Age marriages as holy. Having said that, I now will add that God has not joined together any divorced person to another, during the lifetime of a divorced partner regardless of the conditions.

NO-REMARRIAGE-THIS-SIDE-OF-DEATH

CHAPTER TWO

From Whence Cometh Polygamy and Divorce?

Will Durant, the historian, wrote that man is a secret and ravenous polygamist.⁴⁰ This certainly was not true of Adam when created. He was very good: "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day" (Gen.1:31). Then, when did the change occur? The answer to that question is at the heart of Bible doctrine. Soon after the Fall man realized he was deep into sin. His tendencies were no longer toward innocence but were prone to evil. Adam's delight with Eve was beyond question. Even if God created a Jane, it appears that Adam would have paid her no attention. He loved his bride. The first family appeared idyllic.

Then Adam's eldest son suddenly betrayed this serenity. It is alarming that the first human death was the result of fratricide. If Cain's jealousy could only be satisfied by murder, what would appease his lust? Rape, or perhaps a new doctrine of marriage: polygamy! Durant is correct when he portrays man as a ravenous polygamist; for this is a common lust of natural man. Adam's disobedience was transmitted to all his children, even to those who oppress all outward acts of sin. The prophet Jeremiah revealed the common trait of man: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it," (Jer. 17:9). God's command is His absolute will. The nature of Eden spelled God's will to be life. The murder of Adam's youngest son seriously defied God's absolute will. God's will was so ingrained in nature that all of nature was excited to vengeance when the shepherd boy, Abel, was murdered. Cain would have been instantly consumed for his sin, for our God is a consuming fire; but God often refrains from immediate judgment. This is an important factor in the equation of human existence. Should God at any time elect to judge the wickedness of man He immediately would destroy every sinner; He certainly would have destroyed Cain. But this would have reduced the human population

to two men. God generally permits the sinner to exist; we call this God's permissive will. He permits sinners to live for a period of time. In the other Garden, Jesus said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels"? (Matt. 26:53). Should God choose judgment rather than mercy, we would all die a fiery death. But man's existence is always directly proportional to God's mercy to permit man to exist. Whether there was one man on the earth or six billion men.

Consequently God's merciful permission to man is to permit man to exist; to modern man this means he is given three score and ten years. We do not die immediately for our sin, we eventually die. Along with our existence God permits our sin to co-exist; this is directly related to our existence. Therefore Cain was permitted to exist after committing a violent murder. But this permission was complex. The nature of man also understands justice, and his justice demands vengeance. Cain knew this and fears the hand of man, "It shall come to pass that anyone that findeth me shall slay me." God also knew the vengeance of man and forbid man to judge Cain. God's permissive will is His voluntary act of grace, and His grace abounds. God mercifully places a mark on Cain, and threatens the man that would kill Cain with a sevenfold judgement. Here we find a profound mystery. The mystery is that although God permits the sinner to live he never permits him to sin. He never approves of his sin. But the consequence in permitting the sinner to live means that God must permit the sinners sin to go immediately unpunished. He might even regulate, or mark the sin so that it does not destroy man. When God permits man to exist he permits man's sin to exist, and may regulate that sin so that it does not consume man, as he marked Cain. Later in the drama of man God would establish capital punishment and place its authority entirely in the hands of man.

Permit me to explain this with common terms. The history of man is often studied by the articles he leaves behind as he camps along the hills of life. Unfortunately these articles are, most likely, litter and garbage. Man's existence is directly proportional to the existence of litter. His acts of pleasure and war are even more hazardous, the former produced AIDS, the latter an A-Bomb. Pollution and death is caused by man's existence. Before Christ, God permitted the *Cain's* to exist by controlling their sin, he *marked* it,

and he set rules about it, *seven fold judgements*. But Christ marked a new era. Rather than destroying all sinners and recreating a new earth, God chose to *bruise his Son*. He permitted the sins of man to destroy His Son on a bloody cross, so that man might be born again. He also ushered in a new era whereby His will would again be *absolute* as it was in the Creation. Therefore during the period of history between the Fall and the Cross, God regulated sin or regulated pollution. By permitting man to live, he permitted the pollution of man to exist, however God did regulate and control the pollution.

God initially controlled sin by ordaining that man would be regulated by his conscience, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." Conscience was designed to control the sin, sin that God hated. Conscience, the trophy of man, was the weakest of all controls; it almost led to the annihilation of mankind. "Who sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water." Conscience led man into the deadly Flood-Judgment.

God also permitted man to govern man. Human government had a twofold design, (1) it offered man the right to control his own sin, and (2) it would prove to man that he could not govern sin out of his life. Rather than using human government to humble his sin nature, man used human government to inflame himself, "let us make us a name." With a tower to heaven he believed he could rule the universe. Although human government would be ordained through out history, the judgment which destroyed the Tower of Babel pronounced the sentence of death on the hope that human government would provide man eternal salvation. But human government controlled sin which existed because of the existence of man. Although this failed nevertheless human government did control and regulate the sins of men.

Man has proved that his nature is violent. "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (Gen. 6:11). As Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it" (Jer. 17:9). The point is that conscience, and human government (human laws), are band-aids on the cancer of man's depravity. Man labors to conceal his sin. Under human government rather than clubbing his brother, man hid his evil

nature under his tongue, but Jesus saw his heart. "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Rather than sleeping with Bathsheba, man chose to imagine his way into her bed, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." The garments of man's sin are filthy rags.

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our
righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade
as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have
taken us away. Isa. 64:6

As men invented ways to avoid the outward act of sin he actually covered his sin with sin. His hard heart would not repent, rather he worked on his sin. The garments of sin were invisible garments to God, but man believed in them because other men could not see the real sin; the inner man. Rather than clubbing his younger brother the eldest now used those four letter words (Raca, fool, etc.). Rather than hate his wife he now used a new weapon: divorce. Man's nature was particularly violent on the domestic front. The ferocity of man's nature in the home strained God's longsuffering. Jesus explains God's reasoning, "Moses, because of the hardness of your heart, suffered (permitted) you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." Divorce was not an invention of heaven, it was one of the manufactured garments of sin; it is of the earth, nothing more than a feeble covering for the sin of man. As we shall see its existence predates Moses.

Another garment of sin was polygamy. Rather than commit adultery, a man divorced his wife, and married his paramour. Rather than raping the beautiful young maid, man invented polygamy; he just married her. God permitted man to invent divorce and polygamy. He permitted them to exist, as he permitted sinful man to exist. These feeble coverings for sin are actually the sinful acts and inventions of man. God did not invent divorce or polygamy. Later we will discuss why God chose to permit these sinful acts to exist in the Mosaic Law; but first let us study the ancient laws of man. Laws that preceded Moses.

The Antediluvian Society: (Gen. 4-6)

Creation-marriage is the doctrine of God throughout all ages. Time and circumstance have no influence on its content and application. After 4000 years of human history, Jesus clearly stated this fact, "from the beginning it was not so." Idealism, divorce, polygamy, the inventions of man did not alter Jesus' doctrine of creation-marriage. Theologians refer to *progressive revelation* as doctrine that is revealed throughout Scripture, but the revelation of marriage was totally revealed in the Garden of Eden. As the human population increased, God did increase the government of marriage. Man's actions that surround marriage require us to study all of history and all of the Bible; remember customs play a part in history.

The first marriage question that arises out of Scripture is: Who did Cain marry? The only command that Cain was obligated to follow regarding marriage was that he leave his mother and father—remember Cain was expelled from his family when God said, "A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth—as we have previously declared, Cain's marriage to Eve was forbidden. At this period of history his marriage to a daughter of Adam was not forbidden. Incest was limited to a marriage or sexual act between mother and son and father and daughter. "And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters" (Gen. 5:5).

Surprisingly the next major objection to creation-marriage is the question, What of Bible polygamy? Creation-marriage was monogamy. In the seventh generation of Adam the Bible records the first act of polygamy. The first recorded sin was the eating of the forbidden fruit, the second was the murder of Abel, and the third was the polygamy of Lamech. Man does appear to be a ravenous polygamist. "And Lamech took unto him two wives", (Gen. 4:19). At first glance this appears to be a simple matter of a man taking two women in marriage; but a closer look will reveal several important elements. Please note that polygamy is not a simple matter; this was an entirely new doctrine regarding marriage and as we shall see, it was the sinful invention of an evil man—need I say more. It is absolutely void of any blessing or approval from our Holy God.

The statement of Lamech's polygamy is introduced abruptly, as to mark Lamech as was the murderer Cain marked. The tip off

regarding the character of Bible personages is found in their name: Adam (*adam, adamah, ground*), Eve (*hawah, life giver*). Kiel and Delitzsch point out that Lamech turned marriage into the lust of the eye, and the lust of the flesh. "The names of the women [Lamech's women] are indicative of sensual attractions: *Adah: the adorned*; and *Tillah: shady, tinkling*.⁴¹ The *adorned* reminds us of Jezebel who while attempting to circumvent the judgement of God by painting her face, only made it more appetizing to the man-eating dogs that ate it. *Shady* was a trait of street prostitutes. It is noteworthy that *tinkling* is mentioned by Isaiah when referring to the sensual women of his day, "Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet; Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion" (Isa. 3:16-17). The uncommon record that a daughter was born to Zilla is mentioned, *Naamah: pleasant, lovely, graceful*. Kiel-Delitzsch believe her name "reflects the worldly mind of the Cainites." Perhaps she was the first beauty queen? Does her name mean graceful in the sense of a *belle figure*? Most commentators agree that the evidence suggests that Lamech was a lustful man; and that lust drove his polygamy.

Henry Morris attributes to Lamech the leadership role of the antediluvian rebellion against God; stating that he initiated his rebellion against God with his polygamy. Further suggesting that the sensuality of this society can be heard in the lyrics of Lamech's song; a song which he sang in the presence of his wives. Morris notes that although there were no paramours present, Lamech boasts to killing two men is actually a warning to all to men. He warns them not to seduce his women.⁴² This is a fitting commentary on the moral tone of this society; and when one reads the record in Genesis chapter six of the days immediately preceding the Flood it is evident that Lamech's fears were justified; "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all whom they chose;" (Gen. 6:2) we will fully discuss this text. Regardless, the first polygamist was a killer. Scripture records his confession, "Hear my voice ye wives of Lamech, and hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt." Jewish tradition believes that Tubal-Cain while guiding his nearly blind father (Lamech) to shoot a beast of prey, while on a

hunt, that Lamech failed to reach, the target, and his shot mortally wounded his grandfather, Cain. Lamech was so jubilant, and excited about his deed that he began to clap his hands heavily, and in his blind condition he failed to regard Tubal-Cain, accidentally striking him in the head and killing him. His song was his celebration and self-blessing.⁴³

And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah,
Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto
my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding,
and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be
avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and
sevenfold. Gen. 4:23-24

The survival of the human race was essential to both the generation of Adam and Noah, and this depended on the hope of a large human population; the larger the tribe, the larger the nation. Along with numbers man needed power, and the sons of Lamech were powerful. The record tells us that they were tent makers, herdsmen (red meat eaters), inventors of musical instruments, and metallurgists (metal weapons). This raises a question. Since numbers of sons was power: Was it possible that Lamech was cheating on the numbers, by committing bigamy? Polygamy is nothing more than the sin of bigamy. Realizing that more than one wife gave him the potential to have many sons, he must have imagined he discovered the doctrine of marriage that would make him the savior of the world: polygamy—a Satanic deception. Bible history never fails to document the lives of men who resist the knowledge of God.

Lamech reminds one of the Antichrist of the last day, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is the God" (II Thess. 2:4). The Cainites were an ungodly sensual race; thus polygamy satisfied their lust and need for power. It could also satisfy a man's need for at least one son, an heir, as we shall soon see.

The Godly Antediluvians

And Adam knew his wife again; and she bore a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. And to Seth, to him also there was a son; and he called his name Enosh: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord. Gen 4: 25,26

The next major event which affects our thesis is the birth of a godly seed of Seth and his son Enosh; "who called upon the name of the Lord." In Paul's letter to the Romans we are assured that "Whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Here again, most commentators, see the Sethites as a spiritual race who found salvation by faith." Salvation is clearly visible in one of their race, Enoch. The fact that he walked with God is mentioned twice, perhaps for the reason that he walked with God for 300 years.—A just cause for God to honor him by taking him to heaven via a secret rapture.

But as the world turns, it remains a law of man's depravity that the good of men is overcome by their evil, and this will continue until the Lord returns to establish his kingdom—"thy kingdom come." Man's battle between good and evil often takes the form of war; and so we have the first recorded world war, a civil war. The righteous nation of Seth was at war with his brother, the tribe of the Cainites. The weapons of Cain were, lust, sensuality, polygamy, and the power associated with eating red meat, metal weapons, violence, and pride. Seth was equipped with his faith in God, creation-marriage, peace, and love. Jesus was successful in his defense against the darkness of evil, "it overcame him not." But this is not so with Seth, although he could have had victory by putting his total faith in the Seed of the woman, the promised redeemer. Eve believed this when she announced, "For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel." The protevangelium (Gen. 3:15) was the hope of man, it was the message which was at the heart of God giving us the Book. In this marvelous text we are given the hope of man, *the seed of the woman*, and at the same time we are told of the enmity of the woman, *the serpent*.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,
and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise
thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Gen. 3:15

The battle of the ages began that day. It would now manifest itself in the battle between Cain and Seth; this battle would be won by the *seed of the woman*. But before the seed of the woman would enter the scene man was to wait on him in faith. The vehicle which would deliver this son to the world was marriage, creation-marriage. Early in this battle, *the serpent* despised marriage, i.e. creation-marriage. Thus the Serpent was bent against creation-marriage, the vehicle of his destruction. His attempt was to corrupt marriage, thus Satan influenced Lamech to choose two wives. If Satan could succeed in corrupting marriage, he would have prevented the godly seed, *The Messiah*, his destroyer. The corruption was to permit adultery and lust to be called marriage. Rather than lust after another woman, the married man could just marry the woman of his lust.

Satan was very successful in his early attempt to corrupt the vehicle of the promised Messiah. The proverb was fitting before its time, "Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never full" (Prov. 27:20). Immediately before the Flood, Satan nearly succeeded in his effort to corrupt marriage. "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Gen. 6:12).

The Battle: (Gen. 6)

Some have speculated that the *sons of God* in Genesis 6:1-4 were fallen angels, who had sexual relations with the daughters of men, resulting in the breed of beings referred to as giants.⁴⁴ I believe this view can be refuted with what Jesus said, "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven:" a clear reference to the asexual nature of the angels. However Scofield correctly notes that, "The uniform Hebrew and Christian interpretation of (Gen. 6:2) marks the breaking down of the separation between the godly line of Seth, and the godless line of Cain." This breaking down was a marriage breakdown; an attempt to corrupt the generation of the godly seed.

The First World War was a marriage war. The Cainites with

their lust-marriage were attacking the Sethites the possessors of creation-marriage. The true prize was to preserve the promised seed; the loss of which would have doomed man to eternal suffering in the fires of Hell. The Sethites were in possession of the prize. The Canites were bent on its destruction; their weapon lust. The weapon of the righteous was the preaching of the Word of God. Noah, a Sethite, was a preacher of righteousness; Lamech, a Cainite was a killer and a polygamist. The battle seems to be even until men began to multiply on the face of the earth. This comment indicates that there was a rapid population growth. Although it is speculation, but this population explosion begs the question: Was it that the doctrine of lust-marriage, polygamy, and the absence of birth control, contributed to a rapid growth in population. And could it have been that the concept of beauty, sensual beauty, contributed to a new breed of fair women. This combination could have produced an imbalance in favor of the Canites: (1) Plentiful number of daughters, (2) These daughters were fair in the sense of *sexy*; (3) Sons which possessed lustful physical appeal, *giants of lust and power*.

If the lust-marriage doctrine actually was the basis of the antediluvian society, the final days of that age would read as follows: And it came to pass, when Lamech's lust doctrine succeeded, the Cainites increased in unusual numbers swarming the earth in swarms. Their daughters held unusual physical appeal in a sensual sense they were fair. When the Sethites, the sons of God, looked upon the daughters of the Cainites: the text suggests that they stopped to look at length. These tinkling, shady, lovely, pleasant, graceful, creatures enjoyed this attention. Being trained in the ways of sex-appeal, these daughters of men persuaded the Sethites to say that they were *fair*. The sons of God were actually saying that these promiscuous sexy females were good—the Hebrew word *tohu* here translated *fair* is unanimously translated *good* in Scripture.

Please permit a short parenthesis here. In the midst of the Garden, the Lord God planted the tree of knowledge of good, *tohu*, and evil. When the Sethites who were godly priestly men called the sensual women, *tohu*, they were confusing good and evil. The prophet Ezekiel found the priests of Israel doing the same thing, "Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean" (Ezek.

22:26). And again Isaiah said, "Woe unto them who call evil good, and good evil" (Isa. 5:20). God is not the author of confusion, and therefore the seduction practiced by these beauty queens must be the basis for the antediluvian confusion.

Immediately after proclaiming that the *fair ones* were good, the Sethites were trapped. The lasciviousness of the pleasant females further intoxicated the sons of God, and finally the sons of God entered the seduction and "they took them wives of all whom they choose." To add insult to injury, there is something suspicious about the phrase, "all whom they chose." Could it be that the sons of God actually took multiple wives, committing adultery and polygamy? If so, then the story will continue as follows: Therefore the Sethites, fell into apostasy inciting the anger of God, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." But God's anger did not deter the apostasy, the Cainites and the Sethites continued in their lust actually creating *tyrants*⁴⁵ in the land in those days. These tyrants or *giants* were mighty *gibbor* men—men who believed they were messiahs. Isaiah tells us that the true coming Messiah would be the *El Gibbor*, "The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." These *gibbors* were mighty Liberals, who had no limits but reason alone. Their thoughts and imaginations were only evil continually, "And it repented the Lord that he made man, and the Lord said, I will destroy man."

There is a sense of urgency about God's decision. It appears that the corruption had reached such a height that it was about to overwhelm every man, woman, and child. But finally at nearly the last moment God interceded; there were only eight righteous souls remaining, souls which had not participated in the moral decline of creation-marriage. These eight souls were separated from their society by the preaching of their preacher, by a huge arc (a type of Christ), and now they would be saved from the social corruption as by water. The women who were saved from the swelling tide of social corruption were important women indeed. One of these four women would deliver the *seed* which would be the Savior of the world. These eight souls were married couples; creation-marriage couples. They were the only righteous souls on the earth.

Now this scenario is no more fabulous than the speculation that the sons of God were fallen angels who had sexual intercourse with earth's fair women; and that these women bore giants, E.T's.

(extra terrestrial creatures), or A.L.F's. (alien life forms). To the contrary, there are several facts which lend credence to the lust-marriage view. History has duplicated the declension of a nation or society through moral corruption and marriage corruption. Egypt grew wicked in domestic violence and became notorious for its practice of incest.⁴⁶ The moral decay of the Roman Empire is marked in history as one of the underlying causes of its fall, and Greece can boast of its invention of the word *Lesbian*, not to mention its contribution to male homosexuality. There is one final statement that may have some relationship to this matter. Jesus may have alluded to an antediluvian polygamy.

And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day Noah was entered the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.
Luke 17:26,27

Although the primary thought here is to reveal the serene state of the society during the days that immediately preceded the judgment of the Flood. Nevertheless, Jesus mentions that marrying and giving wives in marriage was as frequent an eating and drinking. The possibility that that society had an unusual preoccupation with marriage may be enforced with the verses which immediately follow this text:

Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.
Luke 17:28,29

Here again Jesus describes the tranquility which prevailed in Sodom prior to its fiery judgment. The social sins prior to the Flood and the fiery judgment of Sodom were abnormally bent on violence. The sexual violence of Sodom remains the by-word of sexual debauchery. Was the violence which preceded the Flood a sexual debauchery of polygamy; lust-marriage? The reason Jesus choose to connect the

Flood with Sodom may have a relationship to the nature of sin that prevailed prior to each judgment. Some may say that this again is speculation, but the sins prior to the Flood were of an equal nature to the sins prior to Sodom, the former was filled with the violence of polygamy, the latter the violence homosexuality. Both acts infuriated the Lord God who saw to it that both acts were annihilated. The interesting point is that both judgments permitted a few righteous souls to escape. The apparent reason to permit Noah, and Lot and family to escape, is because they did not participate in the corruption. Therefore the extent of the violence was just shy of totality—the mystery of iniquity.

The final element that must be considered is that Jesus stated that the same tranquility would prevail in the society which precedes the coming of the Son of Man. This also enlists the state of the society prior to the Son's return. Do we see massive homosexuality in our land? Do we see a massive declension in creation-marriage? The question is not, How many remain monogamous? but the question is, How many believe in creation-marriage, indissoluble marriage. As William A. Heth expresses it, "No-remarriage-this-side-of-death." How many true believers believe in this doctrine of marriage?

The irony of the free-love culture is that it breeds violence. Note the words of the Sodomites:

And they said, Stand back, Stand back, And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door."
Gen. 19:9

The lust-marriages of Noah's day were comparable: "The earth was also corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." The Apostle Peter, conveys the same message as he also combines the same two societies:

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared

not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And, turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.
II Pet. 2:4-6

Billy Graham captured the thought to which I am laboring with exceptionable simplicity, "If God does not judge our generation, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."

If the lust-marriage scenario is correct our generation should be witnessing a plague upon marriage. The modern Sethites, the regenerated believers, should be troubled being contaminated with the pollution of lust-marriage. We should see the sons of God practicing marriage-divorce-remarriage polygamy as they are being led by a world of lust and shame. As a matter of fact we should be witnessing the fall of the pastors as well as the saints in the pew. And churches teaching doctrines which will accommodate the spirit of lust-marriage-divorce-lust-remarriage-polygamy, or to be teaching that very doctrine. Dear reader, you are living in that day. "As it was in the days of Noah", is a signpost which gives credence to the lust-marriage scenario of Genesis six. Was polygamy the suffocating sin of the antediluvians? Did marriage-divorce-remarriage-polygamy flood the earth with corruption? Will this sin be the downfall of the modern church? Will Durant, a secular writer, made this startling comment of the world in the year 1941:

Year by year marriage comes later, separation earlier; and fidelity finds few so simple as to do it honor. Soon no man will go down the hill of life with a woman who has climbed it with him, and a divorceless marriage will be as rare as a maiden bride.⁴⁷

The Basis of Human Law

The postdiluvian period was marked by a new economy. Man proved he could not atone for his sins by trusting in his

innocence (Adam), or trusting in his conscience (Lamech), therefore God changed His economy and permitted man, Noah, to test his righteousness under a managed political system, *human government*. After God blessed the only remaining men on the earth, the eight, He offered them the power to rule man by man. The antediluvians were forbidden to regulate or bring men to judgment—Cain was marked, the avenger cursed—but now Noah was ordained a magistrate complete with the power of capital punishment.

And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man. Genesis 9:5,6

Capital punishment is not some invention of the state, it is a commandment from God. Note that the commandment would specifically destroy any future brother killers; all future Cains were to be put to death by man.

This commandment was planted in the mind of the only holy preacher, Noah, who survived under the dispensation of conscience. The shock of this awesome responsibility forced man to organize his mind to prepare for such an event. It compelled man, the new judge, to judge himself. This new power summoned man to not only organize his mind, but his entire life and every other man's life as well.

It caused him to organize society. In order to control this power, capital punishment, man would promulgate many lesser punishments for lesser crimes before exercising the death penalty. By organizing lesser regulations and punishments, man could prepare men mentally to commit the act of capital punishment. It is one thing to require capital punishment, and it is an entirely different thing to find the man qualified to execute another man. Consequently capital punishment is the father of *human government*. Note that God prepared man to contemplate shedding the murderer's blood by requiring the capital punishment of any beast which would take the life of man. Before beast or man was destroyed, it would of course be necessary to prove guilt, thus the court and seat of judgment were

born. Regarding the dynamics of capital punishment and the Noahic law, Luther wrote:

This is therefore the source [capital punishment], out of which flows all civil rights and international law. Now if God relinquishes to man the power over life and death, actually he also grants power over that which is less important: property, family, wife, children, slaves, and farms. All these God wishes to be subject to the powers of certain men in order that they may punish the guilty.⁴⁸

Keil-Delitzsch agree:

This command [capital punishment] then laid the foundation for all civil government, and formed a necessary compliment to that unalterable continuance of the order of nature which had been promised to the human race for its further development. If God on account of the innate sinfulness of man would no more bring an exterminating judgment upon the earthly creation, it was necessary that by commands and authorities he should erect a barrier against the supremacy of evil, and thus lay the foundation for a well ordered civil development of humanity, in accordance with the words of the blessing, which are repeated in (Gen. 9:7), as showing the intention and goal of this new historical beginning.⁴⁹

This is the truth found in America's historical documents:

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them to another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them ...

(Declaration of Independence)

When we refer to the term civilization we are making reference to capital punishment since it is the source of all national and international law. Walter Berns illustrates this in the introduction to his volume on capital punishment, *For Capital Punishment*:

In the dark of a wild night a ship strikes a rock and sinks. But one of its sailors clings desperately to a piece of wreckage and is eventually cast up exhausted on an unknown and deserted beach [Was this land inhabited by savages?]. In the morning he struggles to his feet and, rubbing his salt encrusted eyes, looks around to learn where he is. The only human evidence he sees is a gallows, "Thank God," he exclaims, "civilization".⁵⁰

The Ancient Law Codes and the Bible:

As with Adam, God now also commanded Noah and his sons, to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth. Violence was to be controlled by the law of man. Therefore the son's of Noah promulgated laws; some of these documents still exist. We refer to these writings as the ancient law codes. Archaeologists have unearthed many fine legal documents inscribed in stone, brick, papyrus, and vellum, of which we will sample and examine, referencing the legal history of marriage, divorce, polygamy, incest and other related matters. Leon J. Wood, has stated in his fine book, *A Survey of Israel's History*, that the oldest actual written code of laws is Sumerian. One would expect that these ancient codes would reflect the man Noah, the preacher of righteousness. But shortly after his deliverance Noah was found drunk and naked, so his grandchildren became intoxicated with idolatry and were found babbling at Babel. Their laws are invariably adjoined to the idol gods—prior to his call we are told that the father of Abraham was an idolater: "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods." Let us now look into these ancient laws that preceded Moses.

Code of Ur Nammu (c. 2050 B.C.)

"Ur-Nammu was the founding ruler [king] of the Third Dynasty of Ur, the builder of the best preserved ziggurat in ancient Mesopotamia, whose reign inaugurated the last great period of Sumerian literary⁵¹ progress antedating Moses by 600 years. "The text states that King Ur-Nammu was selected by the god Nanna to rule over Ur and Sumer as his earthly representative."⁵² He banished malediction, violence, and strife from the land. Dealing with such crimes as cattle rustling, (oxen-takers, sheep-takers, donkey-takers), as well as weights and measures. The orphan, widow, and the poor were protected from injustice. But the most interesting inscriptions to our study are those regulations relating to marriage. They especially expose the understanding of marriage as it existed in the mind of the postdiluvians. Let us discover the state of creation-marriage in the codes:

CU § 4 If the wife of a man, by employing her charms, followed after another man and he slept with her, they [the authorities] shall slay that woman, but that male shall be set free.⁵³

Here we see that the Noachian code which instituted capital punishment for murder had now been expanded to also include the crime of adultery. Where King Ur Nammu's judgment lashes out at the woman, Moses latter squares off at the male, and then includes the female, the weaker sex:

And the man who committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he who committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. Lev. 20:10

We can understand why God would condemn adultery as a capital crime, but what caused the postdiluvians to aggressively promulgate this law? Is there something inherent in adultery that in itself generates the death judgment? Why did the postdiluvians prejudice the female? We will discuss these questions shortly?

CU § 5 If a man proceeded by force, and deflowered [lit.: "undeflowered"] a slave-woman of another man, that man must pay five shekels of silver.⁵⁴

The rape of a slave was considered only a minor offense with a mere monetary penalty. This however is not so strange when we consider Moses:

And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bondmaid (slave-woman), betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her: she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free. Lev. 19:20

The male in this case was only required to offer a trespass offering. I will discuss the Mosaic Law at length later.

CU § 6 If a man divorces his primary wife, he must pay (her) one mina of silver.⁵⁵

The year is 2050 B.C. and it marks the world's first record of a state regulated divorce. There is one earlier document, a private legal transaction (not a promulgated law); it is about 50 years younger. These documents obviously reveal that the thought of divorce existed in the mind of man from antiquity. The fact that (CU § 6) addresses divorce is evidence that the act was considered an act of violence by Ur Nammu. Authorities claim that the "*If*" condition, of (CU § 6) is evidence of *casuistically formulated law*. This means that the code deals with exceptional cases, and not with common daily ones.⁵⁶ The State of Ur Nammu saw divorce as a form of unusual violence; thus the law was casuistically formulated. What this author is interested in is the fact that while the law views divorce as violence it does not attempt to prohibit it, it merely regulates the act. Was the desire for divorce so strong that Ur Nammu could only regulate the act. The law could not say, Thou shalt not commit divorce. It could say, Thou shalt not commit adultery. And since adultery was a capital crime man was forced to invent a loophole in the law, and that loophole was divorce and polygamy. Why did Ur Nammu refer to a man's "*primary wife*?" Because *Lamech-Marriage*, polygamy, existed as a

common act in Ur Nammu. Now what lies behind this divorce-polygamy passion. Let us look at this from two directions.

The first approach sees man viewing himself as a god, or king. Every man has a deep inner self-conceit that he is a king. He may lose this at one time or other, but he has entertained this concept. The word king in English is obviously derived from the word *kin* (kind, family, tribe, race, nation). The patriarch of a family is a king of his kin. One obsession of the king is ownership. He controls through ownership. This ownership concept spills over into his family and the king begins to believe he owns his family. And that ownership concept permits the king to certain rights, so he believes. It has been debated whether the basis of Israelite marriage was one of ownership. Millar Burrows in his exhaustive study, *The Basis of Israelite Marriage*, argues against the concept of ownership, marriage by purchase.⁵⁷ I agree with Burrows, nevertheless, it does appear that ownership-marriage did play a part in the mind of the husband-king. The very law code we are discussing is the law of King Ur Nammu.

It seems when the Lord God gave man the power of capital punishment, man actually began to think he was a god. Man was ordered to exercise the act of capital punishment collectively, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." (Gen. 9:6a). Noah was not a god. But his grandchildren, who turned to idolatry, invented their righteousness by calling on their idols who ordained them king-gods: "Nanna selected Ur Nammu to rule over Ur and Sumer as his earthly representative." And we were told that King Ur Nammu banished violence from the land. Ur Nammu was a mini-god, a king-god. The Pharaohs were believed to be gods.

This invention was easy to create since from the days of Cain, man believed he had the power over life and death. Vengeance is an act of God, not man; vengeance belongeth to the Lord, a prohibition to human vengeance. But ever since the Serpent said, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat there of, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as | God |,⁵⁸ knowing good and evil." Man has not ceased to believe in his own righteousness, his own godliness apart from God. At times He believes he is God. Sovereign. King. When God permitted Israel a king, He nevertheless knew that a single man now could exempt himself from the power of the law, and that man could indeed be sovereign over man. The concept here is that the state could not execute the king because the

king was the state.

God can experience sovereignty with justice because of His holiness. Man's sinfulness does not lend itself to sovereignty; it inevitably results in the abuse of power. Man's sovereignty rest in his possessions. When people are assumed to be possessions of a man's realm, it usually results in some degree of mishandling and exploitation. Men continually develop what is commonly referred to as turf, and the most common turf is in the home. The adage, "A man is the king of his own castle", may not be true. It may mislead some to think as if they were sovereign, or owners of their family, giving them the idea that they dispose or divorce whom they choose. As we saw in (CU § 6), the violence of divorce was common enough that Ur Nammu penalized it with a mere mina of silver. Nevertheless he did penalize the deed as a criminal act. Notice that the act is assumed to be committed by the man. The ancient codes see divorce as an act of the man, the woman the victim. The only explanation is sovereignty; man assumed he was the sovereign king of his own castle. Divorce is the act of a king banishing his subject, a subject that he owns.

The mention of a *primary wife* in (CU § 6) speaks of polygamy. It must be assumed that the fine of one mina of silver was reduced if the woman was a secondary or lesser wife. Lamech-marriage, polygamy, revived in the post-diluvian world. Will it flood the world again? The idea of ownership contributes to the act of divorce, ownership also contributes to polygamy. Borrows is correct by defining the basis of Israelite marriage as that of a covenant relationship; typical of the Creator's relationship with Israel. But sin ruined this idea and that sin was the idea of husband-sovereignty. Although marriage by purchase is not God's will, it nevertheless played and plays a part in the customs of marriage from antiquity. Man assumed that a wife was a mere possession, and he had the right to buy as many as he could afford. If he had enough money he could afford a harem, and since the king was the most wealthy individual in the kingdom it was only fitting that he had the most wives. Harems were the possession of the ancient kings. The Lord God set the rules for Israel's king, "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away", (Deut. 17:17). Nevertheless we know David had eight wives named, and when he took up residence in Jerusalem we are told that he took more wives and concubines. Solomon of course had 700 wives and 300

concubines. But God commanded the king not to multiply wives.

The concept of ownership spilled over to other members of the family as well, for even in the Mosaic Law we find legislation which regulated the sale of a daughter, (Ex. 21:7-11). The father, obviously poor, could offer the sale of his daughter to be a maidservant. Keil-Delitzsch see concubinage in this text and they are probably correct. Polygamy, like divorce, both violent acts, were not eradicated by God, for to eradicate divorce and polygamy would have required the annihilation of mankind. The ownership of family was assumed by others as well. The poor widows words to Elisha tell how the creditors looked upon children, "Thy servant my husband is dead and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen", (I Kings 4:1). The concept of sovereignty, ownership of property, also supported the ownership of slaves, a common act of man.

Vengeance played a significant role in the motive of a man's choice to divorce a wife. If a wife shamed herself in the eyes of her husband, she often found herself under his judgement. Records indicate that if a wife raised her voice in public to over-rule her husband, and embarrassed him, then her husband had the social approval to avenge his humiliation by divorcing his outspoken wife. It appears that if the law legislated against divorce it would have been responsible for the death of many women, since man's anger may have led him to the violence of wife-murder. Divorce obviously the lesser of two evils. The Canadian Government reported that forty percent of the murders in their country are related to violence in marriage, leading various organizations to open halfway houses for women to find refuge. The present laws in the United States, which favor the woman, were laws which were designed to protect women from domestic violence which was common in America during the first half of the Twentieth Century. A live mother is better than a dead one; therefore the judges of the land award divorce. This was the same dynamic experienced by the ancients:

He, [Jesus], said unto them, Moses, because of the
hardness of your hearts [wife murderers] suffered
you to put away your wives, but from the beginning
it was not so. Matt. 19:8

It appears that adultery was a capital crime, and lesser infractions were subject to the punishment of divorce; the next area of concern is the realm of the false accusation or suspicious act. The guilty must be punished, but the innocent must be set free.

CU § 11 If a man accused the wife of a man of fornication, and the river (ordeal) proved her innocent, then the man who had accused her must pay one-third of a mina of silver.⁵⁹

In (CU § 4) the case is against the woman who slept with another man. Here the woman is accused of fornication by a third party. The ancient women were held to very strict standards of modesty: the act of showing the under arms or other body extremities was thought tantamount to adultery. In such cases the woman was subject to the river ordeal, and if she passed the ordeal she was innocent. In Israel there was a similar regulation, however here the woman was clearly accused of adultery; her husband experiencing the spirit of jealousy. The Hebrew priest would mix dust from the floor of the tabernacle with water, have the woman drink it. If guilty the water would be a curse causing her thigh to rot and her belly to swell. If innocent she would go free and conceive.

In (CU § 12) the code protects the rights of a prospective son-in-law: If a (prospective) son-in-law entered the house of his (prospective) father-in-law, but his father-in-law later gave his daughter to another man, he (the father-in-law) shall return to him (the rejected son-in-law) two-fold the amount of bridal presents he had brought.⁶⁰ Please note that Ur Nammu, was contemporary with Abraham. So here we find the justice whereby Jacob was awarded the increase of Laban's cattle. Remember the Patriarchs preceded Moses and lived by the rule of these ancient laws as Jehovah God ordained under Noah.

CU § 22 If a man's slave-woman, comparing herself to her mistress, speaks insolently to her (or him), her mouth shall be scoured with a quart of salt.⁶¹

This final comment from Ur Nammu gives us a glimpse into the responsibilities of Hagar. Although it was Ishmael who mocked,

nevertheless Sarai demanded their punishment; and rightly so according to this law.

Code of Eshunna (c. 1925 B.C.)⁶²

This set of laws written in the Akkadian language have been attributed to the Elamite King, Bilalama, of the kingdom of Eshnunna. The Elamites conquered the city of Ur, but continued their degree of civilization. Again in this code we find an idol-god, Tishpak, bestowed the kingship to Bilalama. We will examine this code with its marriage customs and the origin of divorce, and polygamy.

CE § 25 If a man offers to serve in the house of (his) father-in-law and his father-in-law takes him in bondage but (nevertheless) gives his daughter [to another man], then the father of the girl shall refund the bride-money which he received twofold.⁶³

This law obviously resembles (CU § 12); notice here the prospective son-in-law bonds himself to his father-in-law in labor, in an effort to purchase the bride; Jacob and Laban.

CE § 26 If a man gives bride-money for a(nother) man's daughter, but a second man seizes her forcibly without asking the permission of her father and her mother and deflowers her, it is a capital offense and he shall die.⁶⁴

Very similar to (Deut. 22:25), this law does make one interesting comment: "asking the permission of her father and her mother", an obvious custom from antiquity, or perhaps from the beginning of creation.

CE § 27 If a man takes a(nother) man's daughter without asking the permission of her father and her mother and concludes no formal marriage contract with her father and her mother, though she may live in his house for a year, she is not a "housewife".⁶⁵

This ancient code addresses the modern practice of *cohabitation*, which here is not recognized as marriage, even though the couple lived-in for one year. A formal contract was required. In the United States cohabitation is being recognized, under certain conditions, as marriage in some states by judges if the couple cohabit for a relatively short period of time.

CE § 28 On the other hand, if he does conclude a formal marriage contract with her father and her mother and then takes her, she is a "housewife". When she is caught with a(nother) man, she shall die, she shall not get away alive.⁶⁶

This sequence to (CE § 27) indicates that the woman who cohabits without a formal marriage contract is considered a prostitute, however a formal contract will qualify her for to be a housewife. Again here we see adultery considered as a capital crime.

CE § 29 If a man has been [made prisoner] during a raid or an invasion or (if) he has been carried off forcibly and stayed in a foreign country for a long time, (and if) a second man has taken his wife and she has born (him) a son—should he (i.e. the first man) return, he shall get his wife back.⁶⁷

This particular law protects the rights of a married soldier-prisoner whose wife, because of his long absence, has remarried. The regulation makes no mention of a divorce, however the marriage is considered legitimate providing the soldier-prisoner does not return. The new marriage was annulled, even though a son was born to the new husband.

CE § 30 If a man hates his town and his lord and becomes a fugitive, (and) if a second man takes his wife—should he (i.e., the first man) return, he shall have no right to claim his wife.⁶⁸

This law permits remarriage to the abandoned wife. It annuls the

deserter's marriage and denies him any further claims on his wife. Some may see the elements of what is referred to as Pauline privilege here (I Cor. 7:15). We will discuss this latter.

CE § 59 If a man divorces a wife after having made her bear sons and takes another wife, he shall be expelled from (his) house and whatever (property) there is and he will go after him who will accept him.⁶⁹

Although this regulation makes no provision for the mother of one son, the mother of daughters, or the childless woman, it nevertheless shields this mother from further violence. As we said, *casuistically formulated law*, the (if - then) concept, admits to the fact that divorce was inevitable. The codes attempt to control violence through regulation, and divorce, a form of violence, is regulated by placing penalties on the act. It is assumed that men will divorce their wives. This assumption is based on the nature of man. In other words it is unimaginable to men to think that all men will live their entire lives married to the same woman—this is the product of what Jeremiah the prophet called the deceitful heart of man (Jer. 17:9). The woman is assumed to be a possession of the king-man. Generally divorce was an instrument only permitted to the man. The ancient Semitic tribes, including the Jews, believed that men had the right to repudiate their wives at will. They practiced verbal or oral divorce merely by saying, "I divorce you", three times. The king-man can depose of a wife, and may procure a new one at will. The king-man becomes the law; he becomes the judge and the jury. He executes the expulsion of the woman. Even in our modern courts the judge simply permits the decision of those suing; both spouses having equal rights.

The Code of Lipit-Ishtar CL (c. 1860 B.C.)

King Lipit-Ishtar was anointed by the idol-gods, Anu and Enlil. He was commissioned to "establish justice in the land", and to "bring well-being to the Sumerians and Akkadians", and to "re-establish equitable family relations among his subjects".⁷⁰ King Lipit-Ishtar refers to himself as the "humble shepherd of Nippur". Regarding domestic regulations he writes, "I made the father support

the children and I made the children [support their] father; I made the father stand by his children and I made the children stand by their father; in the father's house".⁷¹ The value of family was of special concern to the government of Sumer. This writer recalls an incident when some of the American public objected to remarks of their vice-president, Daniel Quale, who stated that a single parent mother, bearing children out of wed-lock, should not receive the honor of a true family. It appears that Lipit-Ishtar would have agreed with the American V.P. Although the extant of this code is fragmentary we have these interesting remains which enlighten our study.

CL § 24 If the second wife whom he had married bore him children, the dowry which she brought from her father's house belongs to her children (but) the children of (his) first wife and the children of (his) second wife shall divide equally the property of their father.⁷²

Note that, as divorce, polygamy is the assumption of this law. The two actions that we have addressed in the title of this chapter have the same inventor, man.

CL § 25 If a man married a wife and she bore him children and those children are living, and a slave also bore children for her master (but) the father granted freedom to the slave and her children, the children of the slave shall not divide the estate with the children of their (former) master.⁷³

Here we find regulations addressing slaves, as in the social laws of Moses, (compare Lev. 19:20, and Deut. 21:10-17). Regardless, it speaks of the concubinage of slaves. It assumes that the slave-girl, as a possession of the king-man, was obliged to provide her master conjugal, and child bearing responsibilities. Where did the king-man acquire this right? From himself. Man is a self appointed king.

CL § 26 If his first wife died and after her death he takes his slave as a wife, [the children] of [his first]

wife [are his heirs]; the children which [the slave] bore for her master shall be⁷⁴

Abram took Hagar while Sarai was alive, for he believed his wife's womb was dead. The elements of both Abram's practice and (CL § 26) are essentially the same. The fragment teaches that Ishmael did not have the rights of the true heir, Isaac.

CL § 27 If a man's wife has not borne him children but a public harlot has borne him children, he shall provide grain, oil and clothing for that harlot; the children which the harlot has borne him shall be his heirs, and as long as his wife lives the harlot shall not live in the house with the wife.⁷⁵

This law has overtones of the Tamar incident in the life of Judah, (Gen. 38). Tamar played the harlot, deceiving Judah, and was found with his child. In Israel the penalty for Tamar, had she actually played the harlot, would have been to be burned to death. However, since Judah was her father-in-law, and she was only playing the harlot so as to receive justice, Judah was obliged to confess, "she hath been more righteous than I, because I gave her not to Shelah, my son." Although it is reported that Judah "knew her again no more", it does appear that along with her pardon Tamar was supported by Judah for she was given a place the genealogy of Jesus, (Matt. 1:3) where she appears as a wife of Judah.

CL § 28 If a man has turned his face away from his first wife ... but she has not gone out of the [house] his wife which he married as his favorite is a second wife; he shall continue to support his first wife.⁷⁶

This speaks of a live-in divorce—a form of bigamy—which actually might be more just than divorce. Martin Luther said, "In regard to divorce, it is still a subject of debate whether it should be allowed. For my part, I have such a hatred of divorce that I prefer bigamy to divorce."⁷⁷ Divorce with remarriage, if divorce is prohibited, as this paper contends, amounts to simple bigamy.

CL § 29 If a son-in-law has entered the house of his (prospective) father-in-law and he made his betrothal and afterwards they made him go out (of the house) and gave his wife to his companion; they shall present to him the betrothal gifts he brought and that wife may not marry his companion.⁷⁸

The story of Jacob and Laban surfaces again in this section of the code as the son-in-law's rights were protected. God, of course, protected Jacob.

CL § 30 If a young married man married a harlot (from) the public square and the judges have ordered him not visit her, but afterwards he neglected his wife⁷⁹

Steele comments on the word neglect, stating that this word possibly means divorce. So again here in the Code of Lipit Ishtar we see man with what he believes his natural right in marriage, i.e. his right to execute divorce, with the authority to remarry, and the right to commit bigamy or polygamy; his sovereign right.

The Code of Hammurabi CH (c. 1700 B.C.)

This is the most celebrated of the ancient laws of the sons of Noah prior to Moses. Although scholars and intellectuals have honored this treatise with their recognition, it is nevertheless the product of the idol-gods. Many of whom are mentioned in its prologue and epilogue. Dagan (Dagon) the Semitic grain-god, the pillars to whose temple Sampson pulled down; and Marduk (Merodach) whom Jeremiah called down, "The word that the Lord spoke against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah, the prophet: Declare among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not; say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces", (Jer. 50:1,2). This same Hammurabi who experiences the defeat at the hand of Jehovah, was the king-god who gave obeisance to the false idol-gods said:

The laws of justice, which Hammurabi, the efficient king set up, and by which he caused the land to take the right way and have good government.

I, Hammurabi, the perfect king, was not careless (or) neglectful of the black-headed (people), whom Enlil (storm-god) presented to me, (and) whose shepherding Marduk had committed to me;

I sought out peaceful regions for them; I overcame grievous difficulties; I caused light to rise on them.

The great gods called me, so I become the beneficent shepherd whose scepter is righteous: By the order of Shamash (sun-god), the great judge of heaven and earth, (god of justice). May my justice prevail in the land; by the word of Marduk, my lord, may my statutes have no one to rescind them.⁸⁰

The Lord God did rescind Hammurabi and his idol-god; Babylon fell in one hour, as will the future Babylon. Nevertheless we must keep in mind that the Lord God ordained Noah and his sons to replenish the earth and to rule it by man, i.e. human government with laws of the land. Therefore the Code of Hammurabi is an ordained system of human government as are the laws of Russia, China, Egypt, and America. Let us examine Hammurabi's regulation of marriage.

CH § 128 If a seignior acquired a wife, but did not draw up contracts for her, that woman is no wife.⁸¹

The International Bible Encyclopedia states that, "though the Hebrew wife and mother was treated with more consideration than her sister on other lands, even in other Semitic countries, her position nevertheless was one of inferiority and subjection. The marriage relation from the standpoint of Hebrew legislation was looked upon very largely as a business affair, a mere question of property. A wife nevertheless, was, indeed, in most homes in Israel, the husband's 'most valued possession.' Frequently we find this belief regarding the

basis for Israelite and Semitic marriage." But as we have said, Millar Borrows believes the basis for the Israelite marriage was the covenant nature of their relationship with Jehovah. The covenant was obviously a powerful force with the sons of Noah, as noted here in (CH ' 128); a marriage contract was required.

CH § 129 If the wife of a seignior has been caught while lying with another man, they shall bind them and throw them into the water. If the husband of the woman wishes to spare his wife, then the king in turn may spare his subject.⁸²

Moses commanded the death of both subjects.

CH § 130 If the seignior bound [raped] the (betrothed) wife of another seignior, who had no intercourse with a male and was still living in her father's house, and he has lain in her bosom and they have caught him, that seignior shall be put to death, while that woman shall go free.⁸³

Almost identical to Moses in (Deut. 22:25-27) this law, as the Mosaic, establishes the importance of catching the person, or as Moses states, the act of "being found". This will be an important item to consider when we exposit (John 8)—the woman taken in adultery.

CH § 131 If a seignior's wife was accused by her husband, but she was not caught while lying with another man, she shall make affirmation by god and return to her house.⁸⁴

CH § 130 If a finger was pointed at the wife of a seignior because of another man, but she has not been caught while lying with the other man, she shall throw herself into the river for the sake of her husband.⁸⁵

The ancient laws continually place the woman on the defensive. Of

course, if she was caught in the act the judgment was swift and final. However if she was suspected of infidelity, she likewise was subject to a proving process. As noted by Moses, when a man was caught in the "spirit of jealousy" the woman was obliged to submit to the *bitter water* ordeal, (Numb. 5:11-31). She would be forced to drink the bitter water and if she was guilty her abdomen would swell and her thigh would rot. Here we find a similar test, "thrown into the river."

In (CH § 133 - 135) Hammurabi deals with the wife of a prisoner of war. The wife who had "sufficient to live on" was required to remain in her home and wait for the return of her husband. Had she insufficient provisions she was permitted to leave her home and marry another. In the event her first husband returned home, she was to return to him leaving any of the second husband's children with their father. Should she leave her home where she had sufficient provision, she was to be "thrown into the river." In (CH § 136) we find a law identical to (CE § 30) where the husband deserted the village of his residence, here again he would be denied his wife upon return.

CH § 137 If a seignior has made up his mind to divorce a lay priestess, who bore him children, or a hierodule [female temple slave (concubine)] who provided him with children, they shall return her dowry to that woman and also give her half of the field, orchard and goods in order that she may rear her children; after she has brought up her children, from whatever was given to her children they shall give her a portion corresponding to (that of) an individual heir in order that the man of her choice may marry her.⁸⁶

The comment, "If a seignior made up his mind", affirms that divorce rests solely in the heart of man. His act is final. This squarely contradicts the mandate of Jesus, "Let not man put asunder".

CH § 138 If a seignior wishes to divorce his wife who did not bear him children, he shall give her money to the full amount of her marriage-price and he shall also make good to her the dowry which she

brought from her father's house and then he may divorce her.⁸⁷

Childlessness was considered a failure of the marriage relationship and was considered a breach of contract by the ancients. We should be thankful that Abram loved Sarai even though she failed to conceive. Had he hated her and put her away, as the codes provided, the incarnation of the promised Seed would have failed.

CH § 141 If a seignior's wife, who was living in the house of the seignior, has made up her mind to leave in order that she may engage in business, thus neglecting her house (and) humiliating her husband, they shall prove it against her; and if her husband has then decided on her divorce, he may divorce her, with nothing to be given her as her divorce-settlement upon her departure. If her husband has not decided on her divorce, her husband may marry another woman, with the former woman living in the house of her husband like a maidservant.⁸⁸

CH § 142 If a woman so hated her husband that she has declared, "You may not have me," her record shall be investigated at her city council, and if she was careful and was not at fault, even though her husband has been going out and disparaging her greatly, that woman, without incurring any blame at all, may take her dowry and go off to her father's house.⁸⁹

This is the first mention in the ancient codes of the woman's right to initiate a separation—it would become a common practice among the Gentiles; Jesus addresses the subject, "If a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery", (Mk. 10:12). Jesus condemns the remarried woman as an adulterer. Jesus simply states that any divorce with remarriage this side of death is adultery.

In (CH § 143 - 145) Hammurabi addresses various

aspects of marriage, but in (CH § 154 - 158) deserve mention:

CH § 154 If a seignior has had intercourse with his daughter, they shall make that seignior leave the city.

CH § 155 If a seignior chose a bride for his son and his son had intercourse with her, but later he himself has lain in her bosom and they caught him, they shall bind that seignior and throw him into the water.

CH § 156 If a seignior chose a bride for his son and his son did not have intercourse with her, but he himself has lain in her bosom ... [he shall pay a fine, and let her go to marry a man of her choice].

CH § 157 If a seignior has lain in the bosom of his mother after (the death of) his father, they shall burn both of them.

CH § 158 If a seignior after (the death of) his father, has been caught in the bosom of his foster mother who was the bearer of children, that seignior shall be cut off from the parental home.⁹⁰

Incest, marriage within the forbidden degrees, is the subject of this portion of the code. Notice that intercourse between father/daughter, father/daughter-in-law, son/mother, and son/step-mother are the only forbidden degrees of consanguinity mentioned in Hammurabi. The most prohibitive act was the son/mother relationship, resulting in a fiery death of both partners. It is no wonder that the Apostle should cry out to the Church at Corinth regarding the man who had married his stepmother, "Such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles".

Hammurabi goes on to list twenty other laws that regulate marriage; most of which regulate the betrothal-gift, bride-price, or the dowry. The terms are often used synonymously. Most dictionaries define the dowry as both the gift the wife brings into marriage, and

the gift that the man gives to the bride.

The *mohar*, the payment of a sum to the father of the bride, has created the impression in the mind of most commentators to assume that ancient marriage was an economic transaction, a matter of purchase and ownership.⁹¹ The *International Bible Encyclopedia* is an example of this view: "The marriage relation from the stand point of Hebrew legislation was looked upon very largely as a business affair, a mere question of property". As mentioned Borrows disagrees, and he labors to show that marriage is older than sale, and that the *mohar* was actually a compensation-gift. Regardless the *mohar* was a binding element of the marriage covenant. The words of Jehovah to Israel, "And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord", (Hosea 2:19,20). The NSRB makes this fitting comment, "The grace of God is beautifully set forth in the verb 'betroth', which signifies *to woo a virgin*. The pledge that God made to Israel was *forever*—we will see the ancients applying this concept even to the *engagement* period. Some may question whether the *mohar*, or dowry is practiced today in the west, and most would agree that it is not. Nevertheless, "diamonds are a girl's best friend."

As mentioned in chapter one, man was created married. Marriage is an act of creation, and that marriage was monogamous. Creation-marriage is an ordinance of creation as is the horizon of the earth. As the horizon of the earth was, is, and forever will be, so creation-marriage was God's will, is God's will, and forever will be God's will. The question then: "From whence cometh divorce and polygamy", there is only one answer. Man.

As stated the ancient codes were the result of God's commission to Noah and his sons to ensure human government. They were corrupt by the nature of their idolatry, to which all the codes were dedicated. This idolatry invariably led to immorality. "Babylon was a sink of iniquity and a scandalous example of luxurious laxity to all the ancient world. Even Alexander, who was not above dying of drinking, was shocked by the morals of Babylon".⁹² Jehovah describes Babylon in the Book of Revelation as, "MYSTERY BABYLON, THE GREAT MOTHER OF HARLOTS

AND ABOMINATION OF THE EARTH", (Rev. 17:5).

Every native woman is obliged, once in her life, to sit in the temple of Venus, and have intercourse with some stranger. And many disdain to mix with the rest, being proud on account of their wealth, come in covered carriages, and take up their station at the temple with a numerous train of servants attending them. But the far greater part do thus: many sit down in the temple of Venus, wearing a crown of cord round their heads; some are continually coming in, and others are going out. Passages marked out in a straight line lead in every direction through the women, along which strangers pass and make their choice. When a woman has once seated herself she must not return home till some stranger has thrown a piece of silver into her lap, and lain with her outside the temple. He who throws the silver must say thus: "I beseech the goddess Mylitta to favor thee": for the Assyrians call Venus, Mylitta. The silver may be ever so small, for such silver is accounted sacred. The woman follows the first man that throws, and refuses no one. But when she has had intercourse and has absolved herself from her obligation to the goddess, she returns home; and after that time, however great a sum you may give her you will not gain possession of her. Those that are endowed with beauty and symmetry of shape are soon set free; but the deformed are detained a long time, from inability to satisfy the LAW, for some wait for a space of three to four years.⁹³

CHAPTER THREE

Do Customs Matter?

Customs are related to costumes. What is accustomed, the habitual practice, may well be thought of in terms of the fashion (dress/costume) of the day; the accepted social behavior. By sheer habitual practice some customs acquire the force of law or right.⁹⁴ Therefore the laws reflect the customs and conversely the customs reflect the laws. There is a latent danger in all of this. When an evil practice becomes an accepted custom it may become a mandated law. The virgins of Babylon were required by law to be spoiled by strangers in the temple of their gods.

After centuries of postdiluvian history, we hear this comment on the sons and grandsons of Noah, "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods", (Joshua 24:2). Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory, (Isa. 6:3, Rev. 4:8). Let God be true and every other god a liar. The other gods were unholy; immoral. They were the weak imaginations of men. These gods were the immoral imaginations of men ruling over the hearts of evil men. Their work was to provide a conscience for sin. Their fruit was evil. The attractive virgins were deflowered and released first; the unlovely awaited their ritual fornication, some tarried at the temple for years. Man legislated codes of laws to accommodate his evil immoral nature. Hard-heartedness.

Any attempt by man to exist without a reliance upon Jehovah, his God, will inevitably lead him to defeat. Should he attempt to form a government of laws without a reliance upon Jehovah God the Holy One he will rely on himself and consequently his customs will eventually become law, and his law will inevitably be a direct reflection of himself; immoral. What God

said of man is ever so true: "There is none righteous, no, not one. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," (Rom. 3:10, 23). The question is: How could unrighteous man formulate righteous law? All forms of human government have failed to generate righteous societies; all societies have failed to formulate righteous laws. Noah and his sons were under a mandate to form a human government based on the theocracy of Jehovah; but they formed monarchies, kingdoms built on idolatry. One such early monarchy was the kingdom of Nimrod. He was the *el'gibbor*; the self proclaimed mighty one. Isaiah identified the true *El'Gibbor* as the Lord Jesus Christ, "His name shall be called *Pele Joez El'Gibbor Abi As Sar Shalom*", (Isa. 9:6). The Authorized Version refers to Nimrod as, "the mighty hunter before the Lord", (Gen. 10:9), but the ancient proverb translates this as, "Nimrod the mighty hunter against the Lord [the Antichrist]." ⁹⁵ The name of his city kingdom was Babel; that name would eventually reach the city of the Apocalyptic Judgment.

The Origin of the Races and Customs

It was on the Plain of Shinar where the men of the whole earth began to assemble. Here while speaking one language man formed a compact and designed a universal custom. Each man was to make brick and join them together as a symbol of universal unity in the construction of a temple reaching to heaven. In their labor was heard a chant, "Let us make a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth", (Gen. 11:4). Henry M. Morris suggests that the initial motive for this project was to gain a self accomplished spirituality, but the outcome was a degenerated astrology. He goes on to explain that Virgo was placed in the evening sky to declare the hope of the Promised Seed, (Gen. 3:15), but Nimrod made her the seductive Queen of Heaven. ⁹⁶ Noah's sons had slipped into mass idolatry. As we all know, this temple tower became an object of consternation to these worshippers, as suddenly Jehovah the Triune God, judged the builders by confounding their minds causing them to babble in divers languages. Fear and confusion filled the Nimrodites; in madness and hysteria they scattered themselves upon the face of the whole earth.

The remarkable nature of this judgment is lodged in the human tongue. The speech of man is regulated by his physiology. It is interesting that the only serious theological discussion regarding the origin of the varied races of men is found here at the judgment of tongues; Tower of Babel. Keil and Delitzsch comment on Vitranga and Hofmann who believed that the tongue event of Babel was caused when the omnipotent God changed man's organs of speech, i.e., and anatomical change.⁹⁷ Although they refute Vitranga and Hofmann, nevertheless they address the thought of anatomical change.

Creation repudiates the concept of an evolution of anatomy. However the varied anatomies of the human race indicate that some change occurred to the children of Adam. The eight souls of the ark were obviously of a single racial extract. A study of antediluvian history fails to reveal any time where we might find some event which led mankind into a world of diversity of races with physical anatomical characteristics, like those we see today. But if we examine the Babel Judgment in the light of anatomical judgment the event does lend itself to the thought. It is without question that the Lord God inflicted a psychological curse on man in the Babel Judgment, but is it beyond the realm of reason that He also cursed the physiology of man. The voice of the birds is governed by their physiology: the *caw* of the crow is as expected as the *song* of the canary. The *bark* of a dog is as expected as the *meow* of the cat. The *snappy* high pitch voice of the Oriental is as expected as the *deep tones* of the African. The anatomy of the creature dictates the voice of the creature. The size of the neck, nose cavities, lips, and tongue appear to contribute to the sound of the man. A Chihuahua cannot make the sound of a St. Bernard. The environment can only affect the cosmetic nature of man, "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me", were the words of the Shulamite. The races are the result of a curse, as the races curse the earth with their prejudice and hate, their wars and their death. This writer believes that the races were created as were the species of birds and the bees. The creation which is the product of a judgment curse is nevertheless pure creation. Thus the diversity of size, color, and language of the human race that we witness today is the result of a judgment, the Babel Judgment.

Hath God Joined the Black and White?

Some believe that the black race was born out of the sin of Ham, seeing the nakedness of his father Noah. His curse determined that he would be the servant of servants. As stated previously, the races were created in judgment at the temple of Babel. Therefore this author rejects this Hamite doctrine. All races are the result of a curse, consequently all races are cursed, not just the blacks. "The Phoenicians, along with the Carthaginians and the Egyptians, who all belong to the family of Canaan, were subjugated by the Japhetic Persians, Macedonians, and Romans: the remainder of the Hamitic tribes either shared the same fate, or still sigh, like the Negroes, beneath the yoke of the most crushing slavery."⁹⁸ Here Keil and Delitzsch assign several nations to the list of Hamitic peoples; they are not all black. Morris makes the following comment:

Unfortunately, there have been some interpreters who have applied the Hamitic curse specifically to the Negro peoples, using it to justify keeping the black man in economic servitude or even slavery. It is obvious, however, that the prophecy applies not only to black Africans but also to all other descendants of Ham (most of whom are not blacks), and no more of the Hamitic peoples have experienced such servitude during their history than the non-Hamitic peoples.⁹⁹

If the races were formed at Babel, then the mixed racial marriage takes on an altogether different hue. All skin color is the product of a curse. Color, languages, and race are the product of a universal sin. It is not the sin of one person, Ham; one tribe, the Hamites; one color, the blacks. The *Babel/Race* doctrine includes the entire human family. It places all mankind on a spectrum of color tones. Extreme degrees of the spectrum reveal the curse in greater tones than lesser tones, nevertheless all the races are included in the lines of color. To permit the mixing of the lesser color tones while prohibiting the extreme tones to mix would be insincere; hypocrisy. Race distinction reveals the curse which was aggravated by sin. When a black and

white unite in marriage it personifies the curse. This is socially embarrassing to those who have melted into the acceptable background of the spectrum; some of these people have formed an evil prejudice that is very strong.

Although mixed racial unions are perfectly legitimate, they nevertheless will be unions that experience social tension, i.e. the tension of societies own embarrassment which is a reminder of the sin of all men at Babel. The loving couple will not personally know the embarrassment; they will however wrestle with the embarrassment of others. Those contemplating this union should be warned of the burden of the mixed-racial marriage, for a pastor to do otherwise would be irresponsible.

Abraham and Customs

As a lad, Abram must have stood in awe of the famous ziggurats and other buildings of Ur, his home city. The well organized society of ancient Ur would have also left a lasting impression on this young man. Abram would have been influenced by Ur-Nammu; Leon Wood states, "For even if the period [of Ur-Nammu] began a few years after Abraham left for the promised land, conditions would not have greatly changed in this length of time."¹⁰⁰ The departure of Abram, Terah, Lot, and Sarai from this beautiful city at its zenith of glory, should be recorded among the miracles of the Bible. The code of Ur-Nammu was ordering the peace which contributed to the prosperity of Ur. The element which made the city repulsive to Abram was its idolatry. It was dedicated to the idol-gods. Abram's God was Jehovah Elohim the great Creator.

Abram began a faith relationship with Jehovah through the ancient verbal message of Noah or perhaps the revelation of Jehovah in His manifold creation.—H. Morris suggests, man may have learned the truth of the Godhead from the stars—The Apostle tells us, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so they are without excuse," (Rom. 1:20). Abram knew the Godhead, although his fathers did not, "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor; and they

served other gods", (Joshua 24:2). Abraham obeyed Jehovah:

Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred,
and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will
show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation,
and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and
thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that
bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in
thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Gen. 12:1-3

In leaving his country, Abram was promised with personal blessings, and all the families of the earth were also promised a special blessing. The latter would be blessed in a new dimension of *creation-marriage*, (*Jewish creation marriage*)— throughout the remainder of this dissertation *creation-marriage* will focus on Israel's guardianship of *creation-marriage*—after all Jesus was born of the house and lineage of David, a Jew. It must be kept in mind that although Abram left his country and forsook his idolatry, he did not sever those customs and laws which comprised the spirit of Noah— this was his reasonable obligation as a world citizen. Those customs and laws which regulated violence as ordained by Jehovah through Noah followed Abram and were practiced by all the Patriarchs. This was not altered until Jehovah appeared to Moses on Mt. Sinai. We shall see that the ancient codes and customs regulated the behavior of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And some of these codes impacted their marriage practices.

Shortly after arriving in the Promised Land, Abram prepared sacrificial offerings to Jehovah. This is the first recorded sacrifice to Jehovah since Noah's at the subsiding of the flood. This is solid evidence that Abram was walking with his God; nevertheless Abram forsakes his new land for fear of a current drought. He sought refuge in Egypt—some believe this was a lapse of faith—with his half-sister and wife, Sarai. Fearing his life, because he assumed Sarai's beauty would entice the Egyptians to kill him and take his wife, Abram hid behind Sarai his half sister-wife. Although Abram was wrong to initiate this scheme, he was correct about the sexual interests of the Egyptians. Their art depicts their women wearing light pervious clothing which was designed to reveal the female body. Their

obsession with the sexual delight of their beautiful women reached the height of monomania in this account from Herodotus who records the preoccupation with sex even entered the domain of the mortuary.

The wives of men of rank when they die are not given at once to be embalmed, nor such women as are very beautiful or greater regard than others, but on the third or fourth day after their death (and not before) they are delivered to the embalmers. They do so about this matter in order that the embalmers may not abuse their women [sexually], for they say that one of them was taken once doing so to the corpse of a woman lately dead, and his fellow-craftsman gave information.¹⁰¹

An interesting note was found in the March 14, 1988 issue of *Time* magazine. A team of American biblical scholars deciphered the text of the *Genesis Apocryphon*, a Dead Sea Scroll. Although only a few dozen images have been developed, yet the scholar's believe that they shed light on the ancient customs of the Bible. "Most startling are new passages that record in great detail the physical beauty of Abraham's wife Sarah. These include descriptions of the contours of Sarah's breasts".

Pharaoh did take Sarai to wife, however the Lord God intervened and sent plagues upon him revealing that he had taken the wife of another man. Abram was permitted to leave Egypt with his half-sister-wife. It appears that adultery was regulated in Egypt, nevertheless creation-marriage had fallen on bad times in ancient Egypt a place that was unusually corrupt. But before we investigate this fact, let us follow Abram back to Canaan to the land which was famous for its written alphabet and infamous for its sodomy.

Customs of the Fertility God and Goddess

Expelled from Egypt, Abraham, Sarah, and their nephew Lot returned to the Land with a refreshed determination to trust Jehovah-Elohim. Abraham would go on to grow in grace, while Lot would grow in disgrace, nearly drowning in the corrupt customs of Canaan. The religion of Canaan was at the heart of the matter:

Canaanite culture was based on that of Babylonia, and begins with the introduction and use of copper and bronze. When Canaan became a Babylonian province, it naturally shared in the civilization of the ruling power. The religious beliefs and deities of Babylonia were superimposed upon those of the primitive Canaanite.¹⁰²

As mentioned, Abraham and Lot were natives of Babylon and therefore would not be terribly startled by the customs of Canaan. This explains why Lot could make Sodom his home; but there was something in Canaan which was actually unnatural even to Babylon—the custom of sexual perversion. One would think that the custom of defiling all virgins through a religious temple rite was the height of corruption, but Canaan would raise corruption to even higher levels.

It may be stated without exaggeration that the Canaanite religion was the most sexually perverted, morally depraved, and blood thirsty of all ancient history. It was for this reason that God ordered Joshua to exterminate their very culture, citizens, animals and cities. The head god of the Canaanite religion was El. His wife was Asherah. He also married his sisters, one of whom was Asterah.¹⁰³

Asterah was probably the epithet of Istar (Babylon), Asteroth (Canaan), goddess of fertility.¹⁰⁴ As we study the ancients we are impressed with the omnipresence of this female deity. She appears as Astarte (Phoenicia), Isis (Egypt), Demeter (Greek), Aphrodite (Greek), Ishtar (Assyrian), Venus (Roman), Artemis (Assyrian), and Virgo. Henry Morris has this interesting comment:

Satan is notoriously a corruptor, rather than an innovator. Hence it is probable that the system of paganism, with its astrological emblems and complex mythology and mysteries, represents a primeval distortion of God's true revelation

concerning His creation and promised redemption of the universe. Thus, the zodiac system of constellations may originally have been devised by the antediluvian Patriarchs as a means of indelibly impressing the divine promises on the consciousness of mankind through marking them on the very heavens themselves. If so, the subsequent system of astrology is a gross corruption of the original evangelical significance of the heavenly bodies, created originally to serve in part for *signs and seasons*. The Virgin (Virgo), whose sign among the stars once reminded men of the promised Seed of the woman, began to assume the proportions of an actual Queen of Heaven; and Leo, the great sidereal lion at the other end of the Zodiac, became a spiritual King of Heaven. ¹⁰⁵

It is now believed that the origin for the identification of the constellations was universal and not limited to Greek mythology as was once thought.

The principal achievement of the science of astronomy in the centuries during which the books of the OT were written was the arrangement and naming of the constellations, and there can be no reasonable doubt that the same system was known to the Hebrews as that which has been handed down to us through the Greek astronomers. ¹⁰⁶

Morris expands the constellation theory stating that Simiramis, the wife of Nimrod, was the first false virgin, Virgo, the Queen of Heaven. Nimrod was the first false lion, Leo, the King of Heaven. The heavens were intended to declare the Glory of God. The corruption of which caused the Apostle to cry out:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for

God hath shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse; because, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves, who changed the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use for that which is against nature; and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

(Rom. 1:18-27)

The consequence of false worship is wrong conduct, conversely the result of true worship is moral or right conduct. The Apostle stated: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Spirit", (I Cor. 12:3). Jesus said, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth", (Jn. 4:24). Again the Apostle adds, "For through him [Jesus] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father", (Eph. 2:22). The equation simply states that if you do not worship in the true Spirit you will worship in the Evil spirit, and the natural desires of the evil worshipper will be perverted.

Abraham was called out of Babylon by Jehovah God in order to give mankind a new start. Man failed under Adam, and Noah, now he would have a new leader and example. Abraham departed from Babylon and entered the land of Canaan. The natives, however, were thoroughly corrupted by the customs of Babylon, and God would direct Abraham to establish the first literal kingdom of God on earth in this Promised Land, Canaan. The Canaanites included the Phoenicians, Jebusites, Amorites, and the Hittites, with such well known cities as Gaza, Megiddo, Jericho, Sodom, Gomorrah, and Jerusalem. Ham, who was cursed for looking upon the nakedness of his father, was the father of these Canaanite tribes. It is not surprising that his posterity is notably immoral. Asteroth was the supreme goddess of Canaan and the counterpart of Baal. Her cult originated in Babylon—Istar her Babylonian counterpart was known as the morning and evening star. Abraham discovered the city of Asteroth-Karnaim, a city dedicated to her worship. Some of the Canaanite tribes have left few physical remains of their culture, but this is not so of the Phoenicians:

Their religious ideas are important on account of the influence they had on the Hebrews. Derived from the Babylonians, one of the most corrupting tendencies we notice was the ascription of sexual characteristics to the chief deities of their pantheon, such as Baal and Asteroth who was the great Nature-goddess, the Magna Mater, queen of heaven (Jer. 7:18). She was commonly identified with Aphrodite or Venus. Her worship was too often accompanied with orgies of the most corrupt kind, as at Apheca.¹⁰⁷

The Encyclopedia Britannica gives us this description of the immoral Phoenician mind:

The worship of the female along with the male principle was a strongly marked feature of Phoenician religion. The ghastly practice of sacrificing human victims was resorted to in times of great distress, or to avert national disaster. The god

who demanded these victims, and especially the burning of children, seems to have been Milk, the Molech or Moloch of the Old Testament. Another horrible sacrifice was regularly demanded by Phoenician religion: women sacrificed their virginity at the shrines of Astarte in belief that they thus propitiated the goddess and won her favor; licentious rites were the natural accompaniment of the worship of the reproductive powers of nature.¹⁰⁸

Babylon was apparently preoccupied with the female principle, while the society of Canaan was preoccupied with the male principle. Homosexuality with all its degrading acts was the accepted custom of Sodom. Some commentators see the act of pederasty, as its identifying sin.¹⁰⁹ The men of this infamous city had left the natural use of the woman and burned in their sexual lust one with another: Men with men doing that which is unseemly. Sodom's pederasty and other homosexual acts may have been out done by the Americans. Reports have surfaced of acts of homosexual debauchery that are not fitting to even record in this dissertation. Billy Graham is not far from the truth when he exclaims that God will have to apologize to Sodom, if he further delays the judgment of America.

Just a short note here: The homosexuals of Sodom were violent, although homosexuals claim to be the children of free and unlimited love. Recall the Sodom account: The angels arrive at Lot's door to visit him. They refuse Lot's offer to lodge with him, telling Lot that they prefer to sleep in the street. Lot knowing the sexual perversion of the men of Sodom persuades the angels to abide with him. After enjoying a feast with unleavened bread—a sign of religious devotion—the angels prepare to retire for the night. A mob, the men and boys of the city, gather outside Lot's door and demand to know the angels, i.e. to know them sexually. Lot closes the door behind him and begins to admonish the crowd, "I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly". He judges their homosexual wickedness. The backsliding Lot then offers the Sodomites his two virgin daughters. He declares, "Behold now, I have two daughters who have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing". The homosexual mob then cry out in unison, "Stand back". Who are you,

Lot, to judge our homosexual custom as wickedness. Then they threaten to kill him. Their custom was universally accepted as good. Lot was threatened with death because he condemned their sinful custom. The men were prepared to murder Lot. These homosexuals were violent, unloving people who were killers—some believe this is true of all homosexuals if they are legally denied to practice their cursed custom; their wickedness. The angels then pull Lot into the house and reveal to him that they were sent by Jehovah God to save him and his family from the violence of Sodom. The men of the city are instantly judged by the angels and afflicted with blindness both small and great. Then after the safe escape of Lot, his wife, and his two virgin daughters, Jehovah God burns the city to the ground destroying all the perverted boys, girls, men, women, and all living things. Did the evil custom reach to every soul of Sodom? The account states that all the people of Sodom were united in their judgment of Lot: "the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round both old and young, all the people from every quarter." God judged the entire city—He incinerated it. The question that bids an answer, Did all the living creatures of Sodom have AIDS? Think about it! —I observed an AIDS-Free sympathizing American AIDS activist wearing a T-shirt that read, "We All Have AIDS" (a reference to all Americans)—Are we the next to be judged? Perhaps our enemies could use this for an apology to nuke us.

The custom of Sodom had become a terrible weapon; a Satanic attack upon the Seed of the woman. The success of the Sodomites would have resulted in the destruction of man's power to propagate, preventing the birth of the Savior, and causing the death of man. Homosexuality is atheism and death. The United States of America is failing to control the sin of homosexuality because the government is protecting this evil custom by promulgating laws in its defense. Had the U.S. Congress been the government of Sodom they could have issued in the possible extinction of the human race. God interceded to govern Sodom—he destroyed the city and its inhabitants. The Sodomite generation melted in the fire of sulfur; Will this American generation melt from the *slim disease*, the ugly death of AIDS. The fiery annihilation of Sodom is God's opinion and view of homosexuality. Our God is a consuming fire.

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord. And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt.

Gen. 19:23-29

Smoking in defeat, the weapon-custom, homosexuality, failed to overcome the world. Satan was again defeated, as God gave men a new start in Abraham. Lot is the example of the salvation that was offered through the following of Abraham. The question might be expanded, "Were all the Canaanites homosexuals?" If so, then the annihilation of Sodom was only the beginning of God's judgment. Later God would require the Israelites to exterminate the remainder of the inhabitants of Canaan, and this He did. It is not beyond comprehension that all the inhabitants of Canaan had contracted AIDS, and that they were a threat to all mankind; therefore its judgment was the righteous act of God in saving mankind. Regardless, Sodom was gone, removed from the earth. Nothing remained but the fall-out of their ashes from the smoke of their furnace.

But this is not the end of the story. Babylon The Mother Of Harlots, as we said, had propagated the doctrine of harlotry and adultery throughout Canaan through the deity Asteroth. This female devil had one preoccupation, harlotry and adultery. The dilemma of Asteroth is that her desire can only be satiated on the earth, and since she knows that the earth is temporal, she tries to satisfy her appetite for sex before she will be judged in the Day of the Lord. God's Word

gives us some insight into her ways:

My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: to keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.
Prov. 6:22-26

Proverbs chapter seven describes the "means of the whorish woman" with a vivid description of the "the adulteress who hunts for the precious life."

My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart. Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman: That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words. For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding. Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house. In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: and, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart. She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in

wait at every corner. So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with love. For the good-man is not at home, he is gone on a long journey: he hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straight-way, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteneth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend unto the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Prov. 7

The metaphor has a literal value which cannot be denied, as we watch the cunning craftiness of this Asteroth, the strange woman of the corner. I have always been intrigued by the religiosity of this whore. She boasts of having peace offerings and of paying her vows on the very day of her adultery—Was it the Sabbath? What was she trying to say? It appears she thinks adultery is a religious act, an act which in her eyes is holy. She seems to have the idea that she could commit adultery and at the same time preserve her conviction that she was a perpetual virgin. Asteroth's worshipers praised her as "The Virgin", "The Virgin Mother", and the "Holy Virgin." Regarding her title Will Durant comments, "this merely meant that her amours were free from all taint of wedlock." He continues: "In Babylon she was the goddess of war as well as love, of prostitutes as well as mothers; she called

herself a compassionate courtesan.”¹¹⁰

The concept which permits a man to commit adultery without the taint of adultery is the fuel of hell, the philosophy of harlots. The spirit of adultery amazingly promotes a claim of innocence and a strange idea of rightness. The harlot of Proverbs calls her sin, love. Knowing her time is limited she became aggressive, "So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him: let us take our fill of love until the morning. "Although she is dead wrong, she is oblivious to the truth. She is a whore, who thinks she is a holy virgin. The true virgin, however, would be a humble Jewess. A young virgin who would forever ponder, in her heart, the miracle of being overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, and then the joy of delivering the world it's Savior.

Abraham, Hagar, Ishmael, Rebecca, Jacob, and Custom

The lives of the Patriarchs often leave us with many unanswered questions. Why were Abraham and Jacob permitted to practice polygamy? Why did Jacob serve Laban so faithfully? The answers to these questions are often found in the customs and laws that existed during the lives of these men. It must be remembered that the laws that Noah and his sons promulgated were ordained of God. The customs which preceded those laws were often just as binding to the ancient societies—this did not mean that these customs and laws were perfect; they were as all law: weak. This would not completely change with the Law of Moses as we shall see: the law was weak because it brought the knowledge of sin—not the solution for the redemption of sin. But until Moses the ancient codes would prevail as the law of the land. As we stated from (CU § 6) divorce and polygamy were accepted customs in Ur Nammu: "If a man divorces his primary wife, he must pay her one mina of silver." However the polygamy of Abraham and Jacob were produced by yet other customs. These men were holy men, therefore it is no surprise that there are no recorded divorces in their lives.

Recall (CU § 22), where the slave-woman who spoke insolently to her mistress was penalized by having her mouth scoured with salt, and (CL § 26) where the children of the true or first wife become the rightful heirs of their father's estate even though their

father has had children by a slave-wife. The children of the slave-wife are dis-inherited. These ancient laws shed some light on Abraham's conduct with Hagar, however the ancient customs reveal even greater light.

In 1925 archaeologists discovered thousands of tablets in the ancient city of Nuzi, or Nuzu. Cyrus Gordon states that these tablets draw the most intimate picture we have of the ancient customs which reflect the culture of Abraham.¹¹¹ Abraham complained to the Lord God that he had no heir, save Eliezer, of Damascus. In the light of the Nuzi texts we have support for Abraham's adoption of his house-born slave son, Eliezer. Gordon states that at Nuzi adoption played a significant role as the childless couple adopted an heir as an insurance policy to support them in their golden years. The adopted heir would look after them, repair their home, supply food, as well as mourn their death, and prepare their grave.¹¹² The custom of adoption secured Abraham an heir. He left his homeland and idolatry, but he could not forsake what he believed to be acceptable customs and the legal ideas of his world. Nuzi was located in northeastern Mesopotamia, the homeland of Abraham.

Marital customs from Nuzu as well as the code of Hammurabi provided that, if a man's wife had no children, the son of a handmaid could be recognized as the legal heir. Hagar's relationship to Abraham and Sarah is typical of the customs that prevailed in Mesopotamia.¹¹³

Abraham may have justified acquiring an heir through the provisions of the ancient codes and customs, but his failure to trust the Lord God for a son from the bowels of his marriage to Sarah should be marked as one of the greatest sins of mankind. The son of custom, Ishmael, became the father of Islam. Later giving rise to the likes of Mohammed, Kohmeni, Kadaffy, Hussein, and Arafat. What would the world have been like without Ishmael, and Islam—One of the most profound verses in the Bible for the twenty-first century must be the prophesy regarding Ishmael: “And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.” Gen. 16:12. God had promised Abraham greatness if he would walk by faith.

What would have been the greatness of the nation of Abraham, Israel, without their natural Arabic adversary.

Abraham was apprehensive when Sarai drove out Hagar and her son, and rightly so for the ancient custom forbid this act. Finegan raises the custom to law when he states, "there was a legal basis for this apprehension."¹¹⁴ Abraham employed another custom when he chose a wife for Isaac. This would be unacceptable in the west today, however it must be noted that Isaac loved Rebecca. Not only did he love the lady of his father's choosing, but he also expected his father to acquire him a wife. And Abraham did just that. The price of the Rebecca was paid in jewels of gold, jewels of silver, and garments. Burrows debates the meaning of these gifts: on the one hand they could have been a purchase price and on the other hand they could have been compensatory to a family who was losing a daughter.¹¹⁵

It should be pointed out that oriental women feel sorry for the brides of America and the west because they are given away for nothing. They take pride in their price, believing that the higher the price the greater their self worth. It was also unlikely that the man who invested good money in his bride would divorce her over a whim.¹¹⁶ Jacob's life suggests further interest in the ancient customs.

In Nuzu men sold themselves into slavery in order to obtain, for instance, a wife. In other words, men who knew that they would never have enough money to pay the bride price for a wife of their own, held that it was better to be a married slave than a free bachelor. This nearly parallels the story of Jacob, who worked so long (though not technically as a slave) to win his bride from her father.¹¹⁷

When Jacob awoke and found that he married Leah—the fellowship of tenting together constituted marriage—he had reason to be angry with Laban. Though the tenting ceremony was binding, Jacob was permitted, by custom, more than one wife. Consequently he could serve another seven years for Rachael. This was compounded by the custom which permitted Jacob to father children by the handmaids of both Leah and Rachael. Thus, Jacob became the husband of four women. Perfectly acceptable with the custom of the day—remember

this took place before Moses.

Like Abraham, his first wife, Sarai was eventually blessed with the *promised seed*, so Jacob's first wife, Leah, gave birth to both Levi and Judah. Leah was the mother of Israel's priests and the mother of the *promised seed*, for "the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until *Shiloh* come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be", (Gen. 49)—*Shiloh*, a reference to Christ. The seed of the true Virgin was destined through Leah. But some may object: Was not this marriage a matter of fraud? That is a fact, for it was just that. Nevertheless Leah would give birth to the serpent crusher—Most civil judges would award an annulment to the victim of a fraudulent marriage, God here blesses the union.

Rachael's act of stealing her father's images appears as a theft motivated by idolatry, but the Nuzu library reveals that her intention was aimed at acquiring her father's estate. "The possession of the household gods was tantamount to the title to an estate. Her brothers, one of whom would have become the chief heir." ¹¹⁸ Rachael now held the right to her father's estate. At first glance her act smacked of an angry daughter who recoiled from the agony of having to share her husband with her older sister, but perhaps we see a form of ancient justice in Rachel's larceny.

Before we leave the land of Canaan we should take note of the customs recorded in Genesis 38. The Roman Catholic Church attempts to support their doctrine of birth control with the recorded act of Onan; "And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the Lord: wherefore he slew him also, (Gen. 38). The custom of levirate marriage was obviously common to this society. It would be formally codified by Moses, however here we see that it was known by Onan. Some may see polygamy in the levirate custom, but a close examination will reveal that it fully supported monogamy. Observe the devastating thought of Onan, "and Onan knew that the seed should not be his." If the seed would not have been his, then neither would Tamar have been his. The truth of the matter is that the seed of Tamar was his brother Er's, as the mother of the seed was Er's. Levirate marriage was not polygamy.

The last custom we will discuss in this section is found in the

judgment that Judah sentenced upon Tamar. When Judah learned that his daughter-in-law was pregnant by harlotry he unleashes the ultimate condemnation on the girl, "bring her forth, and let her be burned." The ancient's penalty for harlotry was a bitter form of capital punishment.

Immunity

"L'etat c'est moi", a thought believed to be spoken by King Louis XIV, seems to be the thought of Judah as he recoils from his sin. The Divine Right of Kings, was in existence from antiquity past. Judah a Patriarch was bound in the tribal setting. The father tribesman was the civil authority by divine right. Noah was the supreme court as would be the claim of the Pharaoh's. Some believe that the law cannot be illegal. Government immunity is a requirement of human government. The King is the law. Immunity is the birthstone of infallibility. The Judge of the court cannot judge himself. Noah would judge Ham and sound the degree as a righteous one, even though he was drunk. Human law has always been weakened by spiritual wickedness in high places, and especially by kings. The Pope's claim to infallibility rests in his kingship. Yes, Louis XIV was the state "The State Is Me"; L'etat c'est moi is what he said.

A Theocracy was in place with the advent of the lawgiver, Moses, and the following course of judges, however the arrival of a king took on a threat to the peace of the Theocracy. The Lord God warned the nation regarding the nature of a king and of the affect the king would have upon the people. In Deuteronomy, God established a standard for the king of Israel because He saw that when His people secured the Promised Land they would willfully demand a king like their neighbors. The cry the Lord God heard was a dreadful sound. Departure was in the whine of His own children. A nation He protected and blessed was now forsaking Him as their King. When they turned from Him they turned to another, their king. They now put their trust in the leader of their nation, *a man*. Since the *man* would be over the people his very existence in that state was a cause of concern. The initial regulation of the standard was to the people of the king. They were to permit God to choose the king. The king was not to multiply horses in an attempt to return to Egypt. Neither could

he multiple to himself gold or *wives*, for the multiplication of wives would cause the king's heart to turn away from his God. The king was to write a copy of the law and to read and keep the law all the days of his life, *that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren*.

The king was caught in a dilemma. A man with his human sinful nature was chosen to be the sovereign over the nation. The people were subject to him. Their children were subject to him. Their service was subject to him. Their material wealth was subject to him. Their governors were subject to him. Their law-givers were subject to him. Consequently the king believed that the law of the land was subject to him. Although this was not the case, yet unfortunately it was the case. King Louis the XIV believed he was the law, "L'etat c'est moi." Even in the United States we support the king with what we call: *presidential immunity*.

Egypt - The Danger Greater Than Bondage

The sexual deviants of Babylon, Canaan, and Sodom had a *sister deviant* in Egypt. Previously we mentioned that the lust of Egypt even reached to the coffin of a beautiful female corpse, but that was not the only depravity of the Egyptians. The theme of this study is investigating the methods that Satan employed in an attempt to corrupt *creation-marriage*, and here in Egypt we find a new contaminant. The purpose of which was to hinder and prevent the *seen of the woman* from being born. For his birth marked the death of the Serpent with a crushing head wound. The clue that leads us to consider the evil nature of the Egyptian attack is found in the book of Leviticus. Here Moses specifically names the abominations of the Egyptians.

Joseph was welcomed to Egypt with open arms and a gripping hand:

And it came to pass after these things, that his [Joseph's] master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back

anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife, how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her, and it came to pass about his time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. Gen. 39:7-15

In Egypt, the land of artifacts, it is surprising that no ancient code of laws has been uncovered, nevertheless we have evidence that reveals the nature of its supreme court; since Pharaoh believed he was the supreme court who protected the rights of his people. The rights of the people are their customs. Therefore, knowledge of their customs will reveal their laws, or the rights of the people, and book of Leviticus indirectly reveals the accepted customs of Egypt. The following is a list of certain customs that were practiced in the land of the pharaohs:

1. They uncovered the nakedness of their fathers.
2. They uncovered the nakedness of their mothers.
3. They uncovered the nakedness of their step-mothers.
4. They uncovered the nakedness of their sisters.
5. They uncovered the nakedness of their step-sisters.
6. They uncovered the nakedness of their grand-children.
7. They uncovered the nakedness of their daughters-in-law.
8. They uncovered the nakedness of their aunts.
9. They uncovered the nakedness of their sisters-in-law.
10. They uncovered the nakedness of their step-children.
11. They uncovered the nakedness of their step-grandchild.
12. They approached a woman during her uncleanness.
13. They lay carnally with their neighbor's wives.
14. They burned their children to death in sacrificial worship.
15. Their men would sexually lay with other men.
16. They sexually laid with animals

(paraphrase - Lev. 18)

Uncovering the nakedness is a Hebrew idiom for sexual intercourse; thus the customs of Egypt included incest of every kind, homosexuality, and bestiality. The Lord God introduced this section of Leviticus with these words:

And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the Lord your God. After the doings of Egypt [customs], wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do; and after the doings of the land of Canaan, to which I bring you, shall ye not do; neither shall ye walk in their ordinances [laws]. Lev. 18:1-3

God then goes on to state the case exactly: "None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the Lord." The peculiar custom of Egypt was incest, and sexual perversion. From the language of Leviticus it appears that incest and wife swapping was ordained as a right of an Egyptian. William J. Hopewell and others commenting on (Deut. 24) make this observation: "When Deuteronomy 24 was written, the Jewish people had followed the terrible sin of the Egyptians in wife-swapping:"¹¹⁹ perhaps the thirteenth item listed above refers to this custom. Leviticus 18 closes with this admonition:

Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and mine judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you. For all these abominations have the men of the land done, who were before you, and the land is defiled. Lev. 18:26-27

"After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do", the doings of the land were their customs, and as we said, it appears that the listed items may have been the legal rights of the citizens of Egypt. This is not surprising since America protects the rights of the homosexual, the adulterer, and the abortionist. But, unlike the U.S., it appears that Egypt ordained incest, and protected the rights of their citizens to marry within the forbidden degrees of

consanguinity. In his volume, *Folkways*, William Graham Sumner writes concerning the incest of the Egyptians:

In the Egyptians mythology Isis and Osiris were sister and brother as well as wife and husband. The kings of ancient Egypt married their sisters and daughters. The doctrine of royal essence was very exaggerated, and was applied with quantitative exactitude. A princess could not be allowed to transmit any of it [family wealth] away from the possessor of the throne. There is said to be evidence that Ramses II married two of his own daughters and that Psammetik I married his daughter. Artaxerxes married two of his daughters. The Ptolemies adopted this practice. The family married in and in for generations, especially brothers and sisters, although sometimes of the half-blood. "Indicating the Ptolemies by numbers according to the order of their succession, the II married his niece and afterwards his sister; IV his sister; VI and VII were brothers and they consecutively married the same sister; VIII married two of his own sisters consecutively; XII and XIII were brothers and consecutively married their sister, the famous Cleopatra. ¹²⁰

Adolf Erman in his work, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, continues this thought:

There existed also another custom foreign to our ideas, the marriage with a sister; This became common in Egypt during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. Most of the Ptolemics married their sisters, and under the Emperor Commodus two-thirds of all the citizens of Arsinoe had done the same. Marriage with a sister shocks our moral sense, but seemed most natural to the Egyptians, just as in modern Egypt marriage with a cousin is considered to be most sensible and right. The gods set an example in point; the brothers of Osiris and Set having married

their sisters, Isis and Nehthys.¹²¹

Water seeks its own level, as the people their leaders. It is not surprising to find the Egyptians committing incest since it was the practice of their gods and pharaohs. Will Durant commenting on the morals of Egypt stated, "The government of the Pharaohs resembled that of Napoleon, even to the incest." He goes on to say:

Very often the king married his own sister—occasionally his own daughters—to preserve the purity of the royal blood. It is difficult to say whether this weakened the stock. Certainly Egypt did not think so, after several thousand years of experiment; the institution of sister-marriage spread among the people, and as late as the second century after Christ two-thirds of the citizens of Arsinoe were found to be practicing the custom. The words *brother* and *sister*, in Egyptian poetry, have the same significance as *lover* and *beloved* among ourselves.

In addition to his sisters the Pharaoh had an abundant harem, recruited not only from captive women but from the daughters of the nobles and the gifts of foreign potentates [Solomon's 1000 wives, my comment]; so Amenhotep III received from a prince of Naharina his eldest daughter and three hundred select maidens. Some of the nobility imitated this tiresome extravagance on a small scale, adjusting their morals to their resources.¹²²

Satan would fail to corrupt the generation of the *promised seed* through incest. The Lord God destroys the first-born males and drowns their fathers in the Red Sea, he then prohibits his children to re-enter the land of Egypt. The death custom of Sodom was destroyed by sulfur-fire, and the death custom of Egypt by the death-angel. God went one step further, he attached the death penalty to anyone who would practice the customs of Egypt and Canaan: "For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people;" to cut

off means to put to death. It is not surprising that Western Civilization is built on the morals and customs of Moses. In the State of Maine we find this list of forbidden degrees:

No man shall marry his mother, grandmother, daughter, granddaughter, stepmother, grandfather's wife, son's wife, grandson's wife, wife's granddaughter, sister, brother's daughter, sister's daughter, father's sister or mother's sister, (Marriage Law, State of Maine, ' 31)

An interesting (AP) Moscow news release read, "Soviet paper blames incest for infant deaths in village." In order to prevent paying dowries the people of the Central Asian Republic of Turkmenia resort to incest. The Russian medics attribute the high mortality rate here on intermarriage within the bonds of consanguinity. "We are powerless in the case of the death of a child of related parent."

The Apostle declared that the truth of God's will is known by the heathen because it is revealed to them, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." Therefore it is not strange to learn of the sexual inhibitions of some native tribes. "The Savages Dread Of Incest", is the chapter title of Freud's book, *Totem and Taboo*. The basis of the prohibition of the members of the totem was their dread of incest. Sigmund Freud, a non-Biblicist, aptly confesses his ignorance of the origin of their dread of incest:

This sternly maintained prohibition is very remarkable. There is nothing to account for it in anything that we have hitherto learned from the conception of the *totem* or from any of its attributes; that is, we do not understand how it happened to enter the system of totemism.

Freud's comments go on to reveal the fear of these tribesmen: Among the Battas of Sumatra these laws of avoidance affect all near relationships. For instance, it would be most offensive for a Battan to accompany his own sister to an evening party. A brother will feel most uncomfortable in the company of his sister to an evening party.

If either comes into the house the other prefers to leave. Nor will a father remain alone in the house with his daughter any more than the mother with her son. The Dutch missionary who reported these customs added that unfortunately he had to consider them well founded. It is assumed without question by these races that a man and a woman left alone together will indulge in the most extreme intimacy, and as they expect all kinds of punishments and evil consequences from consanguineous intercourse, they do quite right to avoid all temptations by means of such prohibitions.

Among the Akamba (or Wakamba) in British East Africa, a law of avoidance is in force which one would have expected to encounter more frequently. A girl must carefully avoid her own father between the time of her puberty and her marriage. She hides herself if she meets him on the street and never attempts to sit down next to him, behaving in this way right up to her engagement. But after her marriage no further obstacle is put in the way of her social intercourse with her father.

The most widespread and strictest avoidance, which is perhaps the most interesting one for civilized races is that which restricts the social relations between a man and his mother-in-law. It is quite general in Australia, but it is also in force among the Melanesian, Polynesian, and Negro races of Africa as far as the traces of totemism and group relationships reach, and probably further still.

On the Banks Islands these prohibitions are very severe and painfully exact. A man will avoid the proximity of his mother-in-law as she avoids his. If they meet by chance on a path, the woman steps aside and turns her back until he is passed, or he does the same.

In Vanna Lava (Port Patterson) a man will not even walk behind his mother-in-law along the beach until

the rising tide has washed away the trace of her footsteps. But they may talk to each other at a certain distance. It is quite out of the question that he should ever pronounce the name of his mother-in-law, or she his.

On the Solomon Islands, beginning with his marriage, a man must neither see nor speak with his mother-in-law. If he meets her he acts as if he did not know her and runs away as fast as he can in order to hide himself.¹²³

In the west today it appears that men have some peculiar propensity which repels them from their mothers-in law, but perhaps that repulsion is actually a secret attraction. Nevertheless, the Egyptians were not inhibited with any fear of sex within the forbidden degrees.

In the end one must consider the cause of the fall of the Egyptian Empire. A civilization which introduced the world to medical procedures, the chemistry of dyes, cosmetics, and embalming, they excelled in letters (hieroglyphics and demotic) as well as inventing the paper to write on, constructed the pyramids and sphinx, raised up the Pharaoh's, King Tut, and Cleopatra, and left behind that mathematical solution π (in Egypt 3.16), (today, after 4000 years: 3.14159265). It is difficult to precisely identify what disease caused this nation to fall from brilliance, but we should not eliminate the corruption of incest.

Did incest weaken the stock of Egypt? Were the Jewish woman birthing as the women of Egypt proclaim, "The Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered before the midwives come in unto them," (Ex. 1:19). The small family of Jacob had in a mere four hundred years threatened the nation of Egypt with their numbers, "Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come on, Let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land," (Ex. 1:9,10). As we mentioned the Lord God added to the affliction of Pharaoh, he destroyed their first-born and their fathers. His judgment of Egypt began on that first Passover, and it has never ceased, for the prophet

Ezekiel predicts, "It shall be the basest of the kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations; for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations," (Ezek. 29:15). This judgment has never ceased and will never cease. Could the sin of incest be the everlasting reason? Is the judgment of this nation bound up in its genes? Could this custom (an accepted social practice), or law (the protected right by a state sovereign) be the cause of such judgment? Yes! A thousand times, Yes! Listen to the anger of the Apostle when he discovered incest in the Church of Corinth:

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh. I Cor. 5:4,5

This custom, incest, was practiced prior to the fall of the greatest of ancient empires. Dear reader we are living during the fall of the greatest civilization since Egypt, and that is not the most fearful thing. The most fearful fall we are experiencing is the fall of the true church, the true body of Christ. The church today has reached the apostasy predicted by the Apostle:

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by work, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first ...
II Thess. 2:1-3a

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.
(I Tim. 4:1)

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers,

disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers [covenant breakers: divorcers], false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts.

II Tim. 3: 1-6

Dear reader, we are at the cross-road. The battle has been drawn. Can we stem this rising tide of evil custom, and permit another generation the peace of living in a creation-marriage world? The Egyptian customs were more dangerous than the bondage. Joseph escaped. Will we?

CHAPTER FOUR

Why Does Moses Permit Polygamy and Divorce?

Noah and his son's were commissioned to promulgate laws, but The Law came by Moses. Although the codes of the ancient societies marked the advancement of civilization, the Law of Moses was a masterpiece of ancient and modern jurisprudence. It has rightly been said that if the tables of stone were preserved, they would have become objects of worship today. But the fact of the matter is that the Law of God actually became an object of worship in the form of a religion. Not that it became Judaism, but that it became to some a belief in a way of salvation, a salvation of good works. The loftiness of the Law appeared to promise righteousness to the true follower. But this the law could not do. The Apostle was clear on this point, "Moreover, the law entered, that the offense might abound," (Rom. 5:20). Here Paul directly states, that the law's purpose was to condemn man, not to justify man. This is at the heart of understanding the Gospel and understanding the Bible as a whole.

Now we know that whatever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Rom.3:19,20

Some would say that Martin Luther was at the heart of the Reformation, but the heart and soul of the Reformation was the cry, *Sola Gratia*, by grace alone, i.e. faith alone in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the central dynamic of the Gospel; without this truth there would have been no Luther. The Law teaches

that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. In spite of these driving words, men secretly reach to the law for their righteousness. The law proves a man unjust, but it has no power to regenerate him; to justify him. There are just some things the Law cannot do; in that light the Law is *weak*. When man expects the law to provide him a system to obtain righteousness, he is barking up the wrong tree. Every purpose of the Law is destined to prove to man that he is guilty of sin—capital sin. This fact must be kept in mind when we approach any element in the study of the Law; polygamy and divorce are elements of the law.

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. James 2:10

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them. Gal. 3:10b

To the non-Jew the Decalogue is the Law (the Ten Commandments), but to the Jew the entire revelation of God is the Law. When considering specific commandments the Law actually records 613.¹²⁴ Most scholars agree that the Law of Moses is divided into three elements: a civil code, a religious code, and a moral code. The latter is the distinctive feature of the Law. It reveals a righteous God, as compared to the *immoral* idol-gods. The Gentile world establishes their idyllic on the Ten Commandments, the Decalogue. Throughout this dissertation all nations other than Israel are Gentile. The problem is compounded because the church as a whole regarding marriage has embraced the Gentile governments dictates of marriage-law. The state promulgates laws regulating marriage, and the church foolishly over-embraces those laws. This creates a problem. The problem is that the church because of their belief in and embracement of governmental marriage-laws is failing to regulate marriage according to the dictates of the God of Creation. Regarding marriage, believers often see the state and the church as the same law-giver. Believers trust that they have certain God given rights which apparently seem imbedded in some state regulations, but these are just the rights of the

sovereign man-king. And when the old legal philosophy is excited, that obedience to the law is righteousness, some believers and some churches practice legalism by employing the states marriage laws into the churches marriage discussion, and practice. They use the law to stop some mouths and to open others, but God said, that His Law was intended to stop every mouth.

Please permit this parenthesis: (Marriage is not a Sacrament. Before we continue any further keep this very important fact in mind: Marriage is not a Sacrament. Marriage in and of itself does not impart Grace. Marriage is the right thing to do, but it does not impart grace; the righteousness of Salvation. The word sacrament means an act that acquires the Grace of God. The only way to acquire the Grace of God is to put faith in the substitutionary blood sacrifice of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.)

As we continue keep this point in mind regarding the law. There is another sub objective of the law, i.e., to temporarily control sin. The concept of controlling sin ensures the existence of sin. The law cannot eradicate sin. To do so would require the extermination of mankind. The law cannot make even one man righteous, nor could it eradicate one sin. The law is weak in that light. But before we discuss this let us just consider these points.

The Mosaic Law Was A Marriage Covenant

Yes, Israel married Jehovah in the giving and acceptance of the law. The Scriptures speak of Israel as the wife of Jehovah and Jehovah as the husband of Israel.

Thus saith the Lord, The people who were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness, even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Jer. 31:3

Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness. Yea,

I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine.
Ezek. 16:8

The marriage ceremony took place in the wilderness of Sinai:

And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient, and Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.
Ex. 24:6-8

It must be kept in mind that the law was unique to Israel and Jehovah. It was literally their personal marriage contract. It was their intimate exchange of vows. What the Law was to these two it could not be to any other. This covenant was not made with any Gentile or any church. We must remember that stubborn fact. Although the many Gentiles want to share in the blessing of the Law, they nevertheless do not want to share in the curses, and in the plagues of the Law. Israel is the Chosen nation; His beloved nation. When Israel camped before Sinai, she looked up to heaven and said, "I am Ruth, thine handmaid, spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou [Jehovah] art a near kinsman." And Jehovah returned, "I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness. Yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." God was the courtesan, providing security for his beloved:

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all

their journeys; But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys. Ex. 40:34-38

The quality of the Sinai marriage was as magnificent as you would expect from the Creator, the Father of *creation-marriage*. It was bound permanently. Inseparable.

Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name. For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him. Deut. 11:22

Leaving Egypt and *cleaving* to Jehovah, Israel was married as she confesses that she would keep the commandments. Moses was the preacher who performed the ceremony:

And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. Ex. 24:3

The courtship led the bride into the tabernacle of her lover where the Shekinah Glory entered and the marriage was consummated. The vehicle of the *seed* of the woman, *creation-marriage* was now in the hands of the children of Abraham, the Jewish nation, Israel.

The Mosaic Law Established a Religious Sect

Judaism is bound in the Law. It was to be legally administered by the Levitical priesthood, a requirement attainable by a single nation, the Chosen Nation. Their marriage to Jehovah was marked with the union of faith. The wedding ring of Israel was a golden memorial, the Sabbath. Although marriage is not a sacrament,

the law raises Israelite marriage to the lofty heights only surpassed by the Savior's standard. In Israel the marriages of priests were regulated to a greater extent than other marriages. Abel Isaksson in his volume, *Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple*, suggests that the N.T. church should have a higher standard for marriage than others because the church is a kingdom of priests in the new temple age. Believers are the priests of the new temple, the body of Christ. And like the Levitical priests they have a higher standard than the world. Noting that Lev. 21:7 decrees that a priest must not marry a harlot, a violated virgin or a divorced woman, Isaksson goes on to state that Jesus' teaching on divorce in Matt. 19 was directly related to his eschatological view of the new Temple in the kingdom age, and the regulation of the priests of the new Temple: "Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away, but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before," (Ezek. 44:22).¹²⁵

Although Isaksson is a fine scholar a disagreement with him is here noted: Although the position of Levitical marriage and new Temple priesthood marriage is a lofty standard, it does not reach the height of perfection which Jesus reaches for all men: "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." This preacher teaches that this rule of Jesus applies to all men of all time.

The Law regulated every aspect of Jewish life, including their time. The Sabbath, the primary holy day, was followed with numerous holy days, holy weeks, and holy years. Their clothing, diet, and sacrifices were regulated. Their worship was to be exercised in a tabernacle to be constructed in the most precise detail. However the law could not transfer grace or righteousness; it could only transfer guilt. Nevertheless the law was a religious code; it was the religious creed of Israel.

The Law Was A Moral Code

From a moral standpoint the law surpassed the ancient codes which fell away like the hoarfrost to the burning rising sun. David's comments on the law of the Lord are fitting:

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise

simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eye. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Psa. 19:7-10

The reader may object: You dear writer have just said that the Law could not make one righteous, yet David proclaims that the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. Let me explain: Taken as a whole the law includes the three sections of the O.T., i.e. the books of Moses (the Pentateuch: the first five book of the Bible referred to as the books of the Law), the poetic books, and the historical books. To understand the whole O.T. as the law of God is to understand Psa. 19. Thus a true understanding of the entire O.T. will lead the believer to the real Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. To understand one's sin in light of a coming sacrificed Messiah Savior is to have the experience of having one's soul converted. What we are talking about in this chapter is the Law of God, the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, as an instrument of death not of life. As Paul so aptly wrote:

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Rom. 3:19

The moral beauty of the law led some to idolize it with their worship, thus missing it's purpose: to reveal the true sacrifice, their Messiah. Jehovah God created the Law to teach man his need for a Messiah, a Savior who men could worship, and man could believe in with all his heart to the converting and saving of his soul. But men missed the point of the law. Realizing it's moral loftiness, and being unable to worship two masters, they chose to worship the law and kill the Messiah Savior. They could not accept the force of the law. A Jewish man, the Apostle, Paul, came to understand the truth of the law, and he fully learned its moral lesson: "I had not known sin but by the law—that sin by the commandment might become exceedingly

sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin," (Rom. 7). A study of the ancient codes will lead the reader to see the superior moral quality of God's law; David's conclusion was that the "Law of thy mouth (of God) is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver," (Psa. 119:72). Unlike the *casuistic* (if - then) nature of the ancient codes the Decalogue sets a strong moral tone, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me; Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image; Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy; Honor thy father and thy mother; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, wife, manservant, maidservant, ox, ass, nor anything that is thy neighbors." Where the ancient codes regulated the exceptional cases,¹²⁶ God's law regulated the common daily ones.

The Mosaic Law Was a Civil Code, the Constitution of Israel

And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, all the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men to the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the hearing of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning these words.

Ex. 24:3-8

The civil nature of the law has too often been overlooked. Immediately after Jehovah stated the Ten Commandments he regulates the slave-master relationship. The next law regulates murder, and then lesser problems of a civil nature. The civil regulations make up a large section of the law. One scholar who has not missed the importance of the civil nature of the law is Leon Wood. Noting the ceremony recorded in Exodus 24:3-8 where Moses sprinkles the altar and the people with the sacrificial blood after preaching all the words of the Lord, and hearing the people vow to do all the words of the law, Wood sees in this sealing in blood of the testimony of God and in the testimony of the people as the birth of Israel as a legitimate nation.¹²⁷ This is a point of no small significance. Wood describes the event by saying that Israel now became a *true nation*, and again, Israel became God's *chartered nation*. The law was the Constitution of Israel. The altar which Moses erected to celebrate the union of Israel with her God was composed of twelve pillars, to represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The law was a moral dynamic, a religious dogma, and a civil constitution. As a moral dynamic it extended to all peoples and nations, but as a religious dogma and a civil constitution it was wholly Israel's.

When Moses divided the blood of this sacrifice and sprinkled it equally on the altar and on the people he beautifully depicted the equality that exists in marriage. Isaksson makes this fitting comment: "In the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel there was no question of their being equal partners, nor was there in marriage any question of man and woman being equal partners."¹²⁸ This marriage was consummated when the Shekinal Glory entered the Holy of Holies, and the marriage was made legal with the public vows and signing of the covenant in blood. Marriage is a legal agreement, and a physical agreement. The church can never be Israel and Israel can never be the church.

The Law Is Weak

Sola Gratia is the cry of the preacher. Salvation is by grace alone. The corrupt doctrine of works contaminates the purity of the Gospel. The pollution of Legalism is at the heart of the heresy. It is the leaven which the woman mixed with the meal to leaven the whole

lump. The fundamental Bible believing church has unitedly fought this disease, and will continue to fight it—is my prayer to God. When anyone is suspected of teaching works, he is identified and publicly accused of propagating the lie. The faithful quickly applaud the denunciation. But the most malicious nature of this evil is that those who oppose it are often captured by its subtleness. It is here at the junction of marriage that the believing church while accusing others of Legalism become themselves unknowingly practitioners of Legalism. The primary truth that all must come to understand about the law is that the law is “*weak*.”

For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. Heb. 7:18,19;22

The law was weak because it could not say: Thou shalt not divorce. It could not say that because it already said, "Thou shalt not kill." To prohibit divorce would have “*totally*” revealed the heart of man. Jesus amplified the law to reveal the heart of the man who called his brother a fool, and the man who looked upon a woman with lust. But for Moses to prohibit divorce would have caused a rebellion in the heart of man that would have brought the nation to naught. The will of man explodes with unbridled force when ordered to remain with a wife he has determined to drive from his life. If he cannot kill her, he must have the right to divorce her. Polygamy and divorce were both concessions of a weak law; and as the ancient codes revealed man in his heart was committed to polygamy and divorce.

The Law Permits Polygamy

What was true about the law and divorce was true about the law and polygamy. It appears the heart of man was so hard and stubborn that he could not be legislated away from his sin. As we have shown from the ancient law codes man assumed he has certain rights; rights that he believed were his birthright. If the sovereign

king-man wanted several wives, or if his primary wife could not provide offspring or what ever he expected, he believed he had a unalienable right to acquire more than one wife.

If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated, and if the first-born son be hers that was hated; then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated, which is indeed the first-born.

Deut. 21:15,16

Without any apology, the law acknowledges that polygamy was the acceptable custom of all men, even at Sinai. This regulation governing inheritance rights is relatively minor, but a major problem when one considers the doctrine of *creation-marriage*—God only created one wife for man. Notice that the man was permitted to continue his hatred towards the wife of his first-born, although it protected her honor in her child.

If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without the family unto a stranger; her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him as his wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, that the first-born whom she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother who is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.

Deut. 25:5,6

As mentioned regarding Onan in Genesis 38—*liver*, meaning a husband's brother—levirate marriage was not polygamy. If the child of this marriage belonged to the deceased brother, then the mother also belonged to the brother. Most commentators agree that the levirate custom or law did not interfere with the living brother's existent marriage. In other words within these limits the brother-in-law's marriage might co-exist with the prohibition of marriage with a brother's wife; whereas, if the deceased brother had a son or children,

such a marriage was forbidden as prejudicial to the fraternal relation.¹²⁹ The levirate however speaks well for procreation, on which God obviously places a very high value.

Progressive spiritual development, or what is referred to in the discipline of hermeneutics as *progressive revelation*, seems to play a role in the man's understanding of marriage. Edersheim make this observation:

Of course, against all this may be set the permission of *polygamy*, which undoubtedly was in force at the time of our Lord, and the ease with which *divorce*, might be obtained. In reference to both these, however, it must be remembered that they were temporary concessions to "the hardness" of the people's heart. For, not only must the circumstances of the times and the moral state of the Jewish and of neighboring nations be taken into account, but there were progressive stages of spiritual development. If these had not been taken into account, the religion of the Old Testament would have been unnatural and an impossibility. Suffice it, that 'from the beginning it was not so,' nor yet intended to be so in the end—the intermediate period thus marking the gradual progress from the perfectness of the idea to the perfectness of it's realization.¹³⁰

As progression implies a growing knowledge base from premature to mature, it appears that man's understanding of creation-marriage had reached such a low ebb that God had to gradually recover man from his demise. Man's premature understanding of marriage includes the following idea:

The Israelite matrimonial code is also formulated entirely with regard to the husband's interests. Thus the wife may not have liaisons outside marriage, but the husband may do so, provided that he does not thereby infringe another man's rights. As the primary purpose of marriage is to maintain the man's

lineage through numerous offspring, polygamy is a natural form of marriage.¹³¹

If a man find a damsel who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and they be found; then the man who lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days. Deut. 22:28,29

The law here assumes the right of the damsel's father to deny the perpetrator the right of marriage which is mentioned in Exodus 22:16,17, however it makes no mention of the possibility that the perpetrator was previously married. Actually it assumes that possibility and the reflection is that the man would simply be obligated to practice polygamy. It was not a capital crime for a married man to deflower a virgin. The penalty for the seduction simply required the seducer to marry the victim, and prohibited the right to divorce the woman.

And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman who is a bondmaid (slave girl) betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; she shall not be put to death, because she was not free. Lev. 19:20

Apparently the woman did not resist with a scream; her punishment, scourging, while the perpetrator was obviously unpunished.

When thou goest to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive, and seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire for her, that thou wouldest have her as thy wife, then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails, and she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house and bewail her father and her mother a full month; and after that

thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife. And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go where she will. But thou shalt not sell her at all for money; thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her. Deut. 21:10-14

Polygamy may or may not be involved here but it appears that this law sheds a favorable light on the possibility of such.

As previously mentioned, Jehovah knew the heart of the people would demand a king when they secured the Promised Land. He also knew the propensities of man's hard heart, the ravenous polygamist, to multiply wives. As previously explained: man's insatiable sin nature could not be redeemed by the law, the law simply attempted to control man in his sin, and as we pointed out polygamy was tolerated within the realm of the law. Polygamy was a sin, which was not directly acknowledged by the law. It seemed the only conditions it required was that the polygamist chose an unbetrothed wife, and that he faithfully support all his wives.

Among the unacknowledged sins which God tolerated because of the hardness of Israel's heart was polygamy, which encouraged licentiousness and the tendency to sensual excesses, and to which but a weak barrier had been presented by the warning that had been given for the Israelitish kings against taking many wives (Deut 17:17), opposed as such a warning was to the notion so prevalent in the East both in ancient and modern times, that a well-filled harem is essential to a princely court. ¹³²

An Israelite king would now advance an additional threat to *creation-marriage*, in that he was in a new position to acquire wealth, and the consequence of his wealth would increase his power to support a multitude of wives. The Lord foresaw the king drunk with wives, to the turning away of his heart:

But King Solomon loved many foreign women; in addition to the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the

Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites, of course the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David, his father. I Kings 11:1-4

What Is The Abomination of Deuteronomy 24:1-4

1 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor 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.

3 And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter's husband die, who took her to be his wife,

4 Her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the Lord. And thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. Deut. 24:1-4

Moses now reveals to us in the Law, and I might say without apology, the idea of divorce. Here again it just appears as an *act that will occur* and it is without a strict prohibition. Jesus said that Moses permitted it so because the heart of man was so callous, that it

appears for God to permit man to exist He had to permit divorce to exist. At Sinai, God taught us that to permit man's existence He had to permit the existence of polygamy and divorce. Jesus would however abolish that permission for not only would he prohibit polygamy and divorce, but He would also provide the power and grace for man to live lovingly while under that prohibition; the man could now experience the new birth in Christ. Jesus could do what the Law in no wise could perform.

Now let us examine this text. The hermeneutical principal of *Historical Priority*, must be honored when interpreting any text of Scripture, to do otherwise is foolhardy. The reader who attempts to understand this text by employing his New Testament ideas will fail to comprehend its meaning. We have labored to show you the nature of the ancient law codes, and the historical concepts of the ancient Eastern peoples. From these codes we have explored the dynamics that generated ancient thought regarding divorce and polygamy. It is of the gravest danger for the reader and exegete to bring his historical-cultural thoughts into the ancient records, and this is just what many have done. Abel Isaksson aptly chides John Murry for, "basing his interpretation (Deut. 24) on Christian assumptions,"¹³³ and Heth and Wedham join in chorus, "Murry, giving these verses an interpretation based on New Testament assumptions, goes so far as to say that the divorce is what is wrong here and bears the whole onus of responsibility for the defilement that is sure to enter when the first marriage is restored after the consummation of the second."¹³⁴

The O.T. divorce debate is centralized in the Deut. 24 text. When all is said and done, the victor of this debate will emerge from this ring of Scripture. While analyzing this text theologians speak of it's protasis and the apodosis. The protasis is the subordinate clause, and the apodosis is the main clause of a conditional sentence. The former refers to the "if" of the proposal, while the latter refers to the "then" of the condition, i.e., (condition/conclusion, or the if/then). Verse 1 thru 3 of (Deut. 24:1-4) deal with certain *if* conditions, while verse 4 deals with the *then* of the conditional statement. The majority of commentators see divorce as the subject of this text; *this is incorrect*. It is a *remarriage* text. The driving concern of the text is found in (v. 4) which states that the abominable act is a prohibited remarriage. When God said that the abomination would defile the land, *cause the land to sin*, He uses the same language as he used in

Leviticus 18, the incest chapter.

Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things; for in all these the nations are defiled, which I cast out before you. And the land is defiled; therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and mine judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: For all these abominations have the men of the land done, who were before you, and the land is defiled; That the land spew not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spewed out the nations that were before you. Lev. 18:24-28

The abomination is akin to the acts of incest listed in the Leviticus text. Was the remarriage to a previous wife, who had herself remarried, an act of incest? As we shall see the combined scholarship of Isaksson, Yaron, Wenham, and Heth have collectively reached the summit of understanding regarding the abomination. Therefore, since the *abomination* is the primary object of this text, we will reveal this truth before we discuss the meaning of the unclean thing or divorce.

The Abomination of Deuteronomy 24:4

As we noted there are three *if conditions* in this text: (1) If a man found some uncleanness in his wife, and (2) If a man divorced that wife, and (3) If that woman married another man, *then* that man (the first husband) could not remarry that woman (his first wife) because she was *defiled*. As mentioned the three *if* clauses are subordinate, while the *then* clause is the main clause. And here the main clause (the *then* clause) states that when the woman in question meets the criteria of all the three subordinate conditions she is *defiled* and it is *then* an abomination for her first husband to have her again. Now divorce and remarriage are permitted in the law, save for this one exception, *id. est.*, the man could not marry a former divorced wife who had been another man's after he put her away. However, she was permitted to marry another. Heth and Wenham comment on

the general permission of divorce and remarriage within the law:

Why then does the Old Testament not ban divorce altogether? We are just not told. It is true that in ancient times divorce was expensive and infrequent; perhaps it was thought that it would make for greater social peace to allow divorce in a few cases rather than to ban it altogether. The penalties for adultery and divorce constantly reminded men and women that under Old Testament law polygamy was permitted, so a man could have sexual relations with more than one woman perfectly legally. By forbidding remarriage after divorce, Jesus simultaneously forbade polygamy. The Old Testament is therefore not inconsistent in both allowing divorce and holding that a bond still subsists between the original partners. If a polygamous man could have relations with more than one wife, so could a remarried divorcee.¹³⁵

As we simplify this text to the *if-then* interpretation we see a similarity of this text with the Matthew 19 exception clause. In Matthew divorce was forbidden except for one cause, and here we find that remarriage is permitted except for one cause. The real question of Deuteronomy 24 is not the meaning of *some uncleanness*, but the meaning of *defiled* in (v. 4). Along with Murry, P.C. Craigie forces his New Testament teaching into this text:

The language (*defiled*) suggests adultery (see Lev. 18:20) the sense is that the woman's remarriage after the first divorce is similar to adultery in that the woman cohabits with another man. However, if the woman were than to remarry her first husband, after divorcing the second, the analogy with adultery would become even more complete; the woman lives first with one man, then another, and finally returns to the first.¹³⁶

Heth and Wenham continue to comment:

Yet in this statute the second marriage is regarded as perfectly legal. It is the restoration of the first that is prohibited (v. 4). Commentators advancing this position seem to be reading New Testament ideas back into the Old (cf. Matt. 5:32). The language (*defiled* v. 4) is suggestive, but that it anticipates the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament that remarriage after divorce is adultery is by no means certain.¹³⁷

The majority of the Deuteronomy 24 commentators labor the *unclean thing*, “some uncleanness” (v. 1) in what seems as an endless speculation; with very little discussion of (v. 4). This is done in their attempt to prove that divorce was permitted in the law for infidelity, or adultery as per their interpretation of the N.T., (Matt. 5 and 19). But their interpretation is so wrong; it should go without saying, since the law plainly required the death penalty for adultery, not divorce. But in the discussion of Deut. 24 the *defiled* of (v. 4) and the *abomination* has been given little mention. Dobson like Hopewell suggest that the prohibition to remarry the defiled wife was aimed at preventing the abominable custom of Egypt, that of *wife swapping*.¹³⁸ Their explanation is that Moses by requiring a bill of divorce was placing a written legal requirement in the way of hasty divorces. Some may contend that the custom of wife swapping was made easy with the ancient custom of verbal divorce.¹³⁹ As it remains a custom in Arabic lands today, the man had only to pronounce this verbal statement over his wife three times: I _____ divorce _____ my wife.¹⁴⁰

The proponents of the *prevention* doctrine teach that the writing of the bill of divorce was intended to cause the man to stop and think more about what he was doing; thus a way of preventing hasty divorce. But Yaron argues; "the Deuteronomic provision would hardly serve to deter an angry husband intent on divorcing his wife. The one thing he would want at that moment is to be free of his wife for good.

Beside in biblical times the chief deterrent to divorce was financial. Usually the husband forfeited the dowry and sometimes had to make a divorce payment as well." ¹⁴¹

Murry sees the defilement as a matter of "gross sexual immorality", "gross abnormality", or "gross irregularity." ¹⁴² He struggles with the meaning of the word defile because he labors to ensure that remarriage as a whole is permissible:

It should be noted that it is only with reference to the prohibited return to the first husband that the defilement concerned is mentioned. The remarriage on the part of the divorced woman is not expressly stated to be defilement irrespective of return to the first husband. For these considerations we are required to exercise great caution before stigmatizing the remarriage as adulterous. ¹⁴³

Murry wrestles with his New Testament problem—that remarriage after divorce is adultery—when he attempts to define the word *defiled*. Here he is drifting aimlessly, as do the other "adultery group" scholars, but there is hope on the horizon. The total truth of the (Deut. 24:1-4) comes to light when with R. Yaron who sows the seed of thought which when combined with Isaksson's contribution of the new view of consanguinity, the kinfolk nature of Adam and Eve in marriage, and with the final touch of Wenham, and Heth are all combined; then the secret of the (v. 4) text is unlocked. Isaksson's initial contribution:

To be someone's bone and flesh as a common expression to denote kinship (see, for example, Gen. 29:14; Jdg. 9:2; II Sam. 5:1, I Chr. 11:1). Very likely it is used here also in allusion not only to the fact that woman was created from Adam's rib but also to the consequence of this, viz. that man and woman are closely related to each other. If we accept the translation of "rib", the text says, strictly speaking, only that woman was of man's bone but

not of his flesh. When the man nevertheless says shortly afterwards, on seeing the woman, that she is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, the combination of these two words, "bone" and "flesh", must have been chosen as a common expression for kinship. What is to be explained in this context is, of course, just how it could have come about that man feels the attraction of forming a unity with his wife more strongly than his affinity to his closest relations—his father and his mother ...

With this background of the use of the word to denote kinship, it is reasonable to translate it [bone - flesh] in Gen. 2:24 also by the word "relation", since in this context it is a question of how the original relationship between man and woman forms the explanation of man's strong desire to cleave to his wife. Since man and woman were originally of the same bone and flesh, a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, in order that they may become one flesh, i.e., together form a family.¹⁴⁴

Yaron, building on Isaksson saw in the defilement: the abomination of incest:

It is submitted that *Deuteronomy 24:1ff* is to be explained not in terms of adultery but by reference to another sphere, namely to that of *incest*. This has one immediate advantage; there is no need for stigmatizing the (lawful) marriage of the divorcee as an "implicit" crime. The second marriage puts the wife finally beyond the reach of her first husband; this—and nothing more—is expressed by her being "defiled" (verse 4). More than that, the reference to incest allows us, finally, also to arrive at the true purpose of the law. Rules of incest, it is widely held, are designed to protect the family and to isolate, or insulate, existing socially approved personal relationships from the disruptive influences

of sexual tension. Ordinarily, it is true, rules of incest apply within the family group, and in this point *Deuteronomy 24:1ff* is different; nevertheless the basic aim is the same. We wish therefore to submit that the prohibition expressed in verse 4 aims at the protection of the second marriage. When the divorcee has married another man, we have before us the possibility of tension within the "triangle" which has come into being. The first husband may wish to get back his wife, having repented of dismissing her, the wife may draw comparisons between her two husbands unfavourable to the second one, and may indulge in overtures disruptive of the second marriage. Or, nothing of the kind may have actually happened, but the second husband may go through agonies of jealousy and apprehension, making life a hell for the wife also. All these possibilities are avoided once the reunion is prevented. And it can be prevented effectively only by outlawing it, by declaring it to 'evah, an "abomination before the Lord." This, then, is the very opposite of the approach taken by *Matthew* and followed by the "adultery-group" of scholars. Not only does *Deuteronomy* not object to the second marriage, it takes effective steps to ensure its stability and continuation.¹⁴⁵

Yaron viewed *Deuteronomy* as regulating the psychological aspects of incest, but incest has a darker side. It was Gordon Wenham who seized upon the opportunity offered by Yaron's insight, and captured the analogy of Scripture. His initial thoughts were expressed in his commentary on *Leviticus* published as part of *The International Commentary on the Old Testament*. Wenham would team up with William Heth and publish the marvelous scholarly volume, *Jesus and Divorce*, and it would be in this book that the bushel was finally removed from the light of (*Deuteronomy 24:1-4*). As we watch Wenham open up the concepts of incest in *Leviticus* we get a full view of the truth:

The Lord spoke to Moses as follows: Speak to the Israelites and say to them, I am the Lord your God. You must not behave as they do in the land of Egypt where you have been living: and you must not behave as they do in the land of Canaan, which I am bringing you to; you must not follow their rules. You must do my laws and keep my rules to follow them; I am the Lord your God. You must keep my rules and my laws; if a man does them, he will enjoy life through them: I am the Lord.

(Wenham translation/Lev.18:1-5)

Wenham notes that the phrase, "I am the Lord your God", is almost identical to the phrase which introduces the ten commandments in (Ex. 20:2).¹⁴⁶ He points out Israel's familiarity with the heathen customs, and notes that she is warned to avoid, and at the same time she is taught what she was expected to imitate; quoting that standard of Leviticus, "For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy (Lev. 11:44).¹⁴⁷ Wenham goes on to title verses 6-18 of Leviticus 18 the *Forbidden Unions*:

No man among you may approach any of his close relatives to have sexual intercourse: I am the Lord. Do not have intercourse with your parents: she is your mother: do not have intercourse with her. Do not have intercourse with your father's wife; she is one with your father. Do not have intercourse with your sister, your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether she belongs to local kindred or distant kindred. Do not have intercourse with your granddaughter, because she is one with you. Do not have intercourse with your step-sister, if she belongs to your father's kindred; she is your sister. Do not have intercourse with your father's sister; she is your father's relative. Do not have intercourse with your mother's sister, because she is your mother's relative. Do not uncover the nakedness of your uncle; you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. Do not

have intercourse with your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife; do not have intercourse with her. Do not have intercourse with your brother's wife; she is one with your brother. Do not have intercourse with a woman and her daughter; do not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to have intercourse with her; they are relatives, it is wickedness. Do not marry a woman as well as her sister to distress her by having intercourse with her while she is alive.

(Wenham translation/ Lev. 18:6-18)

Here Wenham is quick to point out that "close relative" is literally "flesh of his flesh."¹⁴⁸ Adam and Eve were a family. The family is the building unit of mankind, and this unit was protected by the prohibitions of certain sexual unions within the family. Wenham makes this interesting comment on the forbidden degrees mentioned in Leviticus 18:

There is one striking omission from this table. Marriage with one's daughter is not proscribed. This is probably because it was already accepted that such a union was illicit (Gen. 19:30ff) [Lot and his daughters]. It was forbidden both in the laws of Hammurabi (LH 154) and in the Hittite laws (HL 195). In other words these regulations extend the prohibition on incest already accepted in other parts of the ancient Near East.¹⁴⁹

Wenham and Heth then go on to reach the summit of this mountainous text:

Through her first marriage the woman entered into the closest form of relationship with her husband; divorce did not terminate this relationship; she still counted as a very close relative. If a divorced couple want to come together again, [the wife having another marriage in the interim, my note] it would be as bad as a man marrying his sister. That is

why it is described as 'an abomination before the Lord' that 'causes the land to sin.'¹⁵⁰

In the final analysis this text might be translated: When a man divorces his primary wife, he is permitted to marry again, *except* he cannot remarry his former wife if she had remarried during the interim of their separation. Thus we see a universal statement with an exception clause—the divorcee may remarry with one exception: he could not commit the abomination of incest. Fornication. The marriage would have been a fornication-marriage. The marriage to the first wife would be equal to a man marrying his own daughter.

Some Uncleaness; Some Indecency (ērwaṭ dabar)

When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found *some uncleaness* [some indecency] in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. Deut. 24:1

Heth and Wenham are correct when they say, "The interpretation of 'some indecency' in verse one is not really that important in this argument."¹⁵¹ They follow Abel Isaksson, R. Yaron, and P.C. Craigie; the last of whom they quote:

... strictly speaking, the legislation relates only to particular cases of remarriage; the protasis [vv.1-3] contains incidental information about marriage and divorce, but does not specifically legislate on those matters. The verses do not legislate divorce, but treat it as a practice already known ...¹⁵²

It is interesting to note that Abel Isaksson was the earliest pioneer to begin beating this drum. Other modern writers such as John MacArthur, J. Carl Laney, Paul E. Steele, Charles C. Ryrie, David Atkinson, John Murry, and as mentioned Heth, and Wenham all see the protasis in vv. 1-3 and the apodosis in v.4. Murry points out that the *Septuagint* "adopts this construction" and older commentators like

Keil, Delitzsch, Calvin, Driver, and Reider all favor the position that (Deut. 24:1-4) be interpreted as a prohibition of the specified remarriage.¹⁵³

The unclean or indecent thing is of little consequence to this text, or to the subject of divorce. Divorce was an accepted custom for all the reasons previously presented. With this said, it remains disconcerting that God's Law did not legislate *creation-marriage*. But can any law legislate virtue to man who's heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and is not *creation-marriage* virtuous. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, (Jn. 1:17). But for now let us complete the exposition of (Deut. 24:1-4).

When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor 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. Deut. 24:1

The "When" of this text has led some to believe that this was a nuptial event, some revelation of the marriage bed. Although not relating their comments to the wedding night, Chase and Edersheim make the following comment:

In itself, therefore, the expression need not denote more than something which is disgusting or unwholesome; or even it would appear, some bodily flaw which might cause disgust and aversion.¹⁵⁴

Alfred Edersheim alludes to the problem of physical unpleasantness as being a cause of divorce: "On the other hand, the wife could insist on being divorced if her husband were a leper, or affected with polypus."¹⁵⁵

Donald W. Shaner quotes Chase:

Chase agrees, however, that "some unseemly thing" (Deut. 24:1) does not mean unchastitly (punishable

by death) but rather "some improper or indecent behavior" or possibly some bodily flaw.¹⁵⁶

Regarding the timing of the "when" of the jealousy text we are sure:

If any man take a wife, and go in unto her and hate her, and give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and *when* I came to her, I found her not a maid; then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate.
Deut. 22:13-15

On the nuptial eve, during the act of copulation, the man found reason to deplore his bride. During his attempt to consummate the marriage the man found a barrier. He sensed that his wife, who obviously claimed to be a virgin, was not. In his mind he believed he married a harlot. Therefore at that instant, before the conclusion of the wedding day, the marriage was in a serious crisis. Is it possible that the "when" of (Deut. 24:1) is a reference to the marriage night? Could it be that the man saw some bodily flaw, physical disease, or other physical unpleasantness which caused him to loath the woman he married—"she find no favor in his eyes."

The text in Ephesians is appropriate here:

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
Eph. 5:25-27

One final comment regarding the timing of the "when" of Deut. 24:1:

When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any

business, but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife whom he hath taken.

Deut. 24:5

Regarding the “*When*” of (v. 1) it is interesting that the “*When*” of (v. 5) should be injected right in this place in the Bible. Immediately after the so called “*divorce text of the O.T. Deut 24. 1-4*” here in Deut. 24:5 we read another statement with the word *when* that obviously means the wedding night. Also the idea of marriage in this text is pregnant, i.e. great with love and joy.

Now let us go on to the meaning of the words some uncleanness, *some indecency*, (èrwaṭ dabar). Most commentators believe the term is used to identify a myriad of minor offences (certainly not adultery); offences that triggered divorce; the definition of which was amplified by N.T. times where we find the school of Rabbi Hillel permitting divorce for "any cause." Here Edersheim comments:

We know that it included every kind of impropriety, such as going about with loose hair, spinning in the street, familiarly talking with men, ill-treating her husband's parents in his presence, brawling, that is, 'speaking to her husband so loudly that the neighbors could hear her in the adjoining house' (*Chethub, vii. 6*), a general bad reputation, or the discovery of fraud before marriage."¹⁵⁷

Others include: poor cooking, no sons, or anything else that displeased her husband.¹⁵⁸ "They divorced them for the most frivolous reasons: if she burnt his biscuits, or didn't season his food right, or if he did not like her manners, or if she was a poor housekeeper, *even if he finds a woman more handsome than she.*"¹⁵⁹ Another mentions the "violation of the Law of Moses, or of Jewish customs, such as the woman causing her husband to eat food on which a tithe had not been paid; not setting apart the first dough; appearing in public with disheveled hair; spinning and exposing her arms in public; conversing indiscriminately with men; speaking disrespectfully of her husband's parents in his presence; brawling in the house; or spoiling a dish for him."¹⁶⁰ William J. Hopewell

agrees: "When Deuteronomy 24 was written, the Jewish people had followed the terrible sin of the Egyptians in wife-swapping, putting away their wives for the least cause, and had degenerated marriage to a very primitive status."

There also existed another school of thought during N.T. times, those of Rabbi Shammai: he believed that the indecency, (*èrwaṭ dabar*), was unchastity: adultery. Many N.T. commentators place Jesus on the side of Shammai, earning them Edersheim's censure: "It is a serious mistake on the part of commentators to set the teaching of Christ on this subject by the side of that of Shammai."¹⁶¹ There is no question of what the Law taught regarding adultery. It was not a matter of divorce. It was a capital crime: the death penalty.

If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman. So shalt thou put away evil from Israel. Deut. 22:22

And the man who committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he who committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. Lev. 20:10

Edersheim exhorts NT commentators to remember the absolute position of the Law concerning unchastity. By putting Jesus on the side of Shammai they were misrepresenting the position of Jesus regarding adultery and the law. Sexual intercourse on the part of the woman with any man other than her husband was a capital crime: (1) In the "law of jealousies", (Deut. 22:13) the woman was put to death if she was found not to be a virgin on her wedding night; (2) If a betrothed virgin was forced by another man to lay with him, and she did not cry rape, both the man and the damsel were to be stoned to death; (3) and the married adulteress and adulterer were to be put to death. In the law adultery was always a capital crime. The *èrwaṭ dabar* could never mean adultery.

Edersheim goes on to say that *èrwaṭ dabar* was translated: "a matter of shame, [literally nakedness]." Regarding this idea Abel Isaksson presents this interesting comment regarding *èrwaṭ dabar* (exposure or the nakedness of a thing):

This expression is usually interpreted to mean something shameful or repulsive, without going into any detail as to what it is that arouses the husband's loathing for his wife. The expression occurs in another passage in the O.T., viz. in Dt. 23.14. Verse 12 of chap. 23 mentions that there is to be a place outside the camp at which all feces from the camp are to be buried. This is to be done lest Yahweh, when he walks through the camp, should find (something exposed). It is clear that here *dabar* stands for human excrement. It is accordingly an euphemism. Yahweh must not see excrement lying about exposed. The expression is similarly used as an euphemism in Dt. 24:1 but here it does not stand for human excrement but for the female pudendum ... [with reference the mention of the female token in Dt.22] here means a cloth or garment of some kind, as a covering for the female pudendum, which the husband gave his wife at their marriage as a sign that she was his (cf. for example, Ezek. 16:8: "And I spread my skirt over you and covered your nakedness", cf. Ru. 3.9). While Leviticus speaks of uncovering the nakedness of a father (Lev. 18:7 f., 20:11), Deuteronomy speaks of uncovering the skirt of a father (23:1, 27:20). Thus here also Deuteronomy avoids directly mentioning the pudendum.

In Dt. 24.1 it cannot be a matter of some other man having lifted the covering and exposed the wife's pudendum. This would have been tantamount to adultery and in that case there could be no question of a new marriage for the wife, since both parties would be stoned to death.

Probably it is a question here of the wife having exposed herself voluntarily or involuntarily. All other exposure of his wife's pudendum than that which the husband himself is responsible for arouses his loathing. That the husband's improper exposure

of himself in the presence of any other person of the opposite sex than the woman he was married to aroused the wife's contempt is clear from the story of how Michal despised David when in his dance before the ark of the Lord he accidentally exposed himself to the crowd (2 Sam. 6:12-20). Michal interpreted David's involuntary exposure of himself as a deliberate exposure to the servant maids. But it is only licentious people (2 Sam. 6:20) who expose themselves in this way. No modest Israelite woman will do so. The wife will no longer find grace in her husband's eyes when he discovers her exposing her nakedness. This is also clear from Ezek. 23:18, in which it is said that the man's soul turns away from the wife who exposes her nakedness.¹⁶²

Isaksson goes on to support this view with the translation of LXX and the conservative rabbis. With reference to his comment that (*ērwat dabar*) was used as a euphemism for human excrement it should be pointed out that the *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament* lists 51 references to the word *dabar*, and in 49 of those references it means *nakedness*. Therefore the two remaining uses belong to Deut. 24 and here:

Thou shalt have a place outside the camp, whither thou shalt go abroad; and thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon; and it shall be, when thou wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee: for the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy; that he see no unclean (*dabar*) thing in thee, and turn away from thee. Deut. 23:12-14

Kiel and Delitzsch comment:

For the camp was to be kept holy, because Jehovah walked in the midst of it, in order that he might not

see the *nakedness of a thing*, i.e., anything to be ashamed of in the people, *and turn away from thee*. There was nothing shameful in the excrement itself; but want of reverence, which the people would display through not removing it, would offend the Lord and drive him out of the camp of Israel. ¹⁶³

Exposed excrement, the *èrwaṭ dabar* the camp of Israel, would have been the act which would have caused Jehovah to be offended, thus driving him out of the camp. Likewise in Deut. 24:1 the *èrwaṭ dabar*, unclean thing, would have caused the wife to find no favor in the eyes of her husband.

As we said, the meaning of *èrwaṭ dabar* in the context of Deut. 24:1 is of little consequence. Edersheim concludes:

And the Jewish law unquestionably allowed divorce on almost any grounds; the difference being, not as to what was lawful, but on what grounds a man should put the Law in motion, and make use of the absolute liberty which it accorded him. ¹⁶⁴

One of the barriers against divorce in the OT was its financial cost. Since a bride price, dowry, was essential to the contract, the paramour had to literally count the cost of investing in and additional wife. Perhaps the anticipation of wealth provoked the admonition to Israel's future king, "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself," (Deut. 17:17). This remains a problem with divorced-remarried polygamist in the West: they must pay alimony to their previous wives, even though the law only permits one wife at a time. Multiple wives is still expensive. Traditionally many believe that Moses was erecting a barrier to the easy divorce of the day by requiring the man to write a *Bill of Divorce*, but Heth and Wenham disagree:

Deuteronomy 24:1- 4 cannot be taken as evidence that Moses sought to limit the husband's absolute right to divorce his wife whenever he wished and for whatever reason. Furthermore, this Deuteronomic concession would hardly deter an angry husband intent on divorcing his wife. When a man divorced

his wife, he would not want her to return to him. Since the law accurately mirrors his feelings when he is giving the divorce it can hardly have discouraged him. Besides, ... probably the strongest deterrent to divorce in Israel and all over the ancient Near East was financial, since the husband had to forfeit the dowry and may have been involved also in other payments to his former wife.¹⁶⁵

These traditionalists also claim that the bill of divorce would have listed the wives faults and along with the time required to write the document would have in itself regulated hasty divorce.

On the _____ day of the week _____ in the month _____ in the year _____ from the beginning of the world, according to the common computation in the province of _____, I, _____ the son of _____ by whatever name I may be known, of the town of _____ with the entire consent of mind and without any constraint, have divorced, dismissed, and expelled thee, _____ daughter of _____ by whatever name thou art called, of the town of _____ so as to be free at thine own disposal, to marry whomsoever thou pleasest, without hindrance from anyone, from this day forever. Thou art therefore free for anyone (who would marry thee). Let this be thy bill of divorce from me, a writing of separation and expulsion according to the law of Moses and Israel.

Witness _____, the Son of _____,
 Witness _____, the Son of _____,

Obviously the woman's faults were not documented in all divorce bills as evidenced here. To the contrary the bill leads one to believe that divorce was rather simple, and if anything the bill made it a greater reality and seems to ensure the idea of permanency. Men like Jay Adams become ecstatic with the revelation that divorce was legal. They then violently drive the O.T. concepts into the NT. Dwelling on the word, divorce, as found in the bill he attempts to convey the

message that the marriage was forever put asunder:" *kerithuth* > *karath*> (1)to cut off; hew down; is used for hewing down timber (I Kings 5:18); (2) amputation (Lev. 22:24); (3) decapitation (I Sam. 17:51). It indicates severing of what was once a living union." ¹⁶⁶ The following statement is typical of Jay Adams: "Contrary to some opinions, the concept of divorce is biblical." He goes on to say, "Divorce, for some persons, under some circumstances is altogether proper and not the object of God's hatred." ¹⁶⁷

But as we have seen, regardless of those who like Adams labor to declare that divorce is a tool to put marriage asunder, we have proved that divorce is impotent in its determination to defeat creation-marriage. Adams is incorrect, for he failed to regard the main clause of the text, the abomination. A man could not return to his divorced wife if she in fact had been married to another during the interim of their separation. To do so would be an abomination. She was kinfolk. She was through marriage equal to his sister, or his daughter. The words to divorce, to cut off, to hew down, to amputate, or to decapitate, contrary to Jay Adams do not, and cannot put asunder the marriage bond which was created in the garden, *creation-marriage*. The law could not separate what God hath joined together; therefore the only thing the law could do was permit man to legally separate from the woman he was bound to, permanently.

Thus the law permitted polygamy and divorce because the heart of man was so totally evil that man could not conceive of a marriage that was permanent. We read the words of the disciples—who after walking with and becoming followers of Jesus for some time—as proof that even believers cannot easily accept the doctrine of permanency:

His disciples say unto him, If the case of a man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. Matt. 19:10

CHAPTER FIVE

Was God A Divorce´ ?

As we descend Mount Sinai we must wade through the serpent filled swamps of the wilderness of Sin before we reach the Promised Land. The next major mountain in the story of the Law will find us in Galilee where Jesus defines the true nature of the law in His Sermon of the Mount (to look with lust upon a woman is adultery). Come along as we join with the band of Israel who carry the cherished cargo, *the marriage doctrine*. This would be the vehicle of the one who would preach that creation-marriage sermon (Matt. 19). As we trek along, we will keep our eyes on the progress of the vehicle of love. Will the serpent's venom poison her?

As we stated earlier, Jehovah was married to Israel. The Law was a marriage contract with His beloved lady. He loved her. In His Song of Songs He composes her sonnet of sonnets, and pledges His love, "Set me as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death," (Song 8:6). His love was everlasting. We will see throughout this treatise that as Israel deserted Him, He wooed her return, always keeping the door of reconciliation open. His perfect love required Him to discipline her, but He never forsook her. We shall see that although Israel was the blessed chosen nation, and the wife of Jehovah, she nevertheless was given to marital apostasy.

As God and Moses were planning salvation worship in the heights of Sinai, Satan and Israel were committing fornication with a golden calf at its base; in nakedness and sensual dance, the nation worshiped in the customs of Egyptian idolatry.¹⁶⁸ The fertility cult would represent idolatry throughout their desert journey, and each time the nation strays into idolatry she will experience fornication, i.e., physical and spiritual fornication. Some may object to that thought; they may change their minds as we proceed.

To The Plains of Moab

The news of Israel's Red Sea victory terrified Balak (name meaning destroyer), a Moabite king, as he watches the nation of Israel march across the Plains of Moab. Realizing his foe was the Mighty God of the Jews and His prophet Moses, Balak chooses to hire his own prophet, Balaam, whom he ordered to curse the children of Israel. Initially Balaam failed, but then conceived a demonic scheme to defile the children of God in hopes of requiring Jehovah to curse His people. Balaam apparently knew that it was prohibitive for Israel to have, i.e., to have as a wife, the daughters of Moab, or of any other nation. Israel was under a special regulation of *Jewish-creation-marriage*, they were required to marry solely within the tribe of Israel.

For thou shalt worship no other gods; for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God; lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods; and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; and thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.

Ex. 34:14-16

With this idea as a concept of deception Balaam convinced Balak to arrange for the daughters of Moab to play the harlot with the children of Israel on its Plains of Moab. These women were experts in the sin of licentiousness, and the prostitution of idolatry.

And the Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses, take all the heads of the people, and hang

them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel.
Num. 25:1-4

The worship of Baalpeor was known to be attended by women and virgins who prostituted themselves to this Moabitish *Priapus*¹⁶⁹, the god of fertility. Archaeological discoveries have revealed that the devotees of Baal practiced prostitution as a part of their worship. This sordid practice was adopted by the Israelites.¹⁷⁰ In the Book of Revelation (2:14,15) it is revealed that this fornication was associated with the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. Although some see Nicolaitanism as clerical hierarchy, others see it as a licentious sect advocating complete and free love. So, the daughters of Moab prepared their licentious worship which required the participation of the standing men of Israel. The Moabite harlot decked her bed with tapestry and perfumed it with aloes. She whispered her offer of lust/love to the interested Jewish males who swarmed the desert floor. The army of Israel soon fell into the idolatry of sexual and spiritual fornication. This was the plan of Balaam to curse Israel. Revelation states that it is Balaam who cast this stumbling block before the children of Israel.

But to the surprise of Balaam, the children of Israel were not consumed. Jehovah's anger was kindled and He began cursing the people with a plague, and ordering Moses to "hang up" the heads of those guilty of fornication. This hanging consisted in a form of crucifixion which was practiced by the ancients. Keil and Delitzsch suggest that a thousand men were crucified and the remainder perished in the plague. But suddenly a miracle occurred which averted this judgment of death. A mediator was raised in Israel who interceded in behalf of God and the people. Phinehas, the son of the high priest, upon seeing a young Israeli soldier return from Baalpeor with a temple prostitute whom he took into his tent in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation, became overcome with a holy rage, took a javelin in his hand, then running into the tent he executed both the man and the woman, thrusting them through with his spear of death. This act was immediately honored by Jehovah who turned away the plague of death; He praised Phinehas for his act of atonement. Another assault on *creation-marriage* had failed.

The Promised Land

A beam of hope springs out of Jericho. Here in this heathen fortress abides the harlot of the city, Rahab. The miracle of Jericho was more than the fall of its walls. It was the conversion of its harlot—the LXX translates the Hebrew word, harlot, as *porne*. The fear of Jehovah and his captain, Joshua, drove the harlot, Rahab, to her knees in repentance for her sinful life. She thrust her life into the hands of this gallant soldier-savior and finds atonement for her soul. She is born-again, converted from harlotry to become the great grand-mother of the promised Seed. What a miracle. The power of God's men is always salvation, and when that salvation is the salvation of his enemies, Oh, so Great Salvation!

So with the opening of the Book of Joshua—Rahab's conversion—*creation-marriage* appeared healthy and promising, unfortunately this was for a moment. By the time Israel reaches the end of the Book of Judges we will find Israel at the lowest moral state in their recorded history. Shortly after the death of Joshua we read:

And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites: and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves. Jud. 3:3-7

Although polygamy was practiced in Israel, as pointed out it was limited by its cost, however it appears that this barrier and whatever others that previously existed were now somewhat removed. It was during this period were we find perhaps its holiest man practicing a brand of polygamy which was previously without record. Gideon, who otherwise had an impeccable and courageous life, had "many wives." Of the exact number of wives, we do not know. We do know he had seventy sons, with no mention of the number of daughters. Perhaps the fate of these men was spawned by the sin of the father. Beside the many wives Gideon had a concubine, and by this maid he

begot a son, Abimelech. Keil and Delitzsch refer to him as Gideon's bastard son.¹⁷¹ It was this son, Abimelech, who murdered all but one of his brothers. Plurality of wives proves to be a plurality of trouble.

Sampson, the thirteenth judge, violated Israel's special marriage code by choosing a bride over his father's wish, and choosing that woman from the ungodly Philistines. Fortunately, Jehovah oversaw the entire affair and redeemed Sampson by inflicting judgment upon Philistia via Sampson's anger. It would be good if we could end the declension of Israel as recorded in Judges right here. We cannot. Chapter nineteen opens a cesspool with a reeking stench.

Here in (Jud.19) a traveling Levite, attempting to embrace ritual purity, refuses to lodge in the Jebusite city of Jebus, choosing rather to board in Gibeah, a city belonging to Benjamin. The Levite was returning to his home in Mount Ephraim, with his wayward concubine—concubinage was the invention of man's polygamist nature. One might wonder as to what was his actual fear—what would the Jebusites inflict upon him and his concubine. Perhaps he feared that history might repeat itself, i.e., the impurity of the Sodomite attack on Lot. Well, his worst fear of heathen violence was realized in the home of his brethren. Finding lodging with an old man, also of Mount Ephraim, he settled in for the night. The old man washed his visitor's feet and prepared a meal and drink for this friend from his home state. But suddenly the peace is disturbed:

Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, certain sons of Belial, [Sodomites], beset the house round about, and beat at the door, and spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man who come into thine house, that we may know him. Jud. 19:22

To say the least, history repeated itself, as these worthless fellows, sodomites, employed the very words of the men who attacked Lot. A similar compromise is offered to these homosexuals, i.e., the old man's daughter and the concubine were offered to appease their desire. The record then reveals that in their anger the homosexuals accepted the offer of the strange concubine, abusing her throughout the night. By "knowing her", a reference to sexual knowledge, they

abused her until she died. In anger the Levite took a knife and divided her dead body into twelve pieces, as they divided butchered animals. He then sent a portion of this divided body to each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The outcome was a civil war; the eleven tribes of Israel battle Benjamin. The war was vicious against Benjamin as Israel turned its rage on their brethren as they did upon the Canaanites, destroying man, woman, child, and livestock. The tribe was nearly annihilated. At the last moment Israel turned away its wrath permitting a remnant to live. Creation-marriage in the tribe of Benjamin was saved.

The Book of Samuel opens with another sad story. Here the priest Eli fails as a father, his son's, Hophni and Phinehas, taught and practiced heathen doctrine of the worst type. Although unsaved, "they knew not the lord", they performed the sacrificial rites of the temple. Not only desecrating their offerings by intruding into the priests office, they offered unacceptable sacrifices to Jehovah. But their most notorious act was their propagation of the doctrine of temple prostitution. Hophni and Phinehas committed sexual acts with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Did they actually commit fornication in the compound of the tabernacle?

During this period of gloom another ray of hope shines into this dark valley, that of Ruth the Moabitess. This beautiful story is actually heightened by the background of all this sin. This love story is a picture poem of the day that the Son of God would offer his Holy Life as a ransom for his friends; you and me. It is a poem of marriage; the levirate marriage; the intricate emotions of the Kinsman-Redeemer relationship. The delicate nature and timing of this event is revealed in an air of suspense and intimacy. Isakkson saw the private nature of "the covering of the nakedness"; here the KJV translates this as, "the spreading of the skirt", (Ruth 3:9). Boaz in his love spread his skirt over Ruth in claiming his bride. Jehovah in his love affair with Israel did the same: "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine", (Ezek. 16:8). Boaz, after redeeming Ruth, marries her and brings her into the Hall of Creation-Marriage, the hall of the grandmothers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, (Matt. 1).

The Kings of Israel

Putting the Israeli kings in charge of the *creation-marriage* was asking the fox to guard the hen-house, nevertheless these kings are in command of the vehicle. Initially all appeared well, as Saul was satisfied with one wife and one concubine. But this was short lived. David the holiest of all the Israeli kings begins a violation of *creation-marriage* which would form the leading doctrine of the future kings. The interesting impact of David's acts also affected his children, all future Israeli children, and surprisingly the children of God throughout two millennia of church history. David's sin with Bathsheba has provided an apology for many thousands of marital infidelity cases throughout history; a false apology. The real problem began when the sons of Samuel departed from walking with the Lord:

And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his first-born was Joel; and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre and took bribes, and perverted judgment. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a *king* to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. I Sam. 8:1-3

Although the iniquity of Samuel's children was only an excuse for the coveting Jewish nation, it nevertheless did open the door for the demand for a king.

Israel was a theocracy. The position of another king, beside the King of Kings, Jehovah, in the theocracy would create one special problem. It was necessary to ensure a temporal sovereignty for the king that would ensure the kings authority among the people. Sovereignty would ensure the king the privilege of being the administrator of the law; the Judge of the land. The problem with this

is that the king could not judge himself with the law. By requesting a king the people willed that God provide them with a man that could live—during his lifetime that is—above the sword of the law. The law could not execute the king. Most people and most marriage counselors do not take this into account when applying the outcome of David's sin to the church today. Although Jehovah provided the nation with a lifetime king sovereign, He did not do this for the good of the people but in response to their murmuring; a thing which He hates.

And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee; but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. I Sam. 8:7

God can be the only sovereign, for the sovereign must be righteous. God reigns in righteousness:

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is established, that it cannot be moved. Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting. The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea. Thy testimonies are sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever. Psa. 93

For a thousand years Israel experienced the rule of the true sovereign, Jehovah. The special problem of a human king would now affect their understanding of sovereignty. The seasoning of their understanding caused them to believe in a sovereign as a righteous leader. Their faith in the government, a theocracy, was based on the holiness of Jehovah. Israel failed to realize that an earthly sovereign could not meet the standard in which they believed. They simply took their understanding of the Holy Sovereign and applied it to sinful man. This was impossible. Nevertheless these earthly kings were given a temporal position above the law, and this led to their

downfall.

As mentioned, Saul had one wife and a concubine. David on the other hand had eight wives before he entered Jerusalem, however after the victory over this city we are told, "David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron; and there were yet sons and daughters born to David", (II Sam. 5:13). Keil and Delitzsch count nineteen sons and numerous daughters being born to David.¹⁷² But the real tragedy of David is his desire to take another man's wife, and the violence in manifesting that desire. Adultery. Probably the worlds most infamous recorded act of adultery.

And it came to pass at eventide, that David arose from his bed, and walked upon the roof he saw a woman washing herself, and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah, the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her. And she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness. And she returned unto her house. II Sam. 11:2-4

There appears to be two connected sins here. First, Bathsheba bathed her naked body in a location that permitted the king to see her physical beauty. The act of a beautiful woman bathing is perhaps the most difficult temptation for a man to resist—what woman ever bathed in a location where a man could view her naked body? The second sin is that of the king who permitted his eyes to be full of the lusty beauty. David was no Job: "I made a covenant with my eyes. Why then should I think upon a maid?" (Job 31:1). That look formed into lust then conceived the sin of adultery, and deception which brought forth death. The deception, a failed attempt to orchestrate a lie which would have had Uriah raise a son which was not his own—one of the greatest fears of all men—gave David one final evil choice: murder Uriah. It almost appears that Uriah knew that Bathsheba was with child of the king; the reason for his refusal to return to his bed although the king made every arrangement to persuade him. Whatever the reason we know God had intervened in

the heart of Uriah to prevent David in his lie. Even if Uriah knew the truth, would he be able to prevail in convicting King David of committing a capital crime; a crime punishable by death. Regardless, God left David the choice to repent. David chose murder.

And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah, her husband, was dead, she mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. II Sam. 11

The marriage of Bathsheba to David is in stinging contrast to the penalty of the law which required the funeral and burial of both. How could this be reconciled with the law? That is a good question. Did David conjecture that since polygamy was suffered to exist, and since Bathsheba was now a widow that he had the right to marry her? This is probably exactly what he reasoned; after all Bathsheba was now truly a widow. This would make the marriage legal. He was not convicted of adultery or murder, so he assumed he was legal; and as we have said the king was the state and believed to be beyond the reproach of the law: inculpable.

Nathan put a wrinkle in his rationality, by revealing that his sin was found out. Then David finally reaches into his heart of hearts and musters his last spark of honor. He cries out, "I have sinned against the Lord." Like the publican's cry, "Oh, God be merciful to me a sinner!" and went down to his house justified; here David was told he would not die. He would go on to reveal his confession in Psa. 32, and 51; there can remain no doubt of his full confession.

Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shaped in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Psa. 51:4ff

Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hidden. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Psa. 32:2ff

The language of these Psalms reveal that David had knowledge of the vicarious atonement of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. David found repentance and redemption—"not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Is it here that David was truly born-again; I believe this is just what took place; David got saved; he was born-again. There is, however, no record of Bathsheba's penitence, nevertheless later we do see her in need of comfort. Their son of adultery would die the death of the law for each of them; not atoning for their souls, but for their lives.

The final element which weighed in David's forgiveness and maintenance must be seen in the covenant of (II Sam. 7:12-16). David was a chosen vessel. He was promised, unconditionally, a son upon whom God would establish His kingdom forever. Although David has other sons, he did not have any sons of promise. With the death of his son by adultery, and with the pure confession of David, it appears that God chose to expose his doctrine of Grace on this penitent. The force of Grace is to prove where sin abounds Grace will much more abound. So in other words, God was forgiving and restoring David on the basis of his un-merited favor, Grace. He was forgiving David because David truly repented. On that basis God wanted to forgive David; and that He did. This is the element which Satan just can't comprehend. It is beyond his capacity to think of such a thought. He assumes that since his own judgment is everlasting and forever final, that the Lord God must judge all beings according to the standard which was applied to him. Therefore he believed by trapping the soldiers of Israel to commit fornication and adultery on the Plains of Moab, and by tempting David to commit adultery, Satan could now require God to curse Israel and David forever. But God wanted to forgive David because David believed in the Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God. This is the total idea of grace; and Satan is Satan because he is ignorant of the

Matchless Grace of God. David knew the Son of God:

The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Psa. 110:1

And David comforted Bathsheba, his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her; and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon; and the Lord loved him. And he sent word by the hand of Nathan, the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah [beloved of the Lord], because of the Lord.

II Sam. 12:24,25

Several interesting comments can be gleaned from this text: (1) Bathsheba is distressed by the death of the son of adultery; was she distressed by her sin? (2) God blesses the widow/marriage with the birth of a son, Solomon, [*peaceful*], (3) Jehovah has a special love for the child and gives him a personal nickname, Jedidiah, [*beloved of the Lord*], and (4) the special phrase, "because of the Lord." The Lord is telling us that the entire David/Bathsheba restoration was a matter of God doing something for His Beloved Son. He was freely exercising his Grace because of the loving sacrifice of His only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

With this said, let us not lose sight of the total corruption and death which the world's most published sin of adultery produced. After all the Scripture cannot be broken, "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," (James 1:15). David committed adultery and murder and was forgiven; God did not require the death penalty for the king. But his murder and lust conceived more than his own sin; it also produced sin in his family. Amnon, the elder son of David, saw a chance to explore his lust and follow in his father's footsteps—children always learn the lessons our own acts teach them. Tamar, Amnon's step-sister, was an especially beautiful virgin, and Amnon had an un-natural lust/love for her. He was literally sick with lust over his sister. With some help from a cousin, Amnon, manages to lure Tamar to his bed. Here he viciously rapes the innocent and lovely virgin, Tamar. Shortly thereafter Absalom avenges his sister,

he kills Amnon. Absalom continues his rebellion against his father, even threatening the throne. Forming a schism against the king he enters Jerusalem, and defiles the king's concubines. Setting up a tent on the top of the king's palace, he enters the tent of his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. In the sad end of Absalom, we find him caught by the hair hanging in an oak, and struggling to get free when he is found. Joab, the captain of David's army, manages to reach the site in time to thrust three staves through the heart of Absalom. One act of adultery and now David is faced with three murders, one rape, and the death of a child. Yes, David was forgiven, but when lust is conceived it bringeth forth death. This is the law of sin.

Now just how do we interpret David's adultery/murder? Consider the following facts: (1) David was a sovereign King believed to be legally inculpable, (2) David fully repented, i.e., he confessed his sin and discontinued his sin; and he was fully forgiven of his sin. (3) He lived during a period that permitted polygamy—as previously explained. (4) Bathsheba was now a widow and free to take another husband. (5) Therefore David's marriage to Bathsheba was legitimate under those conditions. (5) This means that David's future intercourse with Bathsheba was not a continuous act of adultery; under the permission of polygamy Bathsheba did not have another living husband. Think this through. These elements are not found in the act of remarriage today. In most cases of divorce and remarriage that I have counseled both partners are alive and therefore any remarriage for them is an act of continuous adultery—The act of having sexual relations with another during the lifetime of a previously married partner is adultery. No one is inculpable of the law.

Modern adultery is no less subject to this law: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," (Gal. 6:7). The real question facing modern man as we will see later is: Since marriage is permanent until death do us part, can a man have more than one living wife this side of death, during the Christian age of monogamy? The age of Grace will reveal some interesting facts supporting *creation-marriage*. "For the Law (of divorce) was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth (permanency-marriage) came by Jesus Christ," (Jn.1:17). The day of Grace and Truth would be radically different from the age of law. It had a

superior priest, and a superior doctrine. We should expect that its teachings will sharply contrast the doctrines of Deuteronomy. Modern adultery and remarriage may be dancing to the wrong pipe and drummer. It must be noted that David committed adultery once. Modern adultery-remarriage is either continuously illegal adultery or what has been dressed as a false legal adultery—*double-speak*. Augustine referred to this continuous adultery as "Adulterous Marriage."¹⁷³ Adulterous-marriage is what this paper refers to as legal adultery—which of course is being satirical.

But King Solomon loved many foreign women; in addition to the daughters of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites, of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods. Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.

I Kings 11:1-3

"Like father, like son." David's life of polygamy and adultery would bear fruit in the beloved son, Solomon. Although these wives and concubines were the common gifts, peace offerings of foreign kings, nevertheless many of them were bedded by Solomon. We are clearly told that Solomon sinned:

Did not Solomon, king of Israel, sin by these things? Yet among many nations was there not a king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless, even him did foreign women cause to sin. Neh. 13:26

Solomon stresses the doctrine of creation-marriage with what might be termed as a man drunk with marriage. But marriage was ordained in the act of creation therefore even this outrageous indulgence of polygamy could not destroy that which God had foreordained. Men continue to labor to all possible extremes in their effort to up-root the

creation doctrine. Some attempt to corrupt *creation-marriage* with multiple divorce and multiple remarriage; others by homosexuality, bestiality, trans-sexuality, and prostitution—all to no avail.

Did God Practice Divorce?

Jehovah was married to Israel, His beloved. We are clearly told that He was her husband:

For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath called thee like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth [Mal. 2:14], when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. Isa. 54: 5-7

God married Israel on the foothills of Mount Sinai. In her youth she was a slave in the kingdom of Pharaoh, where her infant sons were persecuted. One of those infants, Moses, led the children of Israel to the altar where she married Jehovah; she became one with Him—a type of *creation-marriage*. Later Israel's conduct as a wife became disgraceful, and illegal. The law set certain conditions on the marriage relationship: (1) Adultery; a capital crime, (2) Certain acts could result in divorce with a prohibition to any future reconciliation of the original marriage. Israel committed adultery and those *certain acts*; yet, Jehovah never put her asunder. His perfect love required Him to chasten her, but he never put her asunder. He created the institution of *creation-marriage* and He was bound to her forever, by choice. Let us follow this marriage.

The Queen of Sheba did not believe all she heard of Solomon's splendor, so she decided to go to Jerusalem, and after viewing this glorious kingdom she exclaims: "I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard." But this glory was short lived. As this queen was in awe of the kingdom, Solomon was in awe of his wives. Bowing to

their every desire; bowing to their gods. Solomon joined in the corruption of the gods of his wives: Ashtoreth, Milcom, Chemosh, and Molech. The worship of the former included licentious ritual prostitution and to the latter was attributed the debauchery of burning children alive in sacrifice. The apostasy of Solomon provoked the anger of Jehovah:

And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice ... Wherefore the Lord said ... I will surely rend the kingdom away from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding, in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit, I will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen. I Kings 11:9ff

Shortly after Solomon's death his kingdom was divided. Rebelling against Rehoboram, Solomon's son the king, the people elected Jeroboam, the servant of Solomon, to be their king. Rehoboram was able to maintain the city of Jerusalem as his base, while Jeroboam headed north down and away from the promised city. Fearing that by returning up to Jerusalem, Israel would return to Jehovah, Jeroboam desperately invents a cult religion for Israel:

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. And he made an use of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. I Kings 12

This apostasy, the adultery of idolatry, would continue for about two centuries before Israel, the Northern Kingdom, would be brought into

captivity and slavery by the Assyrian nation. During this time, Rehoboam, the son of Solomon was king of Judah, the Southern Kingdom. Although a step above their northern brethren, they lasted 350 years before apostasy, the adultery of idolatry, caused their collapse and captivity, being captured and imprisoned by mighty Babylon. The prophets continually refer to the religious apostasy of Israel and Judah as spiritual adultery and spiritual fornication. Physical adultery was punishable by death. The Lord God was married to the twelve tribes of Israel: "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you; and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion," (Jer. 3:14). It must be remembered that although Israel and Judah committed many crimes against their marriage with Jehovah, He nevertheless was ever faithful to them. Malachi speaks firmly regarding Jehovah God's commitment to the nation as their Husband:

For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons
of Jacob are not consumed. Mal. 3:6

Both Israel and Judah had committed the capital crime of adultery. Both kingdoms could have been annihilated from the earth for their sin, but God makes no mention of their utter destruction. He does however use a few metaphors to describe His anger. The prophets, as with Jesus, were masters at the use of figurative language, metaphors, similes, hyperboles, and other figures of speech. Hebrew poetry is based on comparative thoughts rather than rhyme: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want ... Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Here in the middle of this viscous apostasy, Jehovah chooses a few appropriate metaphors. None of which threaten Israel, or Judah with total separation (divorce as understood by man), or death; to which they deserved.

They say, if a man put away his wife, and she go
from him, and become another man's, shall he return
unto her again? Shall not the land be greatly
polluted? But thou has played the harlot with many
lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord. Jer.3:1

The illustration here is that Israel was put away (divorced) by her captivity, figuratively given a *bill of divorce*. She had committed adultery with a foreign god, and God put her away. She then went and became the wife of another god, another man. Then in reference to (Deut 24:1-4) Jehovah annuls the "abomination" and pleads for the return of His harlot wife. We see here strong evidence that the thought (divorce-remarriage) of (Deut. 24:1-4) was not God's will. God says, "they say," indicating that He did not say it. But the primary concern of the Jeremiah verse is the fact that God accused the nation of committing adultery, this was certainly not the *some uncleanness*, or *some indecency* or (Deut. 24:1). Adultery was a capital crime. In the Jeremiah text adultery is only a matter of divorce. This text certainly does not refer to a direct translation of the law. It is an illustration of the position of Israel in the eyes of God at this time, a metaphor. A metaphor cannot be translated literally: "It is raining cats and dogs"; when interpreting this metaphor we must translate the entire context of the metaphor as one. In other words we cannot say, "It is raining cats and rain." The divorce for adultery metaphor was symbolic language of the captivity of Israel. Captivity, divorce, was the judgment of Israel for adultery. To add an additional rebuke to those who see a literal application of the (Deut. 24:1-4) text in (Jer. 3:1) God goes on to say, even though you have been defiled by another during our separation, return to me. In (Jer. 3:1) the abomination is annulled. Their reunion was holiness. Why? In spite of Israel's adultery and harlotry, and in spite of her symbolic divorce, she was married to Jehovah in creation-marriage.

The sword of the law is absent from this text. The adulterer and adulteress were not executed, but were graciously offered a pardon. The text is bursting with mercy, and reason: Jehovah argues that He is married to Israel. He is the faithful Husband. And this marriage is a *creation-marriage*. Jeremiah labors to portray the first love of Israel, her apostasy, her metaphorical divorce, and her offer of reconciliation:

Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the

first fruits of his increase; all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord. Hear ye the word of the lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. Jer. 2:2-4

The allusion here is to the betrothal period when Israel was rescued from the armies of Pharaoh and was romanced by Jehovah God on the sands of the wilderness. She there became His wife.

Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain? Neither said they, Where is the Lord who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, who led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat its fruit and its goodness, but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not, Where is the Lord? And they that handle the law knew me not. The rulers also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. Jer. 2:5-8

Here the Northern Kingdom is indicted for adultery, i.e., their apostasy into the idolatry of Baalism. The prophesying by Baal was akin to being married to another.

Wherefore, I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord, and with your children's children will I plead. For pass over the coasts of Kittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be appalled, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my

people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Jer. 2:9-13

The forsaking of God by Israel, the fountain of living waters, and her adultery were acts of marital violence, but her marrying Baal, the hewed out (man-made) cistern, was a second and more violent evil. This act under the law would have prohibited any further reconciliation. She became the wife of another after a divorce from her first husband. Thus according to the law she was now defiled to her original Husband, Jehovah God:

Is Israel a servant? Is he a home-born slave? Why is he spoiled? The young lions roared upon him, and yelled, and they made his land waste; his cities are burned without inhabitant. Also the children of Memphis and Tahpanhes have broken the crown of thy head. Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord, thy God, when he led thee by the way? And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Shilhor? Or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river? Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know, therefore, and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord, thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts. Jer. 2:14-19

The desolation of Israel is a direct reference to a type of divorce. It was a divorce which was self inflicted. God permitted her to exercise her free evil will. He permitted the divorce for which she sued. He gave her the *bill of divorce*, she requested. In this sense God never divorced her.

For of old I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress, when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou

wanderest, playing the harlot. Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed. How, then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me, saith the Lord God. How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? See thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done; thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways, a wild ass used to the wilderness that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure; in her occasion who can turn her away? All they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her. Withhold thy foot from being unshod and thy throat from thirst; but thou saidst, There is no hope. No; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go. As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets, Saying to a tree, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth; for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face, but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us. But where are thy gods that thou hast made? Let them arise, if they trouble; for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah. Why will ye plead with me? Ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord. In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction. Your own sword hath devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion.

Jer. 2:20-30

The nation has been plainly caught in the bed of adultery, and that with her lover, Baalim. Furthermore, she claims that her adulterous marriage is not “polluted.” In her imagination her adultery was a holy religious experience. But God tells her, "For though thou wash thee with lye, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.

O generation, see the word of the Lord. Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? A land of darkness?

Why do my people say, We are lords; we will come no more unto thee? Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number. Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? Therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways. Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents; I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these. Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned. Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? Thou also wast ashamed of Assyria. Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head; for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

Jer. 2:31-37

Her apostasy was preceded by fornication, she trimmed her ways to "seek love." She left her wedding gown behind.

They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? Shall not that land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord. Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lain with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy harlotry and with thy wickedness. Therefore, the showers have been withheld, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou refusedst to be ashamed. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth? [see Mal. 2:14 "wife of thy youth"] Will he reserve his anger forever? Will he keep it to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest. Jer. 3:1-6

Israel had been metaphorically divorced and remarried. Now God says, "They say", regarding the abomination of (Deut. 24:1-4). It was not his will. The "They" of the verse refers to Moses as the author of the permissive section of the law. For Israel in her marriage to Jehovah, *the abomination did not exist*. It did not exist because her marriage was eternal; it was permanent creation-marriage. He was the Guide of her youth; in her youth she was his bride.

The Lord said also unto me in the days of Josiah, the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said, after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister, Judah, saw it. And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce, yet her treacherous sister, Judah, feared not, but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her harlotry, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with trees. And yet for all this her treacherous sister, Judah, hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord. And the Lord said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. Jer. 3: 6-11

Judah, the southern kingdom, is indicted for adultery. The entire nation is equally guilty of capital crimes and of those "certain acts" which caused her to be metaphorically divorced, entering into further liaisons that prohibited her return to her husband, Jehovah (Deut. 24:4 *the abomination*). It is said here that God, "had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce." Her putting away, and bill of divorce was her captivity and destruction by Assyria. These were temporary chastenings, not permanent judgments as the law permitted under divorce. Had God actually wrote a bill of divorcement He would have had no further authority over His wife. She would have been permitted to be wife of another. But she was never so permitted. This is evidence that Jehovah never endorsed (Deut. 24:1-4) as a legal

divorce procedure.

Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord, thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you.

Jer. 3:12-14a

Her acts of adultery and uncleanness reaped neither divorce, execution, nor the abomination of (Deut. 24:1-4). Jehovah, her Husband, pleaded for her return. After her adultery, and uncleanness, Jehovah speaks, "I am married unto you." The metaphor of divorce is only a gentle rebuke to the temporary captivity with which He chastised His beloved wife, Israel. God did not practice divorce at all. God was not a divorcee. He was forever married to Israel.

Some may argue, that since God employs a metaphor of divorce in which he actually offers Israel a "bill of divorce", then divorce is not a sin, because God certainly cannot sin. Please remember, as we explained, divorce was the practice of men; men with hard sinful hearts. A custom which was known and accepted by sinful man as a right which he attributed to his concept of self sovereignty. Jehovah, by employing the custom of divorce as a metaphor, was merely using a teaching tool. As a master of pedagogy, He was taking the people from the known to the unknown. Because God used a teaching metaphor, does not mean that He literally committed the metaphor. As we said, Israel had committed spiritual adultery. The metaphor of adultery would be complete only with the death of Israel. God did not subject Israel to the law, and stone them to death. Neither did he literally divorce his beloved wife, His companion.

Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you. Jer.3:14

Mr. Jay E. Adams, in his most unusual style, has come on with the doctrine that God practiced divorce and therefore Christians have the right to practice divorce within the limits of God's use. "If God Himself became involved in divorce proceedings with Israel, it is surely wrong to condemn any and all divorce out of hand."¹⁷⁴ Edward G. Dobson, parrots Adam's:

If the act of divorce is sin, then why would God utilize this as an analogy of His relationship to Israel? Further, why would God threaten Israel with a bill of divorcement? Since God cannot sin, then the answer to these questions is that the act of divorce is not an act of sin.¹⁷⁵

It is remarkable that these writers deny God the use of the metaphor, where even secular writers could see the possibility of permitting such use. Don't we all use figures of speech while not endorsing their picture. What parent hasn't said something to the effect to their child, "I'll skin you alive." Do we accuse these parents of threatening to flail their children. Although more conservative, John MacArthur also follows their school of thought:

So even God divorced. And that's important, because God does not do things that aren't right. God doesn't give us living illustrations of His own behavior that we can't follow. That's why it grieves me that people will say, There are no grounds for divorce¹⁷⁶

Is MacArthur sure of this? A careful study will reveal that God is not divorced. And that is important. There are no grounds for divorce of *creation-marriage*, which is the foundation of the covenant marriage of God with Israel. MacArthur goes on to accuse God of divorce:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." Do you know what He's going to do? He's going to get married again—to

Israel. Verse 32 says, "Not according to the covenant that I made with their father in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which, my covenant, they broke, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord." Now that affirms that God was no longer their husband, doesn't it? But He will remarry them and make a new covenant. ¹⁷⁷

No, this does not affirm that God was no longer the Husband of Israel. The metaphor does not literally mean that the event was a historical fact. Jehovah told us that "my covenant, they broke, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord." His use of divorce, putting away, and the bill of divorce were metaphors intended to chasten Israel to re-think their waywardness. The idea that God divorced and remarried Israel after she was the wife of another is to accuse God of committing the sin of abomination (Deut. 24:1-4). To defend this conclusion with pseudo scholarship is unfortunate. The idea that God divorced Israel and remarried her is totally unacceptable. Keil and Delitzsch agree, making the following comment:

In this view Jerome translates the reception anew of the people being given under the figure of a new marriage. This acceptation is not suitable to the [text], for this, even if taken prophetically, cannot refer to a renewal of marriage which is to take place in the future. The [text] can be referred only to the marriage of Israel at the conclusion of the covenant on Sinai, and must be translated accordingly: I am your husband, or: I have wedded you to me. This is demanded by the [text] for the summons to repent cannot give as its motive some future act of God, but must point to that covenant relationship founded in the past, which, though suspended for a time, was not wholly broken up. ¹⁷⁸

The use of the metaphor is seen again in the vision of Isaiah, and the life of Hosea:

Thus saith the Lord: Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

Isa. 50:1

The only bill of divorce was the captivity of Israel and Judah which of course, God did not write. They could not produce a bill of divorce, Jehovah never divorced His bride. Did God literally sell Israel to their creditors? No. The nation sold herself, figuratively, to her creditors: Assyria, and Babylon. Did God literally divorce Israel? No. The nation divorced herself from Jehovah through her transgressions. Jehovah God "*temporarily*" suspended his everlasting covenant with Israel.

Hosea carried the divorce metaphor into a literal illustration, and that of his own married life:

The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry; for the land hath committed great harlotry, departing from the Lord. So he went and took Gomer... who conceived and bore him a son, Jezreel for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. And she conceived again, and bore a daughter, Lohruhamah ... Now when she had weaned Loruhamah, she conceived, and bore a son, Loammi.

Hosea 1:1-9

The prophet was to make the divorce metaphor a literal visual aid. Before the days of photography, Jehovah's prophets often used their lives as pictures when preaching God's message. Some may argue whether the marriage of the prophet with an adulterous woman, which is twice commanded by God, is to be regarded as a marriage that was actually consummated, or merely as an internal occurrence,

or as a parabolical representation¹⁷⁹, but this writer believes that the powerful force of a prophet who literally lives with a wife of harlotry serves as the perfect picture of Israel, the harlot wife of Jehovah. This is an overwhelming picture of the truth of God's unthinkable marriage to Israel; as was Hosea's marriage to Gomer. The simple language of the text supports the actual consummation view which seems a fitting message from Jehovah to his sinful wife. Further the children of that marriage certainly appear to be literally born, and are given names which suggest judgment for the purpose of conveying God's message: Jezreel, (scattered), the judgment of the northern kingdom; Loruhamah, (unpitied), no mercy to the northern kingdom; Loammi, (not my people), you are not my people, and I will not be your God.

The one unmistakable theme throughout the book of Hosea is that this adulterous wife is not judged; divorced or put to death. She is not totally destroyed. She is not stoned to death. But she is *wooed as a virgin*. Chapter one begins by portraying Israel in the wife of the prophet as a harlot and her offspring as children of judgment. Remarkably it ends with a beautiful scene of complete restoration:

Yet, the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that, in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

Hosea 1:10,11

It must be pointed out that although the judgment of Israel would be severe, as noted in the meaning of the names of Hosea's children, there is also an unconditional promise of complete and full restoration for both the northern kingdom, Israel, and the southern kingdom, Judah. The putting away in the divorce metaphor was figurative for a temporary chastisement of Ephraim, the northern kingdom, and her adulterous sister Judah. It certainly was not the finality of legal marital divorce as practiced by the ancients, the west, and the church

today. Alexander MacLaren makes these fitting comments regarding the chastening of Israel found in Hosea:

I must begin by explaining what, in my judgment, this text does not mean. First, it is not what it is often taken to be, a threatening of God's abandoning of the idolatrous nation ... the very fact Hosea was prophesying to call Ephraim from his sin showed that God had not let Ephraim alone, but was wooing him by His prophet, and seeking to win him back by the words of his mouth. God was doing all that He could do, rising early and sending His messenger and calling to Ephraim: 'Turn ye! Turn ye! Why will ye die?' For Hosea, in the very act of pleading with Israel on God's behalf, to have declared that God had abandoned it, and ceased to plead, would have been a palpable absurdity and contradiction.¹⁸⁰

Chapter two begins with Hosea speaking to Gomer of divorce and chastisement. As we shall see this was only a metaphoric divorce, a temporary punishment.

Plead with your mother, plead; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband. Let her, therefore, put away her harlotry out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts. Hosea 2:2

In (v. 19) the prophet then begins to drift into a direct discourse with Israel, as is customary of biblical prophecy. Jehovah becomes completely personified in the spirit of the prophet, and Jehovah speaks to His nation. In a spirit of jealousy God, declaring that although the nation had apostatized to the point of calling Jehovah, Baali, they would be restored and call him Ishi, *my husband*. And then he drifts into a beautiful song which Jehovah sings to His lady, speaking to her with the language of love:

And I will betroth [*woo as a virgin*] thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in justice, and in loving-kindness,

and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; And the earth shall hear the grain, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them who were not my people, Thou art my people, and they shall say, Thou art my God.

Hosea 2:19ff

The chastening, putting away of Ephraim, was certainly not divorce. Keil and Delitzsch agree:

But as God the Lord has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but that he should turn and live, He would not exterminate the rebellious tribes [Israel] of the people of His possession from the earth, or put them away for ever from His face, but would humble them deeply by severe and long-continued chastisement... Consequently, even in the book of Hosea, promises go side by side with threatenings and announcements of punishment, and that not merely as the general hope of better days, kept continually before the corrected nation by the all-pitying love of Jehovah, which forgives even faithlessness, and seeks out that which has gone astray, but in the form of a very distinct announcement of the eventual restoration of the nation, when corrected by punishment, and returning in sorrow and repentance to the Lord it's God, and to David it's king (ch. iii.5)—an announcement founded upon the inviolable character of the divine covenant of grace, and rising up to the thought that the Lord will also redeem from hell and save from death, yea, will destroy both death and hell (ch. xiii.14). Because Jehovah had married Israel in His covenant of grace, but Israel, like an unfaithful wife,

had broken the covenant with its God, and gone a whoring after idols, God, by virtue of the holiness of His love, must punish its unfaithfulness and apostasy. His love, however, would not destroy, but would save that which was lost. This love bursts out in the flame of holy wrath, which burns in all the threatening and reproachful addresses of Hosea.¹⁸¹

In chapter three Hosea is asked to take the wife back whom he had divorced and to love her in spite of the fact that she had committed adultery:

Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet and adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love cakes of raisins.

Hos. 3:1

Initially Hosea secretly supplies Gomer with all her needs. She unwittingly believes she is being sponsored by her lovers. Then Hosea removes his support, leaving her to be caught in a society without any wealth but the flesh of her life. She is reduced to a slave and is auctioned for a price. As Jehovah remained the husband of Israel even though she committed adultery, so Hosea purchases her from the auction block and restores Gomer to the full status of a beloved wife:

So, I bought [redeemed] her for myself for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley. And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man; so will I also be for thee.

Hos. 3:2-3

The book then drifts back to a full dissertation between Jehovah and Israel. The tender and amiable language of the book speaks of the love Jehovah has for his adulterous wife. A wife who did not deserve His affection, but as Keil and Delitzsch comment, "by pointing out the unfaithfulness which Israel has displayed towards its God from

the very earliest times, the prophet shows that it has deserved nothing but destruction from off the face of the earth." ¹⁸² But to the contrary, God's love faileth not:

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hidden from my eyes.

Hosea 13:14

I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow like the lily, and cast forth his roots like Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be like the olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon. Hosea 14:4-6

Hosea did not practice divorce. God did not practice divorce. It does appear that Hosea put Gomer away in the beginning of chapter two: "Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah. Plead with your mother, plead; for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband." In chapter three however he immediately takes her back on the command of God: "Then saith the Lord unto me, go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel... So, I bought [redeemed] her for myself for fifteen pieces of silver." God's divorce scenario certainly did not match the scenario of (Deut. 24), and it did not match the judgment of (Deut. 22:22), i.e., death for adultery. But putting that aside for a moment and conceding that the metaphor met the divorce criteria, we can say that: Yes, Hosea was metaphorically divorced. And metaphorically it rains cats and dogs. But please dear reader don't teach anyone that use of the metaphor means that cats and dogs fall from the sky, or that you are going to report the woman down the street to the police because she said she was going to "skin her children alive." As a loving mother metaphorically skins her children alive, so God metaphorically divorced his beloved wife. But to accuse Him of committing literal divorce is to accuse the loving mother of murder because she metaphorically skinned her children alive. Hosea was not a divorce'. God was not a divorce' : "For the

Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away [divorce]" (Mal. 2:16). Metaphors are figures of speech, and are used to permit the speaker the liberty to drive home his thought by creating a picture of the idea. God is not a divorcee, and it does not rain cats and dogs.

Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi

One common denominator of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi was the doctrine of *Jewish-Creation-Marriage*. As we said earlier, the vehicle of the Messiah was in the hands of the administrators of Jewish marriage. The contemporaneousness of Ezra, the scribe, Nehemiah, the governor, and Malachi, the prophet, is without question. Ezra and Nehemiah are co-workers in their ministry, causing the ancients to refer to their writings as a single volume: Ezra-Nehemiah. Some scholars even believe that Ezra was Malachi, although this is not true, it nevertheless reveals the context linking the messages of these men.¹⁸³

These three prophets were equally perplexed with the conduct of the Jewish remnant returning to Jerusalem. While in Babylon the children of Israel learned the custom of the heathen—divorce with remarriage, and marriage with the heathen. The latter prohibition was to ensure that the Messiah was Jewish, the seed of David. In God's wisdom He saw a Jewish child as the only hope for the world. Consequently, when these prophets found divorce, remarriage, and heathen-remarriage in the ranks of Israel, they began barking. Ezra pulled his hair out, Nehemiah pulled out the hair of the offenders, and Malachi warns the guilty that God will "cut off" those who divorced their Jewish wives and married the daughters of the heathen. Some see the marriage account of Ezra and Malachi as one, nevertheless there is ample evidence that they describe two separate accounts of marital apostasy in Israel. But the one cohesive element is Jewish-marital corruption. On the one hand Jewish men were found to have married heathen women and some had illegitimate (non-Jewish) children by them; and on the other some had divorced their Jewish wives and had taken up home-making with heathen wives.

While Ezra was in prayer, distressed about the problem of the mixed marriages, some of which produced offspring, Shecaniah offered a remarkable solution, "Now, therefore, let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are

born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law." The Jewish Publication Societies translation of the Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text translates the phrase "according to the counsel of my lord" as "as according to the counsel of my LORD", indicating that Shecaniah was, for the moment at least, a prophet. Kiel and Delitzsch agree making this statement regarding the phrase:

Instead of, according to the counsel of my Lord, De Wette, Bertheau, and others, following the paraphrase in the LXX. and 1 Esdras, read, according to the counsel of my lord, *i.e.*, of Ezra. But this paraphrase being of no critical authority, there is no sufficient reason for the alteration. For Shecaniah to call Ezra my lord sounds strange, since usually this title was only given by servants to their master, or subjects to their sovereign, and Shecaniah afterwards addresses him simply as *thou*. Besides, Ezra had given no advice at all in this matter, and still less had he come to any resolution about it with the God-fearing members of the community. ¹⁸⁴

The solution included the putting away of both the strange women and their children. Keil and Delitzsch comment, "Separation from women who already have children is far more grievous than parting with childless wives." ¹⁸⁵ The repentance suggested by Shecaniah was referred to as evangelical repentance or true repentance by the puritan preacher, John Colquhoun¹⁸⁶ (1748-1827), that all repentance must depart from all ungodliness or it is not repentance; consequently, repentance needs no adjectives.

The putting away of these woman and their children appears to be a simple matter of divorce, after all the act of "putting away" refers to divorce. The comment made by Shecaniah, "and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the law," means that the act is proscribed in the law. But you may ask where? He cannot be referencing (Deut. 24), for as we explained there is no commandment there. The only commandment he could be referring to is (Deut. 7:1-11):

When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land where thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou, and when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them. Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods; so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them: ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their idols, and burn their carved images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people who are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy with them who love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations, and repayeth them who hate him to their face, to destroy them; he will not be slack to him who hateth him; he will repay him to his face. Thou shalt, therefore, keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the

ordinances, which I command thee this day, to do them.
Deut. 7:1- 11

Israel was to "utterly destroy" their heathen neighbors, being forbidden to make any covenant with them especially a marriage covenant. Some have reasonably concluded that if the only relationship the Israelite's were permitted to have with these seven heathen nations was that of annihilator, then all other relationships were void; consequently, the heathen marriages of Ezra would be considered "unreal marriages." Heth and Wenham note, "As early as 1890, George Rawlinson observed:"

It is quite clear that [Ezra] read the Law as absolutely prohibitive of mixed marriages (Ezra ix. 10-14)—*i.e.* as not only forbidding their inception, but their continuance. Strictly speaking, he probably looked upon them as unreal marriages, and so as no better than ordinary illicit connections. For the evils which flow from such unions, those who make them, and not those who break them, are responsible.¹⁸⁷

They go on to explain the meaning of the Hebrew words employed by Ezra:

In Ezra's eyes this was not a question of breaking up legitimate marriages but of nullifying those which were contrary to the law. This is further suggested by the two Hebrew words Ezra chose to describe these 'marriages' (*nasa* and *yasab**)¹⁸⁸ and the 'divorce' terminology he employs.¹⁸⁹ Ezra was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses' (Ezra 7:6). He studied, practiced and taught it in Israel (v. 10). Yet he employs out-of-the-ordinary terminology to describe the 'marrying' ('taking') and the 'divorcing' ('sending away') of these women. Furthermore, how could these Israelites have made a covenant with God (Ezra 10:3) to put away their legal 'wives' if it is true that Scripture portrays marriage as a covenant made between husband and wife in the presence of

God? Ezra's prayer seems to indicate further that 'intermarriage' had not yet actually taken place (cf. Ezra 9:2 with 9:14).¹⁹⁰

John MacArthur agrees, "There's a sense here in which God doesn't even recognize these marriages."¹⁹¹ The concept of "unreal marriages" sounds a note with Augustine's "adulterous marriages,"¹⁹² which we will address later. As for now, "unreal marriages" are a distinct possibility, and if so, Heth and Wenham are correct, "For the evils which flow from such unions, those who make them, and not those who break them, are responsible." It must be noted that although the separation of the wives with children is especially difficult, it nevertheless was the fruit of true repentance.

The concept of "unreal marriages" is simple. A marriage within the forbidden degrees would be "unreal"; or a matter of incestuous or consanguineous marriage. A marriage to a previously divorced wife who had another husband during the interim was "unreal" or an abomination. Therefore a marriage to a person who was to be annihilated would have been an "unreal" marriage, or an abomination. Augustine refers to marriages built on adultery as "unreal" or "adulterous marriages." In each case the shame of sin belongs to him who unites such marriages not to him who puts them asunder. These "unreal" marriages simply are not joined together by God, and they should be put away. Since these "unreal" marriages were never marriages their disunion cannot legally meet the definition of divorce; however, the term divorce would be appropriate in the common meaning of the act. But to justify the act of divorce on the basis of the Ezra text is wrong. Technically there was no divorce in Ezra, it was legal abandonment, legal separation.

Ezra's prayer is answered and the Israelites including clergy separate from their foreign wives and children. Lanely, referencing Wright, places Ezra in Jerusalem with the mixed marriage problem in 458 B.C.¹⁹³, and he places Nehemiah in Jerusalem facing the same problem in 444 B.C.,¹⁹⁴ just a mere fourteen years later. Laney states, "Unfortunately, the temptation to intermarry continued to plague the restoration community."¹⁹⁵ As mentioned, Nehemiah rather than yank his hair out, chose to yank the hair out of those who defied God's law of separation. It apparently worked, for Nehemiah states that, "I cleansed them from all foreigners." We are not told

how he cleansed the defiled lot, perhaps he used the Ezra formula, a logical rather than a legal divorce. It should be noted that the mixed marriages of Nehemiah included defiled foreign children, and since he cleansed them from all foreigners, we can assume that the defiled children were put away with their mothers.

Providing that he is in fact not Ezra ¹⁹⁶, Malachi brings us the final saga of the Israelite propensity toward "unreal" marriage in his writings. Surprisingly, Malachi's account is of particular interest, for it unexpectedly reads like a NT text. It is for this reason that some object to the traditional understanding of the text:

Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously, every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers? Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a foreign god. The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the Lord of hosts. And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

Yet ye say, Why? Because 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 thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And why 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.

Mal. 2: 10-16

Able Isaksson, for one, labors to explain this text metaphorically or what is referred to as the *cultic interpretation*. Here Israel's marriage to the daughter foreign god is explained by Isaksson to be a symbolic description of Israel's embracement of idolatry. He makes a point of the obscurity of the text and that he believes v.15 is corrupt.¹⁹⁷ But regardless of this one obscure text the entire treatise of Malachi has a literal format referring directly to Jacob, Easu, Levi, God's covenant with Israel, God's immutability, the sudden coming of the Forerunner, the people robbing God of tithes, he rebukes adulterers, and predicts the coming Day of the Lord.

Most commentators agree that in this text for a Jewish man to act "treacherously" meant that he divorced the wife of his youth, and married a younger foreign woman. This traitorous act of no longer cleaving to their wives was being committed by many Israelites, priests included, and is fiercely attacked by Malachi. He explains the reason for his anger. God had chosen the nation to be a holy nation; a nation which would be a blessing to all other peoples; a nation that married Jehovah in holy covenant. The chosen covenant nation which would be the progenitors of the *holy seed*, the Infant Son of Bethlehem. By departing from the wives of their youth and marrying foreign women the nation was breaking their covenant marriage with Jehovah, falling into idolatry, and corrupting *Jewish creation marriage*, the ultimate hope of mankind; that would bring forth the victorious "seed of the woman" Gen. 3:15 the Messiah the Savior of mankind.

Isaksson, disbelieves that Israel understood monogamous marriage at this time, but the text betrays his belief. Even though he believes the text to be corrupt he has severe problems with the question in v.15, "And did he not make one?" Most commentators see this as a reference to (Gen. 2:24), "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." This combined with v.16, "For the Lord, the God of Israel saith that he hateth putting away," drive home the truth of monogamy, *the single pair*.

An interesting comment regarding the question of: "Whom hath God joined together?", is answered here; He hath joined together all "real" marriages. In v.14 we are told that God was a

witness between the marriage which these Jews had contracted with the wives of their youth; these earlier wives were their true wives. Their first marriage was a covenant between the Jewish man and a Jewish woman, and witnessed by God. Keil and Delitzsch make this comment regarding the sacredness of the marriage ceremony:

The words, "because Jehovah was a witness between thee and the wife of thy youth," cannot be understood as Ges., Umbreit, and Koehler assume, in accordance with ch. iii.5, as signifying that Jehovah had interposed between them as an avenging witness; for in that case הָיָה would necessarily be construed with ב but they refer to the fact that the marriage took place before the face of God, or with looking up to God; and the objection that nothing is known of any religious benediction at the marriage, or of any mutual vow of fidelity, is merely an *argumentum a silentio*, which proves nothing. If the marriage was a b^rith 'Elohim (a covenant of God), as described in Prov. ii.17 [Who forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God], it was also concluded before the face of God, and God was a witness to the marriage. With the expression "wife of thy youth" the prophet appeals to the heart of the husband, pointing to the love of his youth with which the marriage had been entered into; and so also in the circumstantial clause, through which he brings to the light the faithless treatment of the wife in putting her away; "Yet she was thy companion, who shared thy joy and sorrow, and the wife of thy covenant, with whom thou didst make a covenant for life." ¹⁹⁸

The exasperating thing about these blessed marriages was that the Jewish men mentioned had dealt treacherously with their wives, divorcing them. The pleasing thing about these divorced wives was the fact that God saw the divorcees as still married, "yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant." That divorce was not recognized by the Lord God.

The next statement of the text presents a most startling element to those who hold a divorce view, "for the Lord, the God of Israel, saith he hateth putting away." At the mention of the God of Israel hating divorce, the commentators start a flurry of quick reflections. But what has been said is said, The God of Israel hates divorce! Throughout this treatise we have laid the explanation for this cry. Slowly, layer by layer the flesh has been removed from the breast of God and now His heart is fully revealed to the eyes of the world. God cries out, "I love *creation-marriage*, I hate divorce." As a mother bear closing in to revenge an assault on her cubs, the God of these Israelite divorced women was raging with fury to establish justice. The treacherous act of divorcing these women caused the altar of Israel to catch the tears and the voices of these weeping women. Their cries caused God to condemn their Jewish husbands, "I will cut off (kill) the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar." God continues His indictment, He accuses these men of wearing blood stained garments, "for one covereth violence with his garment." His cries will not stop until He intercedes, He will send a special messenger (the Baptist) to correct the problem of "adulterous and unreal marriages", divorce and remarriage. The nation had fallen into the decay of sin causing it to threaten the only hope of mankind, *creation-marriage* and Bethlehem. God would now intercede:

Ye have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet ye say, In what way have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighted in them; or, Where is the God of justice? Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And he shall sit like a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them like gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of

Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the sojourner from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Mal. 2:17-3:6

God was angry with divorce. He hateth putting away. He will answer their query, "Where is the God of Justice?" He will send His messenger, who shall prepare the way before Him, and then He, the Lord, shall suddenly come. The prophet could not see the Day of Grace for the Day of the Lord. Nevertheless, God's anger would reveal itself universally. He was angry with all men, everywhere. Then He sent John the Baptist to make his path straight. One of the primary ways of the Lord was *creation-marriage*. John the Baptist was sent to make the way of *creation-marriage* straight. His sermon: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Here Malachi cries against adultery. His cries were provoked by those who dealt treacherously divorcing their wives. Malachi calls on his hearers to repent; to return to the ordinance of the Lord, the ordinance of *creation-marriage*: "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me [Repent], and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts."

God sent John the Baptist to restore, among other things, *creation-marriage*. In his effort to do just that he was required to place his bloodied head and tongue on a platter of silver which was his final sermon against divorce, and remarriage: the incest of Herod.

The marriage covenant is a natural symbol of God's covenants, especially His covenant with the nation He married, Israel. For a man to break his marriage covenant is diametrically opposed to the nature of God. He would never break his covenant with Jacob: "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. God was not a divorcee? A thousand times, NO!

CHAPTER SIX

What Is Jesus' Doctrine Of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage?

It is a delight to consider the theme of marriage in the N.T. Like its O.T. counterpart the N.T. doctrine of marriage endorses and demonstrates the sound doctrine of *creation-marriage*, and like the O.T. where marriage is used typically for Jehovah's marriage to Israel, so the N.T. speaks of the union of Christ and His Church as the ultimate marriage; raising marriage as the final eternal state, while fully defending its original meaning—Again this treatise does not teach sacramental marriage; the act by which grace is acquired. In the doctrine of salvation by Grace we learn that our eternal security, is directly proportional to our union with Christ; the Scriptures refer to this union as a marriage. Our Salvation is by Grace through Faith, not of Works, lest any man should boast; it is permanent, inseparable, and indissoluble; just as *Creation-Marriage*. Divorce is non-existent and incomprehensible to creation-marriage; therefore remarriage after divorce is even more non-existent, and more incomprehensible—if that is possible. Thus any union of the married after divorce of a living partner is adultery. There is no salvation in the act of adultery. Permit me to explain. By permitting remarriage after divorce the church is condoning the continual act of adultery—that is to permit willful sin. There is no forgiveness for willful sin but a certain fearful judgement (Heb. 10:26,27). To teach that adultery on the part of the married is a license for divorce and remarriage is to teach that the first marriage is dissolved by adultery. The exact doctrine one thus teaches is that the original married adulterer is a dead partner—that is the Westminster Confession. Thus the Law of Moses has been exercised and the believer is living under the doctrine of the

Works of the Law. Thus the church that teaches a doctrine that permits divorce and remarriage is teaching legalism and has applied the doctrine of works for salvation, i.e. there is salvation for those who continuously continue in the sin of adultery. The problem here is that the original married adulterer is *living* thus the church is permitting the remarried innocent partner to commit willful adultery under their false doctrine of remarriage; a doctrine they claim is Biblical. Mixing the doctrine of the Works of the Law with the Doctrine of Grace inevitably leads to teaching only the doctrine of works; i.e. you can work on your sin; where as the doctrine of Grace declares that you must repent of your sin—this is an altogether different doctrine. Under the doctrine of Grace the innocent partner must extend to the guilty partner the offer of Grace, i.e. to offer the opportunity of repentance and restoration of the marriage till death does them part.

As we learned in the close of the O.T. *creation-marriage* reigned viable in spite of the onslaught of four millennia of adversity: viable as the vehicle to provide the support for the incarnation of the Messiah, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It was also the vehicle to introduce us to His Witness, John the Baptist. Matthew opens the N.T. with the genealogy of Jesus Christ the Son of David, and then proceeds to a magnificent account of the betrothal of Joseph and Mary. It is magnificent in that Matthew is moved by the Holy Ghost to reveal what he apparently understands as some very important facts concerning the birth of Christ. Matthew has something to say that none of the other N.T. writers seem to consider important, if in fact they were aware of the knowledge. So here in his first chapter Matthew sets his pen to the revelation of the mystery of the virgin birth, the incarnation of Christ. He then introduces us to a peculiar question regarding an act of fornication (premarital intercourse) and its required penalty, the act of divorce at the time of Christ. All of this is included in the revelation of the virgin birth of Christ. So dear reader, we cannot be accused of forcing these issues into Matthew, for he, himself, has taken the bold offensive in the teaching of the doctrine of marriage, divorce, and remarriage in the N.T. This fact is very important to our discussion.

Matthew 1:18-19

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise:
When as his mother Mary was espoused to
Joseph, before they came together, she was
found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then
Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not
willing to make her a public example, was
minded to put her away privily.

Matt. 1:18,19

As Matthew begins his account of the virgin birth he strikes at a very perplexing moment in the life of Joseph. Unknown to Joseph, the virgin birth at that moment undoubtedly created in his mind the crisis of shame, for Joseph felt the conviction and need to bring a judicial judgment against his betrothed spouse, Mary. Matthew specifically notes that the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, *before they came together*, she was *found* with child. We can narrow this down to the fact that Joseph either noticed, or was informed that Mary was pregnant. Of course, Mary knew that the Holy Ghost came upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, and that behold she conceived in her womb, and would bring forth a son. But, apparently Joseph did not have this knowledge. The Scripture is silent as to Mary's thoughts or words at this moment, however Joseph is being moved by thoughts and emotions that are devastating—It should be noted here that Mary was one who "*pondered*" the deep things of God in her heart. She waited for God the Holy Spirit to inform Joseph. This faithful pondering woman is a tribute to the life of faith; she certainly was one of the hero's of faith recorded in Scripture.

This revelation to the reader must be considered vital to the doctrine of Christ and the subject of *creation-marriage*. We are clearly told that Joseph was a just man. This of course means that Joseph was slow to anger, and was willing to investigate the matter, and come to a reasonable decision as to his action. His immediate thought was that Mary had committed a special act of *fornication*.

This idea is certainly supplied with Joseph's first assessment, i.e. he thought Mary had committed an act of fornication and it required that he "put her away," that is divorce her as per the Jewish legal custom at that time. The revelation here is that Joseph was living under a Jewish betrothal-matrimonial custom that legally regarded Mary his espoused fiancée, in equal status as his legal wife. In this case her being with child out of wedlock, before they came together to consummate the marriage, constituted an illegal act of premarital sexual intercourse, a special case of fornication. The specific definition of fornication in this case is reserved to the Jewish betrothed couple. In the event that an espoused fiancée was found to have committed fornication the espoused fiancé (the male) was expected to *put the woman away* publicly, i.e. divorce her in the public square. Matthew obviously understood the options of his cultural setting. He is specific and clear in his revelation. Here in chapter one and verse eighteen Matthew introduces the subject of *divorce*. This is remarkable to Matthew. Keep this in mind as we study divorce in the N.T. Edersheim makes the following comment:

According, their betrothal must have been of the simplest, and the dowry settled the smallest possible. Whichever of the two modes of betrothal may have been adopted: in the presence of witnesses—either by solemn word of mouth, in due prescribed formality, with the added pledge of a piece of money, however small, or of money's worth for use; or else by writing (the so-called *Shitre Erusin*)—there would be no sumptuous feast to follow; and the ceremony would conclude with some such benediction as that afterwards in use: 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the World, Who hath sanctified us by His commandments, and enjoined us about incest, and forbidden the betrothed, but allowed us those wedded by Chuppah (the marriage-baldachino) and betrothal. Blessed art Thou, Who sanctifiest Israel by Chuppah and betrothal'—the whole being perhaps concluded by a benediction over the statutory cup of wine, which was tasted in turn by the betrothed. From that

moment Mary was the betrothed wife of Joseph; their relationship as sacred, as if they had already been wedded. Any breach of it would be treated as adultery; nor could the band be dissolved except, as after marriage, by regular divorce.¹⁹⁹

Before leaving this text make note of this interesting benediction which makes a peculiar mention of incest: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the World, Who hath sanctified us by His commandments, and enjoined [warned] us about incest, and forbidden the betrothed." Incest was a paramount concern of the N.T. marriage codes.

John the Baptist: Marriage and Divorce

Jesus and Divorce is the title of the treatise of Heth and Wenham regarding the teaching of the N.T. and divorce. A correct understanding of divorce in the N.T. must rely on Jesus' teaching on the subject. Heth and Wenham defend the "Early Church View" of divorce and remarriage, concluding that Jesus taught a *no-remarriage-this-side-of-death* doctrine of divorce and remarriage. As these authors have said, the teaching of Jesus and divorce is most vital; but for a moment let us consider how the subject of marriage, divorce, and remarriage impact the ministry of John the Baptist.

Prior to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, John the Baptist preached a fiery marriage message. Malachi's prophecy declared that John would be sent to prepare the way of the Lord. Then Malachi goes on to say that John would be a swift witness against sinners, and he specifically mentions adulterers (Mal. 3:5). John certainly fulfilled this prophecy as we follow his ministry. As a matter of fact it appears that his discourse on adultery-incest was his greatest sermon. Matthew chooses to reveal the fullness of John's sermon in chapter fourteen of his Gospel.

The O.T. closes with this promise, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me," (Mal. 3:1a). *Creation-marriage* has its place in the Lord's way, and the Messenger preparing the Lord's way defended creation-marriage with his life. Malachi has his own dissertation on marriage, divorce, and remarriage as we have previously observed. Luke commences the

life of the Baptist with this statement, "There was, in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias," (Lk.1:5a). Zacharias was the father of John the Baptist. Herod and his family played a significant role in the lives of Jesus and the Baptist. The Herod mentioned here (Lk. 1) is Herod the Great, Herod I. Edersheim reports that Herod the Great had ten wives and many sons. His wife Malthake, a Samaritan, was the mother of Herod Archelaus, and Herod Antipas. Another wife, Cleopatra of Jerusalem, bore Herod Philip.²⁰⁰ These are the major personages of Herod I who will stage their warfare against *creation-marriage*, John, and our Lord. Herod the Great was the bloody tyrant who slew the children of Bethlehem after the birth of Jesus. Here in (Matt. 14:1-11) the subjects of our study are Herod Antipas and Herod Philip, sons of the same father. Antipas ordered the bloody decapitation of the Baptist.

Another interesting note here is that the two controversial rabbi's of the Gospel era, Hillel and Shammai lived and taught in Jerusalem during the reign of Herod I. These two rabbis would inspire two schools of biblical interpretation that forms the sequel to our N.T. discussion of divorce; they held opposing views: "Both gave their names to 'schools', whose direction was generally different—not infrequently, it seems, chiefly for the sake of opposition." Edersheim honors Hillel as the "representative Jewish reformer," and places him presiding over the meeting of the Sanhedrin which, in answer to Herod the Great's inquiry, pointed to Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah. Later we find the schools of these rabbis leading a controversy over the, so called, rightful cause for divorce. Edersheim also reports that some "*falsely*" represented Hillel as he whose principles closely resemble the teaching of Jesus, or, according to certain writers, were its source.²⁰¹ However, we will learn that Hillel's followers would be opposed to Jesus' strict teaching concerning divorce. On the other hand to some it was Jesus who actually was on the side of Shammai, the opponent of Hillel. Nevertheless, we will see that Jesus agrees with neither; Jesus' teaching would be revolutionary to Hillel and Shammai, and this should be of no surprise since Jesus' teaching on divorce and remarriage was so revolutionary that His own disciples became irate and said, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." So we can certainly conclude that divorce and remarriage

were important topics to the political and religious leaders of the Gospel era, and we will see that John and Jesus were deeply involved in these issues.

Luke goes on to tell us that the priest Zacharias had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless (Lk. 1:5,6). Their marriage was a *creation-marriage*. Elisabeth was barren. Then, while attending to the altar, an angel appeared to Zacharias telling him that he and his aged wife would bare a son, and call his name John, i.e. the Baptist. This son would turn the hearts of the fathers toward their children—could it be at that time that the modern divorce-broken-family-syndrome had John turning the hearts of divorced fathers and mothers toward their children? While yet in the womb, John leaps for joy at the very presence of Mary who was with child, the child Jesus. From the womb John can prove he loved his Savior. He was a dedicated soldier. He was a devoted preacher. He was John the Baptist, the preacher of repentance and the Gospel, the defender of *creation-marriage*. His message of repentance was simple, “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” To John repentance was the first step in making the way of the Lord straight. To John repentance was the first step in dealing with any and all the sins of the people. All the marriage sins of his day were relegated to that first step, repentance. If John were to address the marriage sins of the world today he would again preach repentance. The first word John preached was “Repent.” The first word Jesus preached was “Repent.” Today this must also be the first step for everyone involved in a marriage sin. This is the only way of Salvation by Grace. *Sola Gratia*. Now let us return to preaching of the Baptist and the power of his last sermon:

- 1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,
- 2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.
- 3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.
- 4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to

have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.

Matt. 14:1-11

John's last and greatest sermon was aimed at the marriage sin of the political ruler of his time, Herod Antipas. We must not lose sight of the fact that John and Jesus were one in their doctrine and teaching. Jesus testified to this when he was preaching his landmark sermon, *Ye Must Be Born-Again*, to the Pharisee, Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" (Jn.3:11). John was the sharp sword witness of his Lord, and his last sermon cut to the heart of Herod Antipas and Herodias. Antipas' half brother by his father, Herod Philip was previously married to Herodias. She became disenchanted with Philip because he was disinherited by his father Herod the Great. The following is an excerpt from the N.T. commentator R.C.H. Lenski:

This Philip was disinherited through the treachery of his mother and lived privately in Rome with Herodias and their daughter Salome. Herod Antipas was a son of Herod the Great and the Samaritan Malthake and thus a half-uncle of Herodias, and was married to the daughter of Aretas, King of Arabia Petraea. While he was on a visit to Rome, Antipas

and Herodias eloped, and the wife of Antipas, not waiting to be divorced, returned to her father, and a war followed between Aretas and Herod Antipas.

Matt. 14:4 “For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.” Herod’s crime [his marriage] was a public outrage. The woman Herodias had first married her own father’s brother and then had run away and lived with the half-brother of her husband, who thus was also her half-uncle and already had a wife. Two marriages were disrupted, and the new union was not a marriage. It was plain adultery and within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity [my emphasis]. Josephus charges Herodias with the intention of confounding her country’s institutions. No wonder John raised his voice although Herod was his ruler.” To have her” = to have as a wife.²⁰²

The editor and translator of *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, William Whiston makes the following comment regarding the Baptist’s accusation of Herod:

Nor was it, as I agree with Grotius and others of the learned, Philip the tetrarch, but this Herod-Philip, whose wife Herod [Antipas] the tetrarch had married, and in that her first husband’s lifetime, and when her first husband has issue by her; for which adulterous and incestuous marriage John the Baptist justly reprov’d Herod [Antipas] the tetrarch; and for which reproof Salome, the daughter of Herodias by her first husband Herod-Philip, who was still alive, occasioned him to be unjustly beheaded.²⁰³

So now we have Matthew describing another case of “special fornication” regarding marriage, i.e. incest. This is remarkable to say the least. Matthew reports two cases of *porneia* (fornication) in marriage and both cases required divorce to conclude them. John’s sermon was so cutting that the only alternative for the King and his illegal wife was to repent or silence the tongue of John the Baptist;

and what better way to silence his tongue than to decapitate the preacher; cutting off his head with his tongue in his mouth. What a successful preacher was the Baptist; like Churchill declared to Hitler while referring to England, “Some chicken, Some neck,” we can likewise say, Some preacher, Some head. Like I said, John the Baptist was a defender of *creation-marriage*; he literally defended the doctrine with his bloody head on a platter offered to the primary recipient of his sermon, Herodias. I find it an interesting point that this man John was a man whose sermons would drive him to advance upon every sin of all men. His assault was relentless. But regardless of his ubiquitous attack one particular sin would fail to yield to him without a death-to-death fight. John was called upon to confront this sin head-on—no pun intended.

John was consumed with conviction. His eyes blared. His mind was set for the attack. He formulated the exact phrase he needed and cried out, “It is not lawful for thee to have her.” “It is not lawful for thee to have her.” “It is not lawful for thee to have her.” John’s last sermon was his best. He was a seasoned preacher. Fearless. He calculated his offensive thrust. His aim was perfect. He fires his shot heard round the world: Herod commits incest! Herod commits incest! Herod commits incest! He divided Herod’s soul and spirit, and Herodias’ bone and marrow. Herod was wounded, but Herodias was mortally wounded. She was now heart dead—dead hardened. Breathing a fiery rage, she now has one burning desire, the death of the Baptist. John called for Herod to repudiate Herodias. He was crying out to Herod, “It is unlawful to have her”—Put Put her away—“It is unlawful to have her”—Put her away—“It is unlawful to have her”—Divorce her. This is Matthew’s second dissertation on divorce.

But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: Matt. 11: 9 ff

Yes, Herod it is unlawful for you to have your brother Philip’s wife.

John had two verses in mind: Lev. 18:16 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it is thy brother's nakedness, and Lev.20:21 And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness. Both of these verses speak of incest, sexual intercourse within the forbidden degrees. That is sexual intercourse between blood relatives, consanguineous marriage if you will—another special case of porneia, fornication.

Before we leave the last sermon and martyrdom of the Baptist we must note the geography of this event, for it will play a vital role in Matthew's third dissertation of divorce. Edersheim makes the following comment regarding the geographic location of John's last public preaching:

There is no necessity for supposing that John and the disciples of Jesus baptized at, or quite close to, the same place. On the contrary, such immediate juxtaposition seems, for obvious reasons, unlikely. Jesus was within the boundaries of the province of Judea, while John baptized at Aenon (the springs), near Salim. The latter site has not been identified. But the oldest tradition, which places it a few miles to the south of Bethshean (Scythopolis), on the border of Samaria and Galilee, has this in its favour, that it locates the scene of John's last public work close to the seat of Herod Antipas, into whose power the Baptist was so soon to be delivered.²⁰⁴

Another element in the martyrdom of John noted by Edersheim was the intrigue of the Pharisees and the influence they exerted on Herod Antipas. The Pharisees certainly knew the threat John posed to Herod Antipas and Herodias; did they actually help create the crisis that led to John's death? Edersheim believes that is just what happened.

Besides, the Pharisees may have used Antipas as their tool, and worked upon his wretched superstition to effect their own purposes. And this is

what we suppose to have been the case. The reference to the Pharisaic spying and to their comparisons between the influence of Jesus and John, which led to the withdrawal of Christ into Galilee, seems to imply that the Pharisees had something to do with the imprisonment of John. Their connection with Herod appears even more clearly in the attempt to induce Christ's departure from Galilee, on pretext of Herod's machinations. It will be remembered that the Lord unmasked their hypocrisy by bidding them go back to Herod, showing that He fully knew that real danger threatened Him, not from the Tetrarch, but from the leaders of the party [Pharisaic] in Jerusalem (Lk.13:31-33). Our inference therefore is that Pharisaic intrigue had a very large share in giving effect to Herod's fear of the Baptist and of his reproofs.²⁰⁵

The next question we face is that after John's death, were the Pharisees trying to likewise have Jesus incarcerated in the prison of Antipas? When we open (Matt.19) Jesus is found again in the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan. It was here that the Pharisees tempt Jesus to discuss the subject of divorce. They knew that Jesus and John preached the same message concerning *creation-marriage*. Were they trying to get Jesus to make a public statement on divorce in order to excite the wrath of Herod and Herodias? Edersheim makes this fitting comment:

Accordingly, when these Pharisees again encountered Jesus, now on his journey to Judea, they resumed the subject precisely where it had been broken off when they had last met Him, only now with the object of 'tempting Him.' Perhaps it may also have been in the hope that, by getting Christ to commit Himself against divorce in Perea—the territory of Herod—they might enlist against Him, as formerly against the Baptist, the implacable hatred of Herodias.²⁰⁶

Edersheim is focused. Yes, the Pharisaic intrigue played a role in the life of John and Jesus. The Pharisees were certainly aware of Herod Antipas' authority and control over John and Jesus; and as he points out Jesus knew His real threat was not Herod but the Pharisee and the leaders at Jerusalem. Edersheim does us a fine service here. Luke points this out:

31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and tomorrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Luke 13:31-33

The Baptists Final Hour

I see it as fitting that we honor John with a short eulogy; I feel it is no burden of the reader to contemplate the tribute Edersheim pays to The Baptist in this finely crafted account of his final hour:

It was early spring, shortly before the Passover, the anniversary of the date of Herod the Great and of the accession of (his son) Herod Antipas to the Tetrarchy. A fit time for a Belshazzar-feast, when such an one as Herod would gather to a grand banquet his lords, and the military authorities, and

the chief men of Galilee. It is evening, and the castle-palace is brilliantly lit up. The noise of music and the shouts of revelry come across the slope into the citadel, and fall into the deep dungeon where waits the prisoner of Christ. And now the merriment in the great banqueting-hall has reached its utmost height. The king has nothing further to offer his satiated guests, no fresh excitement. So let it be the sensuous stimulus of dubious dances, and, to complete it, let the dancer be the fair young daughter of the king's wife, the very descendant of the Asmonaeon priest-princes! To viler depth of coarse familiarity even a Herod could not have descended.

She has come, and she has danced, this princely maiden, out of whom all maidenhood and all princeliness have been brazed by a degenerate mother, wretched offspring of the once noble Maccabees. And she has done her best in that wretched exhibition, and pleased Herod and them that sat at meat with him. And now, amidst the general plaudits, she shall have her reward—and the king swears it to her with loud voice, that all around hear it—even to the half of his kingdom. The maiden steals out of the banquet-hall to ask her mother what it shall be. Can there be doubt or hesitation in the mind of Herodias? If there was one object she had at heart, which these ten months she had in vain sought to attain: it was the death of John the Baptist. She remembered it all only too well—her stormy, reckless past. The daughter of Aristobulus, the ill-fated Asmonaeon princess Mariamme (I.), she had been married to her half-uncle, Herod Philip, the son of Herod the Great and of Mariamme (II.), the daughter of the High-Priest (Boethos). At one time it seemed as if Herod Philip would have been sole heir of his father's dominions. But the old tyrant had changed his testament, and Philip was left with great wealth,

but as a private person living in Jerusalem. This little suited the woman's ambition. It was when his half-brother, Herod Antipas, came on a visit to him at Jerusalem that an intrigue began between the Tetrarch and his brother's wife. It was agreed that, after the return of Antipas from his impending journey to Rome, he would repudiate his wife, the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia, and wed Herodias. But Aretas' daughter heard of the plot, and having obtained her husband's consent to go to Machaerus, she fled thence to her father. This, of course, led to enmity between Antipas and Aretas. Nevertheless, the adulterous marriage with Herodias followed. In a few sentences the story may be carried to its termination. The woman proved the curse and ruin of Antipas. First came the murder of the Baptist, which sent a shrill of horror through the people, and to which all the later misfortunes of Herod were attributed. Then followed a war with Aretas, in which the Tetrarch was worsted. And, last of all, his wife's ambition led him to Rome to solicit the title of King, lately given to Agrippa, the brother of Herodias. Antipas not only failed, but was deprived of his dominions, and banished to Lyons in Gaul. The pride of the woman in refusing favours from the Emperor, and her faithfulness to her husband in his fallen fortunes, are the only redeeming points in her history. As for Salome, who was first married to her uncle, Philip the Tetrarch. Legend has it, that her death was retributive, being in consequence of a fall on the ice.

Such was the woman who had these many months sought with the vengefulness and determination of a Jezebel, to rid herself of the hated person, who alone had dared publicly denounce her sin, and whose words held her weak husband in awe. The opportunity had now come for obtaining from the vacillating monarch what her entreaties could

never have secured. As the Gospel puts it, 'instigated' by her mother, the damsel hesitated not. We can readily fill in the outlined picture of what followed. It only needed the mother's whispered suggestion, and still flushed from her dance, Salome re-entered the banqueting-hall. 'With haste,' as if no time were to be lost, she went up to the king: 'I would that thou forthwith give me in a charger, the head of John the Baptist!' Silence must have fallen on the assembly. Even into their hearts such a demand from the lips of little more than a child must have struck horror. They all knew John to be a righteous and holy man. Wicked as they were, in their superstition, if not religiousness, few, if any of them, would have willingly lent himself to such work. And they all knew, also, why Salome, or rather Herodias, had made this demand. What would Herod do? 'The king was exceedingly sorry.' For months he had striven against this. His conscience, fear of the people, inward horror at the deed, all would have kept him from it. But he had sworn to the maiden, who now stood before him, claiming that the pledge be redeemed, and every eye in the assembly was now fixed upon him. Unfaithful to his God, to his conscience, to truth and righteousness; not ashamed of any crime or sin, he would yet be faithful to his half-drunken oath, and appear honorable and true before such companions!

It has been but the contest of a moment. 'Straightway' the king gives the order to one of the body-guards. The maiden hath withdrawn to await the result with her mother. The guardsman has left the banqueting-hall. Out into the cold spring night, up that slope, and into the deep dungeon. As its door opens, the noise of revelry comes with the light of the torch which the man bears. No time for preparation is given, nor needed. A few minutes more, and the gory head of the Baptist is brought to

the maiden in a charger, and she gives the ghastly dish to her mother.

It is all over! As the pale morning light streams into the keep, the faithful disciples, who had been told of it, come reverently to bear the headless body to the burying. They go forth forever from that accursed place, which is so soon to become a mass of shapeless ruins. They go to tell it to Jesus, and henceforth to remain with Him. We can imagine what welcome awaited them. But the people ever afterwards cursed the tyrant, and looked for those judgments of God to follow, which were so soon to descend on him. And he himself was ever afterwards restless, wretched, and full of apprehensions. He could scarcely believe that the Baptist was really dead, and when the fame of Jesus reached him, and those around suggested that this was Elijah, a prophet, or as one of them, Herod's mind, amidst its strange perplexities, still reverted to the man whom he had murdered. It was a new anxiety, perhaps, even so, a new hope; and as formerly he had often and gladly heard the Baptist, so now he would fain have seen Jesus. He would see Him; but not now. In that dark night of betrayal, he, who at the bidding of the child of an adulteress, had murdered the Forerunner, might, with the approbation of a Pilate, have rescued Him whose faithful witness John had been. But night was to merge into yet darker night. For it was the time and the power of the Evil One. And yet: Jehovah reigneth.²⁰⁷

Could there be any doubt that John would receive the Savior's highest accolade, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." We might say that John gave his life for the true doctrine of creation-marriage.

Jesus and the Doctrine of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; Matt. 4:12

Lenski aptly points out that Jesus' departure into Galilee was not for fear of Herod Antipas, but rather that Jesus retired to Galilee, correctly noting that Galilee was also the territory of Antipas. Jesus was going to take over where His Witness left off. He would now begin His preaching. Again, His first sermon was one of repentance; for His first word—like the Baptist—was Repent! “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

In prison John had time to contemplate his actions. The fortress prison was exceedingly strong by nature, impregnable. Josephus describes even its natural position as unassailable. John was incarcerated in a dungeon, well guarded. Although John began to question his Lord—“Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another”—we must note that John never questioned his sermon to Herod and Herodias; for which he offered his bloody head to the god of incest on an altar, the dinner table, of the god-king Herod Antipas. One should not be startled with Herod's remarks when he heard of Jesus and His preaching: At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, And said unto his servants, “This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead” (Matt. 14:1,2). To Herod, Jesus and John were one. They both preached the same sermon on marriage.

Sermon On The Mount

While John was in prison for accusing Herod Antipas and Herodias of being unlawfully wed, Jesus, the Evangelist, was preaching His first sermon, “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” It must be noted that later when John requested that Jesus provide him with credentials, Jesus noted among other things “that the poor had the Gospel preached to them.” Matthew then records the sermon of Jesus that He preached on a mountain near Capernaum from which we have entitled “*The Sermon On the Mount.*” This writer is convinced that the Gospel is preached in this sermon. The act of faith is to believe the truth about God, man, and sin; the truth that God is Holy, and that man is a sinner. The truth is that God is

Omniscient. He knows everything about every man—Jesus said unto her, “Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly” (Jn. 4:17,18)—He is a righteous God, He is love; He is truth, and God is merciful; the truth necessary to every man; man the sinner.

During this sermon Jesus was literally present with his hearers and each word of it was drawn from every feature of his voice, his face, his eyes, and his heart. He concluded by giving each one of his hearers an invitation: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way [I am the Way], which leadeth unto life [I am Life], and few there be that find it,” and “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of *‘mine,’* and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock” [I am the Rock], (Matt. 7:13,14; 24). In preaching the Gospel the preacher must preach repentance and I believe that the “*Sermon on the Mount*” preaches repentance like no other:

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time,
Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you,
That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her
hath committed adultery with her already in his
heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out,
and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that
one of thy members should perish, and not that thy
whole body should be cast into hell. Matt. 5:27-29

The Sermon on the Mount preaches the Gospel with simplicity and power. Every word is intended to evangelize the heart of man. Man is given one narrow gate in which to pass, "Repent! Repent! Repent! The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. The first word of the sermon honors this idea, "Blessed are the poor in spirit [the penitent] for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The second word of the sermon is the same, "Blessed are they that mourn [the penitent]; for they shall be comforted." The third word again repeats the call for repentance, "Blessed are the meek [the penitent]; for they shall inherit the earth. The fourth word is the same, "Blessed are they who hunger

and thirst after righteousness [the penitent]; for they shall be filled." Jesus drove this hope to the penitent as the introduction to His sermon because He was about to draw his sword and pierce the heart of every man who ever took a breath of earth's air.

The content of the sermon have led some to believe that the chronological order in which Matthew has placed it is misleading.²⁰⁸ Noting that the disciples had been called prior to the sermon, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was seated, his disciples came unto him." By the end of the sermon we see a multitude following Him, "When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him." Nevertheless, the idea that the sermon initially addresses the disciples has led some to see the sermon as a Christian Code of Ethics. But to view Jesus as a moralist is to miss his entire *raison d'etre*. It is a terrible theological error to place Jesus on the side of the moralist. Jesus taught men to repent. The need for repentance teaches the doctrine of total depravity:

There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher: with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that whatever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:10ff)

This writer contends that the Sermon on the Mount teaches man his depravity by the complete exposition of the Law, and that the sermon

preaches the Gospel to all men. His young disciples were in great need to understand the Gospel. The multitude had the same need. Jesus the Evangelist would preach the Gospel to the poor. All are poor.

Jesus clearly declares that he is not come to destroy the law, but came to fulfill it. With that said, one would think that He had made His point, but He goes on: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Without apology the Preacher warns His audience that He would use every *jot and tittle* of the Law to convict them of sin, and to pierce their hearts asunder. He would drive the spike of the law into the deepest secret of man. Jesus was a preacher who was not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He then immediately preached repentance as no man had ever preached:

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old, Thou shalt not kill and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgment; but I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother, without a cause, shall be in danger of judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

(Matt. 5: 21,22)

Today, men make the same assumption, i.e. men are not sinners unless they have killed someone. This seems to be their only criteria for qualifying as a sinner. Well if that is the case, Jesus was to prove that all men are murderers. The Sixth Commandment now takes on an entirely new meaning. If a man is angry with his brother, and curses his brother, Jesus convicts the man of murder. He teaches that any form of anger, Raca to fool [both four letter words], is murder. The object of His thought was to deprive anyone of his listeners, disciple or stranger, to escape the accusation and guilt of murder. All men were murderers; there is none righteous no not one. The cry of Jesus grew louder and louder: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Again, Jesus perceived that man believed he was innocent of breaking the Seventh Commandment, adultery, i.e. innocent because he never actually had physical intercourse with a woman other than his wife. Men believe that since they have not committed actual physical adultery they are not adulterers. This idea is true today. The moralist relishes in his righteousness with the thought that he has never laid carnally with any woman other than his wife. But Jesus destroys the moralist's self-righteousness. He drove every *jot and tittle* of the Law into the heart of man. Jesus was not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance; therefore he drove men to repentance, as a shepherd drives his sheep from danger. It is as if He thought, since you believe that you are righteous in that ye have not laid carnally with other than thy wife, I will prove to you that you all have laid carnally with other than your wife; you are all adulterers:

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

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.

Matt. 5:27-32

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to

the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Heb. 4:12,13

The striking accusation is that if a man only with his eye looks upon a woman to lust after her—to contemplate even the smallest mental initiative to think of seeing through the clothing, undressing the woman, touching the woman sexually, or of proceeding into sexual contact with the woman—that man is guilty of committing adultery. He then emphasizes his ocular comment by saying, “If thy eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.” Jesus accused every man who has ever looked upon a woman with sinful pleasure (lust) of committing adultery with that woman. That man broke the Seventh Commandment, Thou shalt not commit adultery—Is any exempt? Jesus intended to convict all; His purpose of course was to call all men to repentance. He did just that.

Adultery is the primary cause of marital dissension; although the complaints on legal suits often evade mentioning it. It is the most common breach of the marriage covenant. The Law of Moses protected the marriage covenant in the case of adultery. The adulterer and adulteress were to put to death. It was that simple. When the death penalty was no longer practiced—the State of Israel having lost its authority, or because of apostasy—men employed the death penalty in a different way, excommunication; in other words divorce. To the human mind this was equal to capital punishment. Many believe that life in prison is equal to the death penalty since society has eternally excommunicated the social violator. Some denominations actually teach that in the case of infidelity in the marriage bond: the innocent partner has the right to put to death the offender by executing a divorce, or suing for the divorce. They actually teach that divorce is a form of death:

Adultery or fornication, committed after a contract [engagement], being detected before marriage,

giveth just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract. In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce, and after the divorce to marry another, as if the offending party were dead.²⁰⁹

One must ask: Does this *death-divorce* doctrine preach Sola Gratia? Certainly not! If your doctrine of divorce puts the sinning partner outside the realm of God's Grace, i.e. that the marriage can never be saved, reconciled, you are teaching a doctrine that is anathema to the Gospel of Christ. As we will see the analogy of marriage in the N.T. is likened to the Salvation of Jehovah God. If you believe that divorce can end any *creation-marriage*, i.e. any-first-marriage-this-side-of-death, then you have a conflicting belief with the Gospel of Salvation taught by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Salvation of God is by grace through faith and not of works. Our marriage to Christ is a great mystery (Eph.5); it is an analogy of our salvation by grace to God and His Son Jesus Christ. Oh, so Great Salvation! The very meaning of the word *Salvation* teaches perfect safety. Should we commit some sin and depart from the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for a time, we can be assured that He will never leave us or forsake us. He will never divorce you or me. He will never divorce any believer and no man shall pluck us out of His hand. He will wait your return, or may let you sleep, i.e. permit you to die. The Apostle Paul counseled the innocent partner to peacefully wait for the return of the sinning partner: "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" If any *creation-marriage* can be put asunder then the *Salvation of God; Christ's marriage to the believer* ("For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones") can be put asunder. That divorce doctrine equates that the *Salvation of God* can be lost because of sinful works and if that is the case you are confessing to a doctrine that you obviously gained your Salvation—your marriage to Christ—by good works. If one believes they can lose Salvation by evil works, then you believe that you can gain Salvation by good works. You cannot have it both ways: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Only Legalism teaches divorce. The foundation of divorce is the Law. The

foundation of *permanency-marriage* is Grace; it completely contradicts the Law to the minutest degree.

As the Sermon pointed out, man practiced secret hatred—a system of avoidance—rather than exercise his desire to kill his brother he found ways to raise “*cain*” rather than act like Cain, i.e. he now cursed his brother. In the thoughts of his heart and a decision of his will, he actually violently killed his brother. The same is true of committing adultery. The act of looking upon a woman with lust was an evil propensity toward adultery. The heart of man is laden with adultery. The eye is full of adultery—merchants employing the visual power of TV and photographic print will use the sensual female figure to sell almost anything in our modern world—The system of avoidance that surrounded murder was intricate; that same system encircled adultery, and was intricately even more creative. Here again Jesus proves that even though a man avoided physical adultery, his lustful look was the act of adultery; all men are adulterers. Adultery is a capital crime.

Matthew 5:31,32 Divorce Text

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: 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.

Matt. 5:31,32

Before we exposit this text one must at least honor the context of these verses with the previous four verses:

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right

hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: 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. Matt. 5:27-32

So the context of the famous divorce text in the Sermon On The Mount is literally connected to the pericope on murder and adultery. This fact must play a significant role in this matter. Another point to mention before we reach into the truths of the text is to note that the writer is Matthew. Please note that Matthew is the only writer of the N.T. who offers the most controversial “*exception clause*” into the dialogue. Therefore there are no other sources to reference the exception clause in Scripture then those already mentioned in Matthew—The exception clauses belong exclusively to Matthew. Does Matthew count as his own witness to the exception clause? Is the reader willing to consider this thought? I personally believe that the exception clause even though used twice by Matthew is a single *obscure text*, i.e. a single text without reference. Therefore any effort at exegesis must honor the rules of hermeneutics for interpreting obscure texts: (1) The principal for the preference of the clearest interpretation, (2) The principal of the unity of the sense of Scripture, (3) The principal of the analogy of the faith.²¹⁰ The modern student must be circumspect here to avoid carrying his contemporary understanding of civil legal divorce into this obscure text. So dear reader, please stop for a moment and remember that Scripture interprets Scripture (*scriptura sacra sui ipsius intrepres*).

The person that holds to a *non-permanency-marriage* doctrine must address another important consideration which is referred to as the *Premium of Adultery*—this means that the *exception clause* offers a loop hole in the otherwise permanency doctrine that gives the advantage to the spouse who wants to terminate the marriage, i.e. that spouse can simply commit adultery with the person they want to remarry, and cause the innocent mate to sue for a

divorce on the only (supposed) permitted grounds for divorce (adultery)—this very idea has entered into the mind of several people that I have personally counseled. I find it incredible that here in the middle of Jesus' severe denunciation of murder and adultery that the modern interpreter finds adultery to be an advantage to the person who desires to terminate a marriage covenant. I ask you dear reader one simple question: "Did Jesus permit and offer any exception clause for murder, or for any other crime?" Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not kill; are the words of God. I'm certain that Jesus never taught such a corrupt doctrine: *The Premium of Adultery*. He was teaching men the full meaning of the Law of Moses. He explicitly stated, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am come not to destroy the law, but to fulfill." So I am certain that what Matthew recorded was not a premium to commit adultery; it certainly means something else.

During the time of our Lord the Jewish courts according to Edersheim would, "unquestionably allow divorce on almost any grounds." Explaining the difference between Christ and the two rabbi's of the day, Shammai the conservative, i.e., divorce for unchastity, and Hillel the liberal, i.e., divorce for every cause, Edersheim writes:

And the Jewish Law unquestionably allowed divorce on almost any grounds; the difference being, not as to what was lawful, but on what grounds a man should set the Law in motion, and make use of the absolute liberty which it accorded him. Hence, it is a serious mistake on the part of Commentators [Christian] to set the teaching of Christ on this subject by the side of that of Shammai.

But the School of Hillel proceeded on different principles. It took the words, 'matter of shame' in the widest possible sense, and declared it sufficient ground for divorce if a woman had spoiled her husband's dinner. Rabbi Akiba thought, that the words, 'if she find no favour in his eyes,' implied that it was sufficient if a man had found another woman more attractive than his wife. All agreed that moral

blame made divorce a duty, and that in such cases a woman should not be taken back; according to the Mishnah, if they transgressed against the Law of Moses or of Israel. The former is explained as implying a breach of the laws of tithing, of setting apart the first of the dough, and of purification. The latter is explained as referring to such offences as that of going in public with uncovered head, of spinning in the public streets, or entering into talk with men, to which others add, that of brawling, or of disrespectfully speaking of her husband's parents in his presence. A troublesome, or quarrelsome wife might certainly be sent away; and ill repute, or childlessness (during ten years) were also regarded as valid grounds of divorce.²¹¹

On the other hand the conservative rabbi, Shammai, set unchastity or adultery as the only legal ground to secure a divorce; for which Moses of course required the stoning to death of both guilty partners. But the Law required every capital offense to be witnessed, "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established," (Deut. 19:15). Therefore in order to execute the penalty of the Law the husband, or his acquaintance would have to literally catch his wife in the act. This would prove almost impossible. Sexual relations of the married are a private act, and adultery is even more private and secretive. The intrigue of privacy and mystery that surround adultery are the very elements that make up the definition of adultery. Without the secrecy element adultery would not be possible. Therefore it would be near impossible to prove the act of adultery was actually committed. Stoning for adultery was most likely very uncommon, however adultery was probably more common.

In (John 8:1-11) the scribes and Pharisees claimed that the woman they arrested was taken in adultery. If this was true where was her male counterpart, the adulterer. They failed to meet the criteria of the Law, and consequently Jesus threw the case out of court. First of all they wanted to stone the woman without a trial. They did not present the two witnesses. But the real problem with

their story was that the adulterer was missing. The case against the woman could not be proven without the male counterpart. The real possibility was that the woman had a reputation for adultery, but these men could not prove it. That was exactly what the dilemma of adultery was all about. The reason for the dilemma of adultery is that a man whose wife secretly committed adultery may have conceived child by adultery. The man then would have a wife who was with child of another man, the adulterer. Without this knowledge the innocent husband would be required to raise this child even to calling it his own. The elements of adultery, or even the suspicion of adultery have the gravest consequences for the man. A woman, however, never has this total fear. She knows the man, or possible men that impregnated her. The mystery of iniquity is that a woman could conceive a child by adultery and her husband probably would never know. The woman alone can guarantee the knowledge of the father, i.e. before the day of DNA testing. When the man is distressed with doubt of his wife's fidelity, he is overcome with what the Scripture refers to as the *spirit of jealousy*. Today this same *spirit of jealousy* may enter into a marriage relationship; for which moderns have no solution, save DNA testing; certainly a difficult test for the jealous husband to obtain. The ancients however had a remedy.

During the period of the tabernacle God provided a test for the woman who was suspected of adultery; and if she was with child the husband could be assured that he was the father. The test was to ensure her innocence in the event her husband brought false accusation against her. Like the river ordeal of the ancient codes the Law of Moses provided a similar examination:

- 11 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 12 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man's wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him,
- 13 And a man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of her husband, and be kept close, and she be defiled, and there be no witness against her, neither she be taken with the manner;
- 14 And the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled: or if the

spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled:

15 Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal; he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon; for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16 And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD:

17 And the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel; and of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water:

18 And the priest shall set the woman before the LORD, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which is the jealousy offering: and the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that causeth the curse:

19 And the priest shall charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, If no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness with another instead of thy husband, be thou free from this bitter water that causeth the curse:

20 But if thou hast gone aside to another instead of thy husband, and if thou be defiled, and some man have lain with thee beside thine husband:

21 Then the priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing, and the priest shall say unto the woman, The LORD make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the LORD doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell;

22 And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot: And the woman shall say, Amen, amen.

23 And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot them out with the bitter water:

24 And he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse: and the water that

causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter.

25 Then the priest shall take the jealousy offering out of the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before the LORD, and offer it upon the altar:

26 And the priest shall take an handful of the offering, even the memorial thereof, and burn it upon the altar, and afterward shall cause the woman to drink the water.

27 And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, that, if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot: and the woman shall be a curse among her people.

28 And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed.

29 This is the law of jealousies, when a wife goeth aside to another instead of her husband, and is defiled;

30 Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law.

31 Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and this woman shall bear her iniquity.

(Numb. 5:11-31)

The dilemma that surrounds adultery is manifest in this law. One would wonder if the law was ever exercised, not just because of the required dust from the floor of the tabernacle, but also for the intricate difficulty of the law. In all probability just the inquisition would bring out the truth: the accused would either plead her innocence, or if guilty she would confess her sin. This all contributed to the problems associated with adultery, problems for the guilty, the innocent, the suspected, and for the jealous one.

There is no divorce provision in the Law for adultery. If adultery was committed the only solution of the Law was death. The

(èrwaṭ dabar) the unclean thing, certainly was not adultery, or for that fact it was not even the suspicion of adultery as noted.

The myriad of offences which permitted divorce were in all actuality nothing more than what Edersheim said, "The Jewish Law unquestionably allowed divorce on almost any grounds (except adultery); the difference being, not as to what was lawful, but on what grounds a man should set the Law in motion, and make use of the absolute liberty which it accorded him." Was it possible that because of man's design of *adultery avoidance* he created a grocery list of reasons to set the law in motion—In other words he was using his divorce privilege to actually commit adultery "*legally*", i.e. these minor offences became a *Premium of Offences to Commit Adultery*; so he could divorce his wife instead of committing the act of adultery with the woman he was lusting.

As stated here Rabbi Akiba permitted divorce if a man found a woman more attractive than his wife. If this was the case men did not have to worry about committing adultery. If he lusted after another woman he only had to divorce his wife—perhaps for some trivial matter—and marry the woman he wanted to take by adultery. He could do this even if he was coveting another man's wife. Herod Antipas was accused of exactly this act, although there is evidence that Herodias had motives of her own to enter into the incestuous adulterous relationship. The surprising thing was that man actually believed he had solved the problem of the prohibition of committing adultery by promulgating laws that permitted divorce for *every cause*. Certainly if a man suspected his wife of committing adultery, he only had to apply this interpretation of the Law, and divorce his wife for the suspicion of adultery. But it appears that the Lord Jesus Christ was about to challenge all their permissiveness, and drive the spear of repentance deep into their heart of hearts. He was about to divide to the bone and marrow, and to the soul and spirit. He was about to reveal to each man that the sin of adultery was much more extensive than any had imagined:

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement; but I say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, causeth her to

commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that
is divorced committeth adultery.

Matt. 5:31,32

Here Jesus clearly cuts the liberal divorce school off at the pass. By making marriage a permanent contract, *except for Matthew's understanding of fornication*, Jesus forbids the putting away of any woman for any matter, whatsoever. Dear reader please read this treatise *Jesus' Doctrine of Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage* completely: the knowledge of Matthew's understanding of fornication is absolutely critical to understanding the doctrine of divorce and the argument of this book. I believe that the two definitions of the word *fornication* that is given by Matthew are the only possible definitions of the word found in Matthew's two divorce logions.

The latest figures claim that sixty percent of modern American marriages are destined to the divorce court. Those suing for divorce customarily charge their spouse with irreconcilably differences, or cruel and abusive treatment among other things, although adultery is probably the principal cause. The difficulty of suing for adultery has been stated, the secrecy of sin makes it difficult to prove. On the other hand the suspicion of adultery, *jealousy*, according to Solomon "is as cruel as the grave," (Song 8:6). Jealousy may reflect: (1) the evil suspicion of the husband, or (2) the unproven knowledge of the truth. If adultery has been committed and the dreaded fear is true, the innocent partner tastes of death. If adultery did not exist, the suspected innocent partner suffers a measure of death; yes, jealousy is a cruel as the grave. Adultery is the primary evil of marriage, the primary cause of divorce. But you will not read this on most divorce complaints.

And so it was in the time of Christ. The Rabbi Hillel permitted divorce for *every cause*, but he does not mention *jealousy*. The "law of jealousy" was no longer an option, if in fact it was ever practiced. If a man believed he had the right to put away his wife when his eye beheld a woman who was more pleasing to him, he certainly would divorce a wife who he suspected of infidelity. Here in (Matt. 5:31,32) we hear Jesus say (apart from the exception clause which we will address in the Matt. 19 logion), that divorce is forbidden, and that any remarriage following divorce is adultery. In

this Sermon Jesus is teaching that the depravity of the heart of man. He cites the Sixth Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill", then he aggressively reveals the heart of man as a killer. He continues with the Seventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery", and now proves that all men are guilty of adultery, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." In the past the Jews understood the Law and they committed their adultery behind the cloak of the permissive divorce laws of the rabbis. Now Jesus strips these hypocrites naked, divorce with remarriage is adultery. He forbid divorce, save for the Matthew's exception clause.

The modern understanding of the exception clause in (Matt. 5:32) does not harmonize with the context of the Sermon, and this disparity has led some, to even go as far as, to suspect the text. This lack of harmony is caused by the student attempting to read his modern understanding of civil divorce into the N.T. text. There are two possible harmonies in understanding the exception clause; I have been developing those options since the first word of this book. Stuart L. Tyson wrote a little book, *The teaching of our Lord as to the Indissolubility of Marriage*, where he *sternly defends* the doctrine of permanency-marriage. He argues to defend the teaching of Jesus regarding marriage. He understands Jesus to teach the absolute permanency of marriage this side of death; and this fact causes him to struggle with the exception clause in both (Matt. 5:32;19:9). His sincere and rigorous effort to harmonize the divorce texts with the teaching of Jesus drives him to suspect those very texts. He obviously is attempting to interpret the exception clause with a modern view of civil divorce. Donald W. Shaner quotes Tyson:

Tyson does not see how the statements of Matthew attributed to Jesus (5:32; 19:9) can be brought into accord with the previously mentioned biblical authors. "...if Christ really uttered these words [the exception clause], so far from elevating the conception of marriage, He has not raised it one whit higher than the level of Moses, whereas the very purpose of His previous words [Matt. 5] is to contrast His teaching with that of Moses!" And to Mark's question, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce

his wife?," requiring a direct Yes or No, Matthew adds "for every cause?," presupposing his acceptance of the Deuteronomic Law, but asking him to decide for either the strict or liberal view of certain Rabbis. Jesus, by including the exception of adultery, seems to accept the view of Shammai, rather than abrogating the Mosaic law. If so, it is difficult to understand the disciples' protest (vs. 10), since it was merely a reaffirmation of a Jewish doctrine accepted by a large segment of the population. The only conclusion is that the exception clause is an interpolation due to a Jewish-Christian compiler or editor.

In Matt. 5:32 Jesus also simply confirms the Old Testament teaching; this is contradictory to the structure of the verse which has Christ saying, "But I say unto you," in contrast to the Mosaic law in the preceding verse. The second half of the verse, "and whosoever shall marry her that hath been put away committeth adultery," is almost verbatim with the last portion of Luke 16:18. The anarthrous participle *απολελυμενην*, occurring in both Gospels, denotes "... any woman divorced for any cause whatever." Luke is consistent, but the only way to harmonize Matthew is to place the exception clause also in the second half of the verse 32, or to eliminate it from the first.²¹²

Tyson wrote this in 1909 when marriage was relatively sound in our country. He had so much difficulty with the exception clauses of Matthew that he believed that Jesus, whose teaching of marriage was ablaze with the doctrine of permanency, certainly could not have spoken them. I am very surprised that today most scholars, pastors, students, and confessed Bible believers seem to have no difficulty with the apparent blatant contradiction of the divorce texts and Jesus' teaching on permanency-marriage. Tyson was not a fundamentalist—he was a southern Episcopalian—nevertheless even in 1909 this gentleman was having serious trouble thinking through

these texts. It is just remarkable today that from student to scholar our generation does not at least admit to the difficulty and contradiction of the modern interpretation that the exception clause permits man to put asunder that which God joined together. Matthew's text is absolutely an *obscure text*, and if our generation does not make that admission then this writer suspects not the Matthean text, but I suspect the honesty of the modern students, pastors, and scholars—I adamantly suspect our generation of prophets. In order to understand the exception clauses one must put himself completely back into the exact time of the record of the N.T. When any honest person considers exactly what Matthew understood about *exceptions* and his use of the word fornication as he himself admits in his writings then the student, pastor, and scholar will understand the text in its fullness.

The major context of (Matt. 5:32) declares that Jesus was sternly objecting to the Jew's understanding of the Law. He was explicitly teaching the true meaning of the terms, kill, adultery, and to forswear. In each case His teaching is unambiguous and without any exceptions. Yet, in the discussion of adultery there seems to be an unusual contradictory statement. A statement that on initial examination appears to challenge the entire context of the pericope, i.e., His objection to the Jew's understanding of the Law of Adultery, —adultery could only be committed if the physical act took place— in other words to the Jews the act of thinking adultery was no crime; yet Jesus clearly states that to think adultery is a crime. Since, to some, the modern interpretation of the exception clause permits divorce for adultery this fact absolutely qualifies the exception clause to be defined as an *obscure text*: murder is murder, and adultery is adultery. When Jesus describes *murder* there is no question, no exception to his dialogue; the same is true of *adultery, and to forswear*. So the evidence that the exception clause is an obscure text cannot be denied. The context must dictate the meaning of the obscure text; like it or not. As the Reformers argued with Rome, "Scripture must interpret Scripture." Rome was not the exclusive interpreter of Scripture. The modern interpretation of the State civil marriage and divorce laws cannot dictate the interpretation of the exception clause to the Church. Before we directly tackle the exception clause in Matt. 19:9 we must first gather the other Scripture data on the subject.

Mark 10:1-12

And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. Mark 10:11,12

In Mark, Jesus reiterates the prohibition of divorce; whereas in (Matt.) Jesus charged the man who divorced his wife with causing his wife to commit adultery, and likewise He charged the man who married a divorced woman with committing adultery. Here in (Mark 10) He charged the man who divorces his wife and remarries with adultery and likewise He charges any woman who would do the same with adultery. There is no question that apart from Matthew's exception clauses Jesus clearly prohibited divorce—this writer believes that Jesus forbid divorce in Matthew as well; a thought that embraces the teaching that Jesus is consistent.

It is of extreme interest to this writer that an apology has been developed to permit Mark to make this very obvious editing regarding the woman. The argument states that Mark was writing with the Gentile-Christians in mind, since the Gentiles permitted the woman the right to sue for divorce—an act quite foreign to the Jew. Since the commentators are swift to apologize for Mark my questions is: Why not give Matthew some space in his understanding of *fornication* in the divorce texts?

Luke 16:18

Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.

So again here we have, without the exception clause, the absolute prohibition of divorce. Jesus was adamant, He forbid divorce. Jesus absolutely taught that marriage is permanent. We will now enter that

famous battlefield (Matthew 5:32; 19:9), the Gettysburg of the *Divorce-War*. Let us proceed by examining the entire battlefield.

Romans 7:1-3 A Case For Permanency

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Rom. 7:1-3

Our conscience is pricked with these words. They are so clear. The thought of permanency is so profound and so simple. This verse has created great difficulty for the "not permanency" camp. It clearly teaches permanency, causing the "not permanency" camp to cry, "But, But, But." The "permanency camp" realizes that this text is an illustration to explain a Christian's relation to the Law. As a widow is free from the law of her husband and free to remarry, so the Christian is no longer bound by the Law, but is free to marry another, i.e. Christ. The "not permanency" camp cries that this text is just an illustration, it is not a divorce text. They cry that the societies of the Biblical text understood a doctrine of marriage that permitted divorce. Nevertheless, the illustrator, Paul, chose to dissolve marriage only by death, and that point must be addressed. From this verse it can be argued that Paul personally believed in a "permanency-marriage" doctrine; and as we shall see Paul believed in absolute permanency, as did Christ. This is a difficult thought to those looking for license to divorce; so as for the "not permanency" camp we see them laboring to convert Paul to their false doctrine. They cry that the Jews according to the law practiced divorce and remarriage as expounded in (Deut. 24:1-4) but this text was thoroughly discussed in Chapter 4 of this book—dear reader please keep in mind that Jesus

rejected the Deuteronomy text and relegated it to a mere concession of Moses. Can any reader be sure that Paul wrote this text with the understanding that he was only making a general illustration of binding and loosening elements of the law? I believe that Paul's other writings combined with this text, will prove that creation-marriage, permanency marriage, was his view of sound doctrine. The next text in our discovery is found in I Corinthians.

I Corinthians 5:1-5 Fornication Means Incest

1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. I Cor. 5:1-5

The Unlawful Marriage school, the incest view, has the right to claim this as a proof text in support of their understanding of *porneia*. The Corinthian church obviously did not get the message of Acts 15 and 21; reasoning that since they were not under the law they were free from all aspects of the law. The interpretation of *porneia* in this context is not disputed. A man in the church had married his father's wife—the man's stepmother. It is only probable to assume that his father was dead. This was a clear violation of the Jerusalem Decree where fornication (incestuous marriage) was forbidden. Paul is alarmed. His distress is exasperated by the fact that the entire church had not only approved the unlawful marriage, but they were glorying in it, i.e. they were puffed up (literally proud of it).

Consequently Paul lashes out with his most severe N.T. censure, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The professed believer, the fornicator, violated Leviticus 18:8 The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness. Paul's doctrine is without question; he saw this marriage as a *fornication-marriage* that must be put away. This was an unlawful marriage and Paul screamed it must be put away (divorce was immediate). So here in Corinth divorce was permitted for the exception, *incest*. Let us continue to follow Paul as he continues teaching his doctrine of *creation-marriage*.

I Corinthian 6:15-18 Permanency and the Body Of Christ

15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. I Cor. 6:15-18

This text suggests that the Corinthian church was perhaps as corrupt as any church in history. Heth and Wenham commenting on I Corinthians 7:2 (Nevertheless to avoid fornication), see a reference to I Corinthians six: "As Fee suggests, the 'because of immoralities' (nevertheless, to avoid fornication, KJV) in verse 2 is probably a direct reference back to 6:12-20 where men, in all probability married, were going to the house of prostitutes (and possibly even at the suggestion of their ascetic wives?).²¹³ A doctrine existed in the Corinthian Church that permitted their men to have free sexual relations with the many prostitutes of that city. Paul cries out against this immorality, declaring that the believer's body—contrary to the Corinthian opinion—experienced salvation in Christ equally as his

spirit. The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. The body will experience redemption (resurrection). A believer's body is a member of Christ's body; it is a temple. By having sexual union with harlots, a believer was taking the members of Christ and uniting them to the harlot. In (I Cor. 6:18) Paul exhorts them to flee this kind of fornication. The union of Christ's body with a harlot is absolutely forbidden, because he that is joined to a harlot is one with a harlot, "For two, saith he, shall be one flesh." We should be one spirit and one flesh with Christ. Fornication is a sin against oneself. Fornication is a sin with oneself. Fornication should not be committed in the temple of God, and your body is the temple of God the Holy Spirit. You are no longer own your body, it has been bought (redeemed) by another. Bought with a price, the precious blood of the Lamb of God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who taketh away the sin of the world.

The Erasmian's draw an unusual conclusion from this text. Removing this text from the context of the Corinthian practice of a free permission to visit the brothel, they conclude that when a married person unites with a harlot something beside fornication has taken place. With the act of fornication their creation-marriage died, because their act created a new union. They reason that since fornication required them to unite with another, this could only be accomplished by dissolving the original union. This idea should be stricken from the record—to believe this is to deny the power of the Gospel that unites the believer to Christ forever. The text does not honor the thought of dissolution of marriage. It is sheer conjecture. Note that in spite of their sin, Paul indicates that all is well. He reaches in to salvage them, wholly. For this they have been aptly chided, and called on to repent; being offered complete Christian restoration: for after he chided them he proclaims that they have been "bought with a price," brought means they are redeemed.

Contrary to the Erasmian's who see the dissolution of marriage in this text, the text clearly supports the permanency of marriage even in the event of fornication, i.e., in this case their unions with harlots. Paul clearly extends complete salvation to these sinning Corinthians. "You are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." There is absolutely no mention of these men losing their wives, or salvation in this text. Their wives are for some reason unusually silent. Was it in fact that

because they were ascetic they were refraining from conjugal reciprocation; did they believe abstinence was holiness? Well, chapter seven seems to answer that question in the affirmative. Nevertheless, chapter six is a victory for the permanency camp.

I Corinthians 7 Marriage's Moving Chapter

As we proceed to view the battle field at Gettysburg, Matt. 5:32; 19:9, we must first pass "marriages moving chapter." Here in I Cor. 7 we will find another field in this battleground of the "not permanency" camp. These forty verses are intertwined into a strong rope anchoring the text to the doctrine of permanency. There is but one possible thread that seems to give some hope to the "not permanency" group: verse 15. But before we discuss that verse let us examine each preceding verse of this chapter:

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

I Cor. 7:1

Paul begins his answer to their question—note the discussion of (I Cor.6)—by stating his primary position on marriage: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman." Paul's voluntary celibacy is his primary platform and verses (7,8,25,26,40) reflect that. He appears to directly reference (Matthew 19:11,12) the eunuch reference: "All men cannot receive this saying, except they to whom it is given." Paul was one who made himself a eunuch for the kingdoms sake. He was able to receive the saying of Jesus. We will see that this chapter resounds the permanency view of Matthew 19: 4-6. Gordon Fee understands that the "to touch" is a reference to marriage. The word in classical Greek literature, and in the Greek O.T., is a figurative expression for sexual intercourse. The question the church obviously presented: Is it good for a man to abstain from sexual relations with a woman.²¹⁴ Therefore the real question of the text is not fornication but it is a question of marriage. In other words Paul is saying that although he advises that men practice celibacy, nevertheless, because of strong sexual passions that they evidence, "it is better to marry than to burn," (v.9).

It also seems that there was a spirit of asceticism in the Corinthian church: some women were ascetic while their husbands were not, and vice versa. As stated in chapter 6 some ascetic women appeared to permit their husbands to visit the brothel.

Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

I Cor. 7:2

Paul will address several parties throughout this chapter. Here he simply permits marriage and enforces conjugal liberty in monogamous marriage: "own wife and own husband." This implies full conjugal rights and a right to full sexual satisfaction of the marriage bed. Paul's is forced to explain:

3 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.

I Cor. 7:3-5

Paul, a single man, has a marvelous grasp of marital relations and a full understanding of copulation. Full sexual satisfaction of the marriage partners is their right. He clearly teaches that sexual satisfaction is in the power of each other partner. Impotence may not be the problem of the partner diagnosed with the malady. Paul goes as far as to make sexual satisfaction a moral right; he admonishes the partners not to defraud one another. The only room Paul provides for avoiding a partner is a period of fasting created by the burden to pray. Certainly one cannot fast for a long period of time. But if a partner determines to fast the abstinence from conjugal rights is permitted during the fast. Fasting in the Scriptures meant to go without eating, not a mere abstinence of certain foods; it was the abstinence of all

food—I believe that the act of fasting is only dictated by the urgency to pray; in other words the only reason a man or woman fasts is because they are too busy praying—The period of fasting here was obviously a relatively short, other wise Paul states that there is no room for asceticism in marriage.

Paul moves away from the married for a moment, and now addresses the unmarried and widows:

6 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.

8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn. I Cor. 7:6-9

Paul, in this parenthetical note, states that what he is about to say is not a commandment; but as you will see a few moments later he speaks by commandment. Paul obviously sees celibacy as a voluntary or as a special gift from God as in Matthew 19:11,12. He then gives his personal testimony, that he is one who has been given a special grace, he is celibate, but he goes on to permit others to marry. This is a marriage text. Paul stresses his personal belief that celibacy is his preference for all men. He then defines the eligible for marriage as the unmarried and the widows. Note here that Paul specifically sees unmarried people as never-been-married-people or those with a dead partner. But, Paul does not stop there. He recommends marriage over burning in sexual desire; for if burning is not cooled, it will foster fornication. Paul will now reverse his role as a guidance counselor and speak as a prophet of the living God:

10 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. I Cor. 7:10-11

This text solidly embraces permanency. Note: This is not Paul's command, it is the actual command of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul explicitly tells us this: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord." Paul makes no exceptions for divorce. He interprets the Gospel texts of Jesus perfectly; he is in perfect agreement with the Lord Jesus Christ. I see this text as a clear repudiation of remarriage after divorce or during the life of a living partner, regardless of any condition—Absolutely without *Exception*. Even if as some writers believe, that *depart* refers to divorce then there is again an unmistakable command not to remarry.²¹⁵ The word *depart* here could mean to separate without divorce; regardless, the idea of permanency-marriage is the focus of this text. The husband is commanded by God not to *put away* (divorce) his wife. It is as if Paul is exclaiming Jesus' permanency doctrine that he preached to the Pharisees and His disciples: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Paul certainly knew and understood what Jesus taught as Paul himself now teaches the same doctrine of *permanency-creation-marriage* here in Corinth. The other important doctrine here is the doctrine of reconciliation that must remain a permanent option for this N.T. marriage scenario; reconciliation speaks of Salvation by Grace Alone. Therefore we can conclude that Jesus, Mark, Luke, and Paul are in complete agreement, the only *obscure text* belongs to Matthew and we have labored at this entire dissertation to show that Matthew is also in full agreement with all the other writers of the sacred page—providing you understand Matthew's meaning of *fornication*. Let us go on to *the city of boots*; the battle draweth nigh.

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.

13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the

husband: else were your children unclean; but now
are they holy. ICor.7:12-14

The question of the *mixed marriage*, the believer with the unbeliever surfaced in Corinth. Paul only instructs the believer. His primary instruction is that the believer should not put away the unbeliever. He does indicate that if the unbeliever is pleased to remain in the union, then that union is holy, or sanctified. The believer is commanded to stay with the marriage; it is the unbeliever who is not commanded. The unbeliever appears to have the right to control the outcome of the marriage. Paul gives the unbeliever the right of choice. If the unbeliever is pleased to remain, then he/she may do as he/she pleases. The choice is entirely with the unbeliever. The believer must permit the unbeliever the choice. *Mixed marriages* are holy in these circumstances; thus the children are not unclean but holy

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. I Cor. 7:15

The believer must permit the unbeliever the choice. This coincides with I Cor. 5:12 "For what have I to do to judge them also that are outside?" The believer, like Paul, cannot judge them that are "outside." The unbeliever has the freedom to make the choice; and since the unbeliever has the free choice to depart, the believer then has the responsibility to permit that departure, peacefully. As we said earlier, marriage has always invoked the man's sense of sovereignty and ownership; his sense of authority. A believer might even argue that the unbeliever does not have the right to depart based on Jesus command, "Let not man put asunder," and "They twain shall be one flesh." Although this is so, it is nevertheless true that God permits man the right to choose—even if the choice is sinful or leads to his destruction—"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." This right of choice must be extended to the unbelieving partner regarding their marriage. The doctrine of marriage and the doctrine of Salvation are very similar.

The Scriptures are clear in teaching that the believer is not under bondage to force the unbeliever to stay. He/she must not thwart that free choice. The unbeliever must be permitted to leave in peace. In God-speed if you will. The believer is not bound to force the unbeliever to remain, however the believer is bound to permit the unbeliever to leave in peace with the hope of a future restoration; always restoration and reconciliation, the mark of Salvation. The Christian must extend to the unbeliever the invitation to return to the marriage bond and must remain unmarried as taught in (v. 10,11) thus permitting the indissoluble union to physically reunite. To the believer this is the true essence of love. As with the grace of God, he waits for the return of all unbelievers; and for wayward believers. God keeps the door of His heart ready to open; all we have to do is come and knock. We as pastors must teach our dear people to do the same for the lost husband or wife. The believing partner must keep the door of his/her heart ready to open and must keep the literal door of his/her home ready to open. Hope must not be abandoned; hope that the lost partner will find true repentance and faith upon their return and be saved. What better words can be said then these:

For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt
save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man
whether thou shalt save thy wife? I Cor. 7:16

The extension of love to the departed is intended to bring the loved one to salvation, "thou shalt save thy husband, or thy wife." I find this statement very interesting since the salvation of the departed loved one is now the target of the believers love. He/she must pray for the departed love one to be saved. The question this verse raises is, When do we stop? When do we stop praying for them to return to the Lord, and to us? This verse indicates that the believer permitted the unbeliever to leave in peace, and with the condition that when they return it implies the hope that they will also accept Christ as their own personal Savior, and thus be saved. You never stop praying for your loved ones until your, or their dying day. Therefore this verse states that unless the unbelieving spouse returns there is to be no remarriage for the believer *this-side-of-death*. Again, this verse speaks for *permanency*; even if that partner is never heard from again, or even if the believer has no knowledge of whether they are dead or

alive. This is the complete translation of Ephesians 5:25: Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.—That verse could just as well read: Wives love your husbands, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.

In verses (17-26) Paul introduces a parenthetical statement regarding the need for men to be content with their personal calling. He mentions those called in circumcision, out of circumcision, servants, and freemen. He speaks of virgins and then leads up to his proposition again that celibacy is recommended but not required:

27 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.

I Cor. 7:27-28

Paul's concept of the times in which he lived was that of "distress", and in this state it was better for a man to remain unmarried. Paul repeats his appeal for men to be content with their calling: Let every man, wherein, he is called, there abide with God. If you are bound in marriage to a wife, seek not to be loosed; if your loosed from a wife, seek not a wife. Paul is using common language to make a point. To be bound to a wife simply means to be married, and to be loosed from a wife means the person is single or a widow. It means this and nothing more. From this chapter we have shown that the unmarried are people who have never been married, or widows (ers). In each case where a believing married person realized the departure of a living mate, that believer was ordered to remain unmarried or be reconciled. And of course as Paul opened the chapter with his *it is better to marry than to burn* he now continues that theme with *if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned*.

Heth and Wenham note that the best interpretation of virgins in the context under discussion (v. 25-38) is that of J.K. Elliott.

"He demonstrates that these virgins are engaged couples. In the rest of the NT 'virgin' is commonly

used of a betrothed girl (Lk. 1:27, Matt. 1:18, 23; 25:1-13; II Cor. 11:2), and throughout verses 25-38 Paul addresses the men and his special notations are to the women (cf. vv. 28b,34). The question these engaged couples ask Paul is whether or not to fulfill their promises of marriage in view of the present distress. So when Paul says in verse 28, 'But if you should marry, you have not sinned', he is not speaking to divorced individuals as a good number of Erasmians suppose. He is speaking to those who are bound by a promise of marriage (= engaged) in verse 27. It is to this group that Paul says, 'But if you should marry, you have not sinned' (v28a).²¹⁶

37 Nevertheless he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. I Cor. 7:37

Following Elliott, this verse simple states that the male who is engaged does well if he breaks the engagement and remains a virgin. There is a slight hint here of the idea of a father having the oversight of his virgin daughter, but this idea does not harmonize well with the context. However, if that is what Paul is stating it does not diminish from the proposition of this thesis and perhaps should be discussed in another forum. Paul continues:

38 So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better. I Cor. 7:38

Paul's conclusion regarding the *engaged*: Yes you can marry, but if you remain single it is "better." Paul now returns to the others who are loosed: *widows*:

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. I Cor. 7:39

Paul repeats what he said in Romans 7:2. The point that is very interesting to this writer is that in both cases Paul does not even hint at any other event that could loose the marriage bond; absolutely no exceptions. Paul teaches a *permanency* doctrine which is equal to his Lord. This fact reinforces the doctrine that states: "*no-remarriage-this-side-of-death*." Paul gives the approval of remarriage after the death of a partner. Here he appropriately chooses the death of the husband. It seems that antiquity even declares that women outlived the men. Consequently, the church as a social unit had to manage widows, to which the NT attests. Again the widows were admonished to remain single, and as a matter of fact they were looked upon as worldly if they did remarry: "But the younger widows refuse; for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry, having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith," (I Tim. 5:11,12). Nevertheless, widows were permitted to marry, however this is to be "only in the Lord."

Another principal teaching in the marriage doctrine of the church is that marriage like other partnerships is to be between two believers. A partnership between a believer and an unbeliever is *unequal*: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness (II Cor. 6:14).

In I Corinthians 7:39 Paul initiated that doctrine. He permitted widows to remarry only in the Lord. This careful instruction compounded with the regulations of widows gives credence to the position that the NT does not make any remarriage provision for those who believe in divorce. Before leaving these texts let us exposit (I Tim. 3:2):

The Husband of One Wife

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; I Tim. 3:2

Some divorce scholars have difficulty with this text. Since they believe in divorce—to them marriage is not permanent—they see the rejected bishop candidate here as a man who remarried after a

divorce; i.e. more than one living wife. They interpret remarriage after divorce to mean that the man is the husband of more than one living wife. Some fundamental churches penalizes these men, permitting them to be church members, but denying them any significant position of leadership. But if you follow the treatise of *permanency-marriage* and consequently absolutely deny any *remarriage-this-side-of-death* you understand this text to mean something very different. The only second marriage permitted in Scripture is that of a widow or widower. Therefore this text is denying the office of bishop to a man who widowed and then remarried. If the widow in (I Tim. 5:11,12) was penalized for her remarriage, i.e. “having damnation”, should God not penalize the bishop/elder candidate; a pastor or deacon (Tit. 1:6), if they should remarry after widowhood.

Ephesians 5:21-32 The Mount Everest of Marriage

As we continue to study the Gettysburg battlefield we must observe this mountain peak. Douglas B. MacCorkle has written a splendid commentary on Ephesians titled, *God's Special Secret*. This special secret is fully revealed in (Eph. 5:32), “This is a great mystery but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” God's love affair with man culminates in his special gift of grace, i.e. permission to enter into the life of the trinity through Christ and become one with the Godhead in the body of Christ, His Church.²¹⁷ The beauty of this love affair is highlighted by the analogy of what we know about *permanent-creation-marriage*. God choose to explain the church by taking us pedagogically—taking us from the known to the unknown—by first taking us to what we know, *permanent-creation-marriage*, then onto his new doctrine of the union of Christ and the believer, the Church; as a marriage, literally the twain becoming one indivisible in Christ: “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross” Eph 2:15ff. This analogy of the body of Christ is the grandest truth we will ever know about marriage. Ephesians has been called the *Alps of the New Testament*, and its teaching elevates marriage to shine as from the world's highest peak. This truth is so fundamental to the teaching of

Christ, and to our *Salvation* that it cannot but receive our adoration, and deepest conviction to understand, document, protect, and propagate. Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

In the first three chapters of Ephesians Paul labors to explain the position of the believer specifically using the terms *in Christ*. I like to explain the preposition “*in*” by envisioning a box. The believer is in the box. Paul emphatically states that the believer is in the box forever, literally in heavenly places in Christ. Permanently. This is an extremely important theological truth. This is the doctrine of grace; *Sola Gratia*. To be one with Christ is to be in the box; “And gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22,23). The believer joined in one (married) to Christ is the Church; His body.

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of
God. Eph. 5:21

MacCorkle notes that a strong debate has raged over whether this verse goes with what went before in 5:3-19 (especially 5:18,19) or what comes after, i.e. the subject of marriage. His response is simple, i.e. “This is indeed a transitional verse looking both ways.” I believe he is certainly correct. Therefore the doctrine of permanent-heaven-marriage begins with some practical applications of permanent-creation-marriage. Perhaps to the chagrin of the chauvinist type the admonition begins with: “submitting yourselves one to another in the *fear* of God.” In marriage we are to submit to each other. Paul clearly establishes the authority, i.e. the common denominator, “in the fear of God.” The omnipotent sovereign Everlasting God is a powerful force to reckon with, leaving no room for insubordination. I find this verse leveling to both the husband and the wife, and superior to what ever follows as some believe the word “*submit*” only refers to the wife. Please note verse 21 precedes verse 22 which requires the husband to submit to his wife and the wife to submit to her husband.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands,
as unto the Lord. Eph. 5:22

Again, MacCorkle catches the spirit of the submission text

with his English version of the original Greek text: "For example, the wives are to keep submitting themselves to their own husbands in the Lord." He also expounds Gen. 3:16, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee;" stating that Paul is only applying the Genesis marriage doctrine to having the husband rule and administer the home. This is God's will for the wife. The level of subordination called for here is lower than the one previous. In a godly manner the wife is to submit to the husband as she submits to the Lord. MacCorkle argues that this must be a voluntary submission; i.e. that as the Lord loves her and she submits to His care for her, the wife is commanded to submit to her husband who cares for her. Should her husband require her to perform an act outside of God's will, we must note here that she is told to submit to her husband as she would submit to her benevolent Lord. Therefore should her husband's command be without the Lord's benevolence, she is free to follow the Lord; whatever that will mean to her husband. This verse certainly requires the husband's command to be benevolent. MacCorkle makes an interesting comment: "To their own husbands," may seem an unnecessary statement, but only to the naive. The track record of world-lings in this regard is an open one—certainly some words to contemplate. The idea of the husbands benevolence will go without saying for the husband will be commanded by God to love his wife in benevolence to the very point of dying for her if necessary.

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. Therefore as the church is subject unto
Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in
every thing. Eph. 5:23, 24

The wife's subordination is further clarified. The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. This can be supported by I Cor. 11:3, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." Christ to the church is Savior. The church submits to its benevolent Savior. Likewise the wife is to be subject to her own husband when he treats her as his church, because he is her savior-type here on the earth. Benevolence is

written all over the definition of a husband that is to be obeyed. Certainly if the husband's commands are driven from a benevolent heart as from the Lord then of course she is expected to obey her husband in every thing. MacCorkle makes another fitting comment: "No sane person would suggest that wives be as Jezebel (I Kings 21:15, 23) or Herodias" (Mk. 6:19ff).

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

We now come to the clincher in the submission debate. Paul now rolls out his big gun of submission and fires a round squarely into the heart of every husband. Paul now defines the submission necessary of the husband. As Christ hung on a bloody cross and died, *dying* for his beloved wife, the church, every husband is commanded to submit to God and to love his wife as Christ loved the church and if need be, be ready give himself in death for her. This is the matchless definition of love. Only God can define love for God is Love. The ramification of this kind of love on the marriage bond is infinite. MacCorkle states, "Godly loving of his wife is put in the *imperative form*, a direct commandment of the Lord." The point here is not that the husband should just take a bullet for his wife but that he should wear himself to the point of death for his wife if necessary; that of course does not void the former, the bullet. Now dear reader it also means that the forsaken believing spouse must wear themselves out till death, if necessary, waiting for their departed love one to return. This is biting the real bullet of death for your beloved spouse. Oh so great love as He loved us; this is the actual Matchless Grace of God. What a wonderful testimony of a believing spouse. What a sacrifice!

This verse makes the analogy complete. Christ's work in establishing his wife the church contains the full definition of *Salvation by Grace; Sola Gratia*. His remarkable work of redemption was fully displayed in His love for his wife the church. The Scripture states: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now

justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life (Rom. 5:6-10).” The union of Christ with His church was sealed in blood; a permanent marriage. The believer is literally in Christ and Christ is in the believer. The believer is literally the body of Christ: “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Eph.1:22,23).”

Dear reader lean forward for a moment and listen. Salvation means the eternal deliverance from all evil, i.e. the power and penalty of sin, and to be one with Christ and God. The believer is delivered from death both temporal and eternal. The believer becomes the body of Christ, who rose from the dead and now lives forever. Christ's body will never die. He that hath the Son hath life. That means every believer has security for eternity—Eternal Security. Marriage is therefore a picture of eternal security. “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Marriage like the salvation of the church is permanent, the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. The Doctrine of Eternal Security is identified with *permanent-creation-marriage*. Permanent-heaven-marriage is the doctrine of Christ and His Church; therefore as we have taught all *creation-marriages* are inseparable, indissoluble, and permanent. Thus there is *no-remarriage-this-side-of-death* because once married the couple is bound until death due them part; they have become one flesh on this earth till death due them part. Divorce of a marriage is an impossibility. So then while both partners live on this earth there is no other marriage for them; remarriage during the lifetime of a married partner is adultery. The analogy that God makes between marriage and the church dictates that as salvation is permanent and sure, so to marriage is permanent and sure. Therefore the preacher who promotes the doctrine of divorce is at the very same time teaching that a believer can lose his salvation; thus teaching that Christ will divorce the believer if He so wishes. That is a false doctrine. The primary problem with the one who teaches that salvation can be lost is that at the same time he is confessing to the doctrine that a man can gain or work for his salvation. By teaching that salvation is gained by man, than one teaches that it can be lost by man. This is the false doctrine of works; the opposite of *sola fide*.

This is the only possible way to establish divorce, i.e. by teaching works for salvation. But our salvation is sure: “He that hath the Son hath life”, and “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” Does this sound like Jesus will divorce one of his sheep if He so wishes.

Therefore marriage is binding even in the event of adultery. Remember that Jesus took on the church while we were yet sinners, and reconciled us while we were enemies. Love is at heart of the matter. The innocent partner must provide the way for the adulterer—or any other marriage breaking sin of the partner—and permit the door of repentance to remain open as the way for the departed spouse to return to full marital union. Thus marriage is a picture of salvation. (I certainly am not advocating sacramentalism). If one does not provide the way of return and repentance for the separated spouse then one certainly does not preach Christ and His Gospel. For the Gospel is always open to the sinner, and that offer is until death does us part. The only time that God's offer of salvation is removed from the spouse—For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life—is when the spouse is dead. Jesus by equating His marriage with His church to human marriage declares that marriage on the earth is eternal—eternal as a measure of the time one lives on the earth. And that since a man establishes his salvation by faith—without the deeds of the flesh—then the door and way of faith in the marriage of earthly wedded couples must be kept open for their guilty partner during their lifetime. If you have followed my argument I have said: To believe in divorce is to believe in works for salvation. By divorcing a spouse you are saying that the failed spouse lost the salvation of the marriage, and is to be accursed. This concept terribly fails to meet the analogy of marriage that God teaches us in Eph. 5.

I am not preaching sacramental marriage—the Roman Catholic doctrine of receiving grace through marriage—I am teaching that marriage is a type or a picture of salvation. Some do not seem to understand the complications caused by sin in a marriage. The guilty spouse who believes in non-permanency marriage may have found in their eyes a more attractive person, and after some time was found guilty of adultery. That spouse may see their “salvation” in this

situation as: divorce with remarriage to the person of adultery. But according to permanency marriage the only thing that spouse has accomplished is to make-believe that their adultery is a holy. Their adultery is continually adultery and the children of adultery are always bastard-children. If the spouse had any children by their first spouse, those children are holy and that spouse is the true parent of those children forever. But the children of adultery are unholy. Adulterous-marriage is all too common in our evil world today; as stated' some people just don't understand the complications of divorce with remarriage.

The other side of the coin here is that if an innocent spouse sues for divorce they deny the guilty partner the promise of full marital reconciliation upon repentance; then it's as if that person is denying salvation to the guilty; since marriage is a picture of salvation. The most degrading event occurs when the innocent partner sues by the false doctrine of divorce and then the innocent partner remarries under the law of man. The debauchery here is that the new marriage is adultery, and any children born to this marriage are unholy.

So the solution to any marital problem can only be solved with true repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. 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. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife? If an innocent spouse denies their partner the opportunity of repentance with full marital reconciliation, then the analogy of the church and marriage has failed.

The greatest sin in the marriage discussion is actually caused by the false teachers who are leading millions into darkness and apostasy. Let me explain. When a pastor counsels a person away from permanency-marriage and pontificates that their marriage can be put asunder, for what he decides is a so called legitimate reason, and approves remarriage he is leading that person into apostasy. Any act of sexual intercourse for a married person with someone other than their living spouse is adultery. Divorce in other words for a married couple is impossible. By advising toward divorce with remarriage the false teacher is leading his hearers into apostasy, the falling away from the truth. The Scriptures declare that the latter day apostasy will

be marked by marriage divorcers (covenant breakers, trucebreakers): “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, *trucebreakers* [*given to marital divorce, my comment*] *II Tim. 3:3*.”

So these false teachers enter the world of apostates themselves. Notice what they have managed to pull off—a vernacular term meaning to deceive. They take a clean holy vessel—a spouse who never committed adultery—and have led that spouse directly into and adulterous union and have accomplished even a greater feat; they have called the unholy act of adultery, holy matrimony. It is as if they are saying to the spouse, Go, the church blesses your holy-adultery. The crime here is enlarged since now the spouse is trapped into the bonds of sin without the immediate opportunity to repent and be saved, repent and be forgiven. This is apostasy. The Pharisees asked, “Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away,” did they realize what they said. The word divorcement is *apostasion*. The “writing of divorcement” can be referred to as a *Writing of Apostasy*

Salvation *sola gratia* assures sinners that by repentance and faith they are saved; “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” The false teacher’s doctrine slaps *sola gratia* in the face. By teaching holy-adultery they have created an act whereby the sinner is at liberty to willfully sin and live comfortably—especially in the church—in a state of mind whereby they believe they are righteous. This is an affront to the Gospel—excluding the sin of adulterous-remarriage from the act of repentance—now the sinner cannot be forgiven because they do not know they are living in sin. It is the same as teaching a homosexual that he/she has been born as such. This is debauchery and apostasy; for certain. “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness” (Isa. 5:20a).

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or

wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy
and without blemish. Eph. 5:26,27

The husband is also called upon not only to prepare to die for his spouse but to live for her. He is to labor with her to make her beautiful and glorious, i.e. without the blemish of any sin. He must be determined to teach her, or assure that she is taught the truth of the Scriptures that she may be spiritually clean not having any spot or wrinkle of sin. She can only be glorious if she is steeped in the Word. The couple should have a living dialogue with the Scriptures.

So ought men to love their wives as their own
bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For
no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth
and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For
we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his
bones. Eph. 5:28-30

The man is again commanded to love his wife. The Lord expects men to love their wives as they love themselves. Most men savor food, and consequently most men love to nourish themselves with good food. American men generally prefer beef to fish; so the landscape is littered with burger and steak restaurants. One might say men love grilled steak and hate boiled fish. The man's appetite is addressed here as proof that he nourisheth himself, because he loveth himself. We might go one step further and say that because man loveth himself he cherisheth a grilled medium rare filet mignon, and he hateth boiled fish. Men are very happy and with joy eat the steak. This is the joy he should have in loving his wife, cherishing his wife as Christ cherisheth His church. Then Paul expands his teaching on the doctrine of *permanency-marriage*, stating that believers are members of Christ's body, flesh, and of His bones. We, the believers, "are" one with Christ; as Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh."

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. This is a great mystery: but
I speak concerning Christ and the church.
Eph. 5:31,32

Here we find *creation-marriage* glorified in the doctrine of the body of Christ, the church. This is marriage; “a man shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” This speaks of permanency and the permanency of the church is spelled Eternal Security. Creation-Marriage is permanent, and Heaven-Marriage is permanent. Salvation, the blessing of the church, is a heavenly marriage with Christ, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). As is heavenly-marriage, so is creation-marriage they are both permanent, otherwise God would not have compared them. Paul concludes the matter, “*This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church*”—what more can I say.

Now the purpose and labor of this entire dissertation was to set the record straight. Matthew's *exception clause* alone belongs to Matthew. The exception clause of Matthew is an *obscure text*, or as Peter declares of some Scriptures “things hard to be understood” (2 Pet. 3:16). The true church and believer in our day must “*admit*” that Matthew is a difficult “*obscure*” text. The difficulty of Matthew's obscure text must be subject to the analogy of the faith, i.e. it must harmonize with the Scriptures. The primary difficulty with this obscure text observed in Matt. 5:32 is that at the moment of its record Jesus was rebuking Israel's leaders for failing to understand the Ten Commandments. His teaching was radically opposed to their assumptions regarding murder and adultery. A moment of hatred with a foul word toward your brother was murder. To look on a woman with lust was now adultery. Radical. So His teaching on divorce must have been radical, just as radical as the teaching of divorce as seen in the Gospel of Mark, Luke and in the writings of the Apostle Paul. For any believer to understand otherwise is to be down-right dishonest. I believe that anyone, believing saint or lost sinner, who fails to admit that Matthew's *exception clause* on its immediate appearance in both cases when considering just some of the context (Matt. 5 “But I say unto you,” and Matt. 19 “Let not man put

asunder”) contradicts Christ’s teaching and contradicts the entire Bible regarding the subject of marriage. This does not mean that Matthew’s text is spurious; it simply means that it is *obscure* and difficult to understand. Just be careful dear reader that you do not wrest with it to your own destruction; “As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (II Pet. 3:16).

With that said, I will conclude this dissertation by permitting Scripture to interpret Scripture and for that matter I will permit Matthew to interpret Matthew and dissolve the doubts regarding the meaning of “except it be for fornication.” Let’s go on to the final battle.

Matthew 19—The Gettysburg of the Divorce War

As we pointed out the geography of (Matt. 19) may be as important as the text itself. As Gettysburg, the city of boots, was located central to the Civil War, so Perea, the geography of (Matt. 19) was central to the Divorce War. Pennsylvania was at the geographical separation of north and south. The site provided for the full expression of both armies. It permitted both ideologies to fully vent themselves, as likewise does the location of the Matthew logion:

And it came to pass that, when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan; (Matt. 19:1)

Edersheim makes this notable comment:

"Accordingly, when these Pharisees again encountered Jesus, now on his journey to Judea, they resumed the subject precisely where it had been broken off when they had last met Him, only now with the object of 'tempting Him.' Perhaps it may also have been in the hope that, by getting Christ to commit Himself against divorce in Perea (the territory of Herod) they might enlist against Him, as

formerly against the Baptist, the implacable hatred of Herodias.²¹⁸

Edersheim introduces the implacable hatred of Herodias into his interpretation of the Matthew divorce logion, a consideration which has been received indifferently by modern scholars. He goes on to state that many commentators of his era believed that this was the case, specifically mentioning Meyer as a proponent of this view. Heth and Wenham give honor to the thought:

It is of interest that Tertullian set Jesus' prohibition of divorce in the context of John's denunciation of Herod's unlawful and adulterous marriage with Herodias (Against Marcion 4.34). J.C. Laney also feels this historical incident is important to consider: John the Baptist's denunciation of the 'unlawful' (Matt. 14:4; Mk. 6:18) union of Herod Antipas with the former wife of his brother Philip fits well with Jesus' confrontation with the Pharisees. Perhaps the test with which the Pharisees confronted Jesus (Matt. 19:3) was related to Herod's situation rather than simply to the rabbinic debate.²¹⁹

Some honor has been given to the geography of the text, but most draw away in favor of the Hillel-Shammai debate. But is the text a rabbinic debate? It was certainly an element of the debate that cannot be questioned, but the geography of the debate weighs the balance in favor of the Herodias view, and the preaching of the Forerunner. Jesus did not immediately answer or remark on the beheading of John, but now He opens the door to Herod's palace and preaches John's message, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife," (Mk. 6:18). Is that in fact what Jesus was doing?

Let us now consider this element in the explanation of the dissertation of Jesus regarding divorce. As stated each of the divorce statements prohibit divorce and remarriage, except for the *exception clause*. Consequently the *exception clause* has become the *crux interpretum* (the primary cross, perplexing problem, or puzzle of the interpretation) of all Scripture regarding divorce. Creating such a dynamic impact that it seems shelves and shelves of books and tracts

have been written to discuss the problem; with positions ranging from its meaning to be adultery to the possibility that it is an interpolation. Certainly Matthew's exception qualifies as an *obscure text*. This book has not been entered into without much serious study, and labor, (it was over thirty years in the making).

With this in mind we are then forced to choose our hermeneutics. Regardless of your scholarship you must make a choice. If your system believes in the analogy of the faith—this rule states that there is a harmony of Scripture—then you must apply this rule to Matthew's *obscure exception clause*. Scripture must be used to interpret Scripture. Peter said it this way, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation," (II Pet. 1:20). The NSRB makes this comment, "Any private interpretation" might read "its own interpretation"; i.e. not isolated from what the Scripture states elsewhere.²²⁰ It is the *exception clause* that must be interpreted with the analogy of the Scripture in mind. Since the word *porneia* has the potential of being interpreted in many ways the understanding of that word must be generated by the context surrounding the word. Perea surrounds the text. John was killed in Perea. There his headless corpse was buried, nevertheless his tongue continued to preach. Could the Pharisees succeed in arousing the semi-cooled implacable wrath of Herodias?

John the Baptist was sacrificed on the altar of incest. John's cries were bold against the king of the land. His call was as of a clarion: You Herod are corrupting marriage and I am going to make an example of you. He was willing to do whatever was necessary to make his message known to all mankind. He was even willing to have his throat severed through and have his head delivered to the king on a silver platter to make his message known. Now in Perea, Jesus raises the screaming cries of John to Herod and Herodias, Repent of your sin, for it is not lawful for you to have her. J. Carl Laney agrees:

The geographical and historical background is crucial to our understanding of this encounter between Christ and the Pharisees. Jesus had concluded His Galilean ministry and was now beginning His journey through Perea to Jerusalem for the Passover and His own crucifixion. Traveling

through Perea in the spring of A.D. 33, Jesus was approached by some Pharisees who sought to stump Him with a theological test question. Notice that the Pharisees were not asking the question to learn but only to "test" Jesus. They actually wanted to get Him into trouble.²²¹

Heth and Wenham artfully resurrect the scholarship of the early church, showing that until Erasmus the church believed in the permanency of marriage. In their volume they take a *no-remarriage-this-side-of-death* view, which is constructed on the writings of the early church fathers. Regarding the meaning of the *exception clause*, Heth and Wenham labor to explain all the present schools of thought on the subject and then say, "Considering the brevity of Jesus' recorded remarks about divorce, the quantity of literature that they have generated is truly remarkable. This survey [their book *Jesus and Divorce*, my comment] has tried to present the current scholarly theories as fairly as possible, to show their strengths and weaknesses, so that the reader can decide for himself or herself which is the most probable view."

As stated, as it appears Jesus absolutely prohibited divorce except for the *exception clause*. Therefore if the *exception clause* did not exist, the Scriptures would overwhelmingly teach us that divorce was absolutely prohibited by the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, we are not ashamed to address those words: "*saving for the cause of fornication, and except it be for fornication.*" However, it brings to mind those admonitions: "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:16). So keeping this in mind we shall exposit the most wrestled text in the history of Christianity. Let us continue to explore the context of those disputed words: *saving for*, and *except for*.

Matthew 19:2

And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there. Matt. 19:2

In Perea, great multitudes are gathered about Jesus, and of course that includes the Pharisees. The fame of Jesus was peaking. We can imagine the applause of the multitude as they see the miracles of healing. The Glory of the Savior was shining through, provoking the poor to praise and the Pharisees to outrage. That rage was a cunningly devised plot against the Lord of Glory. Their design was simple. Now that Jesus was in Perea, they would simply align Jesus with the Forerunner and deliver Him to the fury of Herodias, the Mad-One. Jesus knew their plot and was not fearful to enter it, as we shall see.

Matthew 19:3

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? Matt. 19:3

The question “for every cause” is the bait of a trap. It raised the theological controversy of Shammai, and Hillel. But this was not just a simple honest doctrinal inquiry. It was a deliberate testing; the setting of a trap. As said, one important element in this inquiry was its geography. Was the real purpose of the question to draw the Lord Jesus into the jaws of Herod and Herodias? After all, divorce was the initial sin of Herod Antipas. He put away his wife, the daughter of Aretas, King of Arabia. John attacked the incestuous marriage of Herod. John preached against the sin of Herod's divorce. The Herod-Herodias snare is a reasonable interpretation of this incident. The Pharisees knew that Jesus did not agree with either one of the rabbis. They knew that Jesus, as John, taught a revolutionary doctrine of marriage—revolutionary to their own liberalism—however it was nothing more than the old fashion doctrine of permanency *creation-marriage*. Some scholars put Jesus on the side of Shammai; but this is wrong since Shammai did not teach permanency. Jesus' teaching was radical, so radical in fact that his own disciples were outraged with Him; as we shall see.

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, 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? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Matt. 19:4-6

Permanency-Marriage was the doctrine of Jesus. The answer to the question of the Pharisee's was quick and simple: the marriage bond is permanent. Man cannot divide that which is indivisible. The words above declare that Jesus believed and taught the doctrine of *permanency-marriage* and that is indisputable. Therefore before any interpreter teaches that Jesus did not teach permanency, they must be absolutely sure they can prove their claim. For this reason the Early Church View understood the *exception clause* to permit a separation of the marriage partners without any right to remarry; "*no-remarriage-this-side-of-death*." Another monumental consequence of the twain becoming one flesh, and Jesus' prohibition of remarriage is the truth that Jesus taught that marriage is monogamous; he absolutely repudiated polygamy.

Matthew 14:6 Early Church View²²²

Heth and Wenham realizing that pastors and laymen would not have the time or the resources to examine the extensive literature surrounding the divorce debate therefore they completed that task and have established a standard explanation of all the early church literature in their volume, *Jesus and Divorce*. Establishing the Early Church View as their foundation they go on to examine the church Fathers, "namely those Christian theologians who wrote in the first five centuries of the Christian era."²²³ One influencing observation is that the early father's shared unanimity in their understanding of the divorce texts. These authors then summarize the fathers as teaching a doctrine of *no-remarriage-this-side-of-death*.²²⁴

Their comprehensive study—it possibly could be described as the most comprehensive study of this subject that was ever written—contends that in the first five centuries all Greek writers and all Latin writers except one agree that remarriage following divorce for any reason is adulterous. The marriage bond was seen to unite both parties until the death of one of them. When a marriage partner was guilty of unchastity, usually understood to mean adultery, the other was expected to separate—separation without divorce—without the right to remarry. Even in the case of I Corinthians 7:15, the so-called Pauline privilege, which later Catholics interpreted to permit a believer deserted by an unbeliever to remarry, the early church fathers said that the deserted Christian had *no* right to remarry.²²⁵

Heth and Wenham commence the third chapter of their dissertation with this sentence:

The early Christian writer's interpretation of the divorce texts remained the standard view on the church in the West until the sixteenth century when Erasmus suggested a different view that was adopted by Protestant theologians.²²⁶

It is of utmost importance that one understands that Erasmus was a man who shunned sound doctrine in spite of the serious warnings of the Apostle: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Ti. 4:3,4). Again Heth and Wenham quote V.N. Olsen who writes in his study of the interpretation of the New Testament divorce texts from Erasmus to Milton:

In his interpretation of the New Testament logia on divorce Erasmus reveals himself as a Christian theologian who seeks to solve an ethical problem within Church and society by finding a solution [to permit divorce with remarriage, my comment] based on Scripture and centered in Christ. No ecclesiastical institution should stand between the needy [i.e., the divorced needy who wish to remarry,

my comment] and the Good Samaritan [the Church should not stop Erasmus the heretic, my comment]. Erasmus appears not as an academic theorist but as a Christian pragmatist who is devoted to his Master in service for his fellow men.²²⁷

The overwhelming thrust of Heth and Wenham is to reveal that the Erasmian view "flatly contradicts the patristic interpretation." This is a very important observation. Has the Erasmian view been dogmatized by the spirit of compromise? Modern Protestant scholars embrace the Erasmian view as the Roman church embraces the doctrine of the papacy and the mass. Heth and Wenham go on to exposit the teaching of the following Fathers: Hermas, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Tertullian. They go on to list the others who agree to the doctrine *no-remarriage-this-side-of-death*, Basil of Ancyra, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory Nazianzus, Apollinaris of Laodicea, Theodore of Mopsuestia, John Chrosostom, Theodoret, Epiphanius, Ambrose, Innocent I, Pelagius, Jerome, Leo the Great, and Augustine. "In all, twenty-five individual writers and two early councils forbid remarriage after divorce."²²⁸ They also point out that the early church fathers debated many doctrines but regarding no-remarriage-this-side-of death there was no debate; they all agreed. In general the early church fathers take the following position: (1) the heart of their doctrine saw marriage as organically indissoluble—permanent; (2) if infidelity interrupts the marriage bond the faithful partner could separate from the infidel—the innocent to wait for the infidel to repent, but the innocent partner could not remarry (3) remarriage was only permitted to the widow or widower, and then sometimes reluctantly; (4) the remarriage of a separated partner to another, while their original marriage partner was alive, was considered adultery; (5) they understood the "*exception clause*" to apply only to the first part of the conditional clause, and that it did not apply to remarriage; (6) the repentance of the guilty partner was the only hope of the innocent partner to establish any marriage relationship, and that repentance was taken seriously:

Whoever has committed adultery will be excluded from the sacraments for fifteen years: he must weep

for four years [outside the door of the church during the service], then he must listen for five years [in the vestibule], be prostrated [among the full congregation] for two years without receiving communion.²²⁹

Some of these penalties seem exceptionally harsh to our age partly because discipline has virtually disappeared in many parts of the modern church. Excommunication, however, was a regular feature of the New Testament church for various sins (cf. Matt. 18:15-18; IICor. 2:5-11; II Thess. 3:14) including sexual offences (ICor. 5:1-13). We do not know how long such a sentence would have lasted, though presumably it could not have been revoked until the offender showed signs of repentance (cf. 2 Cor. 7:7-13; 2 Tim. 2:24-6).²³⁰

Matthew 19:7,8

They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? 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.

Matt. 19:7,8

This text has been discussed at length in earlier chapters of this book. Jesus explains that *the writing of divorcement* was not an ordinance of law it was a Mosaic concession to the awful hardness of man's heart. Jesus throws their exhibit out of court forever.

Matthew 19:9 and The Exception Clauses

But I say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

Matthew 5:32

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her who is put away doth commit adultery.

Matthew 19:9

As noted the *exception clause* is common only to Matthew; therefore I see it as one comment, i.e. one witness. The three other N.T. writers who discuss the subject of marriage and divorce—Mark, Luke, and Paul—preach the doctrine of permanency-marriage with no divorce-remarriage option. This in itself, beside the fact that the tremendous weight of the literature it has spawned, qualify Matthew's texts to be tagged an *obscure text*. With this in mind—noting that we have earlier eliminated (Deut. 24:1-4) as a possible reference—we must ask ourselves the following question; since no other author permits us to cross reference Matthew, does Matthew himself interpret his own words of the obscure text? As the honest student proposes this question to Matthew he will find that Matthew *clearly* answers the query himself. He actually gives us two causes that can be interpreted as fornication. Two separate meanings of *porneia* that could explain his obscure text. We will exposit the definitions as they appear chronologically. They have been given the theological titles of: (1) The Betrothal View, (2) The Unlawful Marriage View.

Betrothal View: Fornication

I have fully explained this view at the beginning of this chapter in my exposition of (Matthew 1:18,19). Joseph, while engaged to Mary, found her with child. On the surface this appeared to Joseph as an illegitimate child. His exact thought was that Mary committed an act of premarital sex, i.e. she committed a special act of *fornication*. His immediate reaction was to put her away, divorce her. This required a public act of repudiation—divorce was public—and Joseph could not bring himself to commit such a public act. So he decided to privately divorce Mary. The Scripture clearly tells us that Joseph was a “just man.” He had the perfect legal right to put his betrothed (engaged wife) away; it was the accepted legal custom at that specific time in Jewish history. At that moment he thought she

had committed betrothal fornication. This is one of Matthew's own answers to the question as to the meaning of fornication. Therefore if we rewrite the text in question it would read:

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

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

The Unlawful Marriage Incest View: Fornication

The Book of Leviticus is the ruling text of this view. As mentioned under the discussion of John the Baptist we found John in his sermon accused Herod of committing incest, i.e. being unlawfully wedded to Herodias according to Levitical law. Thus the Unlawful Marriage View may be referred to as the Incest View. In Chapter Three of this dissertation we have explored the abominable custom of the Egyptians—Incest. We noted from (Lev.18:1-18) that Jehovah God specifically threatened the death penalty—to be cut off from among their people—to any Israelite who committed the abominations of the Egyptians. Marriage within the forbidden degrees of (Lev. 18:1-18) was absolutely prohibited. Lev. 18:16 specifically prohibits a man to marry his brother's wife; this was the very act that John accused Herod Antipas of committing. World governments today have similar definitions of incest and prohibit marriage within the forbidden degrees. This being the case we now might interpret Matthew to read:

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

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

Matthew 19:9

The primary argument against both these views from divorce scholars is that both of them are remote interpretations of the word *porneia*. So be it, I say, Matthew has spoken and no other biblical writer has; and beside that Matthew has explained himself. Therefore we can conclude that remarriage this side of death is adultery. This is exactly what Augustine referred to as “Adulterous-Marriage.”

Acts Chapters 15 and 21 Further Support For the Unlawful Marriage View (Incest)

Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

Acts 15:19,20

That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

Acts 15:29

As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. Acts 21:25

As we continue into the N.T. some scholars find the above texts to be the next major reference in the incest view of *porneia*. As we explore these texts, known as the Jerusalem Decree, we notice some of the nomenclature of the priesthood. We should not be

surprised to find that scholars see these texts as a clear reference to (Lev. 17,18). Although Heth and Wenham do not embrace the Unlawful Marriage View—also known as the Rabbinic View—they nevertheless give it some respect.

[Leaving the idea of mixed marriages—Jews with heathen, Heth and Wenham go on with this consideration: my comment.] This is not impossible, but another view may offer greater possibilities of being the correct one [a reference to the Incest View, my comment]. In the light of the almost unanimous scholarly consensus that “porneia” in Acts 15:20, 29 and 21:25 denotes intercourse with close of kin [within the forbidden degrees—incest, my comment], that no great problem exists in lining up a moral regulation with several ceremonial restrictions, and that the four things prohibited by the decree [pollutions from idols, from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood - my comment] are the same four prohibited by the holiness Code of Leviticus 17-18 for both Israelites and strangers among them, it seems that the rabbinic [incest] variation of the unlawful marriage view has a better chance of being the correct one. On this view, Gentiles who had ‘married’ within the categories forbidden by Leviticus 18:6-18, upon becoming Christians, found themselves in a double-bind: caught by Jesus’ absolute prohibition of divorce. Matthew solves their dilemma by inserting the clauses which indicated such unions were in fact non-marriages. They did not fall under Jesus’ absolute prohibition of divorce where a valid marriage is concerned.²³¹

I see this commentary as a remarkable discussion that certainly places the Unlawful Marriage Incest View interpretation of the *exception clauses* as viable.

Matthew 19:10-12

10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.

11 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. Matt. 19:10-12

I find this outburst of the disciples almost hostile. I believe it was driven by their conviction that they believed that marriage certainly was not permanent; that all men, even a disciple, had the right to put away a wife and remarry, i.e. at least for some causes. But they now understood Jesus to absolutely forbid divorce. He was also absolutely declaring that marriage is permanent until death *do-you-part*. One must note that all of Jesus' disciples strenuously objected; almost to the point of threatening a departure with Christ over this issue. "If the case of a man be so, it is not good to marry." The disciples were divided against Him; but, Jesus quickly puts them in their place.

He gives them the door. Go from me if ye will, he cries. All men cannot receive this saying, save them to whom it is given. Here the Savior strikes back with another exception clause; *save them to whom it is given*. Please note that *all* the disciples are silent. They now had to evaluate their hearts. They certainly knew that the arguing Pharisees were not among *the given*. So in plain English they shut up, in fear of perhaps being counted among the unsaved ones. They must have pondered what they perceived as His awful words "*What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder.*" Their silence is louder than a shrilling scream.

Matthew 19:13-15

Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

Matt. 19:13-15

Some may object to including the little children in the marriage-divorce pericope; but I say it is fitting and should be included. What is the bottom line of the divorce controversy? Is it not the children; the orphans of divorced-broken families. Don't these orphans have any rights? Well, Jesus said that they sure do have rights. "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence." Yes, He laid his hand on them. He touched them. Marriages are to be built on Christ. What God hath joined together. The most powerful evangelistic tool in the hand of God is a saved mother and father; and I might add a saved grandmother and grandfather. The heart of a true believing parent prays fervently for its child; presenting the Gospel with great care so as to ensure that their child truly gets every opportunity to get saved; to have his or her own experience of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is difficult to provide to the child of a broken-family.

In the dedication of this book you will read that I have honored the faithful spouse who is awaiting the return of a departed sinful spouse; in all actuality dying for the beloved departed one. I believe that is what it means to give your life for your wife—to wear yourself out till death if necessary for your departed spouse. These faithful men and women are offering the Grace of God to their unfaithful and abusive mates to the Glory of God, waiting lovingly for their reconciliation in this lifetime if possible. The second person I honored are the children of divorce; especially that little Amy or Tommy who wish they could live with their creation-marriage biological father or mother and have all his or her love; not being

required to share it with alien children or an alien parent. These children have rights to.

Conclusion

Well, after this lengthy discussion of divorce we have finally reached the end of the road. The immense volume of literature which this subject has generated raises a serious question: Why all this literature? The answer is simple: Because the weight of Scripture, conscience, and nature teach man that marriage is permanent, i.e. a literal band of God. The literature is the result of man's feeble attempt to break God's bands asunder (Psa.2:3), and God said, "Let not man put asunder;" nevertheless man believes he has found an *exception clause* to rend God's prohibition, His band. But as I have labored to reveal, the *exception clause* in the hands of man has become a *deception-clause*. This single fact has created the massive volume of historical literature on the subject of divorce. Divorce is not even a possibility; it is non-existent in the teaching of Christ regarding marriage. You can be assured dear believer, as God said, "I hate putting away" (Mal.2:16), be assured that Christ will never divorce me, and he will never divorce you. Jesus just does not teach divorce; to Him it is a mere imagination, and the invention of the Prince of Darkness, the Devil. But Christ is the Prince of Light and He has faithfully promised each believer an eternal union with God the Father through Him and this union is indissoluble and eternally permanent.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life [He will never take it back, my comment] to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (Jn. 17:1-3)

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That

they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us [as in marriage: they twain shall be one, my comment]: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one [marriage a type of the believer in the body of Christ, my comment]; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

Jn.17:20-24

We have eternal life, eternal security, in Christ, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life; For he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; He that hath the Son hath life. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. The great mystery of being one with Christ, is salvation. Oh how great salvation! Our heavenly marriage to Christ is everlasting. And dear born-again reader, if you in some way believe that you have departed from Christ and his doctrine, be assured that if you repent and return to Him, He will receive you with open arms for Jesus said, Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. He is a faithful husband that is still waiting by homes door since the day you left him. He is ready to receive you back into his arms.

And dear reader if you have never found repentance and faith unto eternal life I invite you today to turn from sin to God and come unto Jesus the only true God and Savior and believe in Him for your salvation which he purchased with His own precious blood on the old rugged cross. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and

the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Jesus promises you eternal life, that is absolute everlasting life, and Jesus is not a liar, His word is sure and everlasting; heaven and earth shall pass away but His word endureth forever, and so will you if you trust in Him. He will never divorce you, for that I am sure.

As I have been laboring: the most important subject in the divorce debate is the subject of Salvation by Grace. The sinning partner must be offered salvation; the fornicator of (I Cor. 5) eventually repented and was received back into the church of Corinth (II Cor. 2). Marriage is an illustration of Salvation. Salvation is permanent, and for that reason Marriage is permanent. Divorced from Christ cannot be; so divorce does not fit into the married person's life. Therefore if divorce is forbidden then the Deuteronomic abomination cannot be committed today; all other liaisons of a married spouse are adulterous. Keep that in mind if you should so seek reunion with a divorced creation-marriage spouse. Furthermore the concept of the *abomination* has been over-ruled to the permanency believer since Jehovah God himself told His sinning wife Israel to return to Him (Jer.3:1). The reason God could justly take Israel back as His wife in purity was only because God never endorsed, and never will endorse divorce. The divorce that Israel experienced was only an illustration. Jehovah God hateth putting away; He hateth divorce. Creation-Marriage is a type or picture of Salvation it speaks of eternal life with eternal security; for by Grace are ye saved by faith.

Final Comment:

Consider the possibility of the judgment of Western Civilization, likened to the Judgment of the Flood and Sodom; and the violence of measure today would be man's violent treatment of God's ordained command regarding creation-marriage; then as we look about our once Christian America—especially the Bible believing church—and the other Christian countries of the West, the state of creation-marriage is quickly collapsing, thus we can say the next Date of Judgment draweth swiftly nigh. Yes, as mentioned in the "Introduction" of this book, "The fate of marriage and perhaps the

fate of mankind may depend on your interpretation of those five words: "*except it be for fornication.*"

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

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4.C.F.Kiel; F. Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentary* (Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, Mi) v.1:p. 65

5. Abel Isaksson, *Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple* (trans. N. Tomkinson with J. Gray; Lund: Gleerup, 1965) p. 20; This idea of kinship is a strong support for the doctrine of indissolubility. Heth, Wedham, Laney, Steele, and Ryrrie lean in Isaksson's direction. Gen. 2; Lev. 18; and Deut. 24 are pertinent to kinship.

6. C.F. Kiel, F. Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentary* (Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, Mich.) 1:60

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168. Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Ex. 32
169. KDOTC, Num. 25:1-5
170. Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Num. 25:1-5
171. KDOTC, Jud. 9:1
172. KDOTC, II Sam. 5:13ff
173. Augustine, *Adulterous Marriages*, (translated by C.T.Huegelmeier) Fathers of the Church, 1955, N.Y., M.M., Maryknoll
174. Adams, Jay, E., *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, Phillipsburg, N.J., 1980) p. 24
175. Dobson, Edward G., *What The Bible Really Teaches About Divorce*, (Revell, Old Tappan, NJ, 1986) p. 43
176. MacArthur, John, *John MacArthur's Bible Studies on Divorce*, (Moody Press, Chicago, 1985) p. 46
177. Ibid. p. 46
178. KDOTC, p 8:90
179. KDOTC, Hosea 1:1
180. MacLaren, Alexander, *Expositions of the Scriptures*, (Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI) Hosea 4:17.
181. KDOTC, *Hosea*, introduction, p. 22
182. KDOTC, *Hoses*, introduction, p. 25
183. KDOTC, *Malachi*, introduction, "The Targumist, *Johnathan*, ... has given the statement that Ezra the scribe is the prophetic author of our book, as a conjecture founded upon the spirit and contents of the prophecy. The notion that *Malachi* is only an official name is therefore met with in

many fathers, and has been vigorously defended in the most recent times by Hengsterberg, who follows the lead of Vitringa, whilst Ewald lays it down as an established truth."

184. KDOTC; Ezra 10:3

185. Ibid. Ezra 10:44

186. Colqhoun, John, *Repentance*, (Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1826, 1965)

187. Quoting Heth and Wenham, *Jesus and Divorce*, p. 163 (note 27) G. Rawlinson, *Ezra and Nehemiah: Their Lives and Times* (New York: Randolph, [1890]) 42. Cf. *The Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha* (eds H.G. May and B.M. Metzger; New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965) 584 n. at Ezra 10:2).

188. Quoting Ibid. p. 163 (note 28) Though Ezra knows of and uses the 'normal' Hebrew verb for 'to marry' (laqah, cf. Ezra 2:61), he uses other terms when he says they 'took' (nasa in 9:2, 12; 10:44) some of the daughters of the land, or 'gave a dwelling to' (yasab* in 10:2, 10, 14, ,17-18) 'foreign women'. The former verb is used elsewhere in the OT of 'to take as a wife' in Ruth 1:4; 2 Chr. 11:31; 13:21; 24:3; the three instances in Ezra, and Neh. 13:25. Each of these references has foreign women, multiple wives and/or concubines as the object. The latter term is used only in Ezra and Nehemiah (13:24, 27) and the accusative is always foreign women. The LXX uses kathizo* (to sit down, settle, live) to translate this word, and kathizo* is never used to translate any of the 'usual' words for marriage (i.e., laqah, baal*, or nasa).

189. Quoting Ibid. p.163 (note 29) Ezra uses yasa* (of 'putting away' wives and children in 10:3, 19 in the Hiphil; cf. Qal in Deut. 24:2), and

elsewhere in the OT *garas** is used passively only of divorced women in Lev. 21:7, 14; 22:13; Num. 30:9; and Ezek. 44:22 (BDB, p. 176); and *salah** means to 'send away, dismiss' (= divorce) with acc. of wife in Deut. 22:19, 29; 24:1, 3,4; Jer. 3:1, 8; Mal. 2:16 (all piel), and fig. in Isa. 50:1 (Paul). W.R. Eichhorst ('Ezra's Ethics on Intermariage and Divorce', *Grace Journal* 10:3 [1969] 23) thinks that Ezra also carried out this divorce action 'according to the law' (10:3) and followed Deut. 24: 1-4. This not only misunderstands Deut. 24: 1-4, but it fails to see that 'the law' according to which they should 'put away' their women refers to that law in 9:1-2, 10-12 and 14 which Ezra was confessing: 'shall we again break *Thy commandments* and *intermarry* with *the people* who commit these abominations'. the law in view is Deut. 7:3 and exod. 34:16, *not* Deut. 24: 1-4.

190. Ibid. p. 163
191. MacArthur, John; *John MacArthur's Bible Studies on Divorce, (Matt. 19:1-12)*, (Moody Press, Chicago 1983) p. 44
192. Augustine, Saint, *Adulterous Marriages*, Translated by Charles T. Huegelmeier, M.M. Maryknoll, New York 1955)
193. Lanely, Carl, *The Divorce Myth*, (Bethany House Pub. Minn. Minn. 1981) quoting(J. Stafford Wright, *The Date of Ezra's Coming to Jerusalem* (London: The tyndale Press, 1948) pp. 23-28) p. 36193.193.193.
194. Ibid. p. 39
195. Ibid. p. 39
196. KDOTC, Introduction to Malachi, 10:423

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197. Isaksson, Abel, *Marriage and Ministry*, p. 27
198. KDOTC; Mal. 2:13-16
199. Edersheim, A., *Life and Times of Jesus*(MacDonald, MacLean, Virginia) Bk.II p.149-150
200. Ibid. Bk. II:126
201. Ibid. Bk. II:129
202. Lenski, R.C.H. *New Testament Commentary*, (Augsburg Pub. House, Minn. MN 1943) Matt. 14::3,4
203. Flavius Joseph, William Whiston, translator/editor, *Works of Flavius Josephus* (Reprint 1974, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI) vol. IV p. 19; Antiq. XVIII 5.1
204. Edersheim, A. (1883). *Life and Times of Jesus*, (MacDonlad, MacLean, Virginia) p. Bk.III 393
- 205.Ibid. Bk. III p. 658
206. Ibid. Bk. IV p. 332
207. Ibid. Bk. III p. 671-675
208. Lenski, N.T. Comm.; Matt. 5:1
- 209.*The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church*, (1915); Ch. XXIV Sec. V
210. Ramm, Bernard, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (W.A. Wilde, Boston, 1956 p.120-128
211. Edersheim, *Life and Times*, p. Bk. IV: 334
212. Shaner, D.W., *A Christian View of Divorce* (Leiden E.J. Brill 1969) p. 11,12
213. Ibid. p. 146 quoting Fee
214. Ibid. p. 145 quoting Fee
215. Ibid. p. 137

216. Ibid. p. 147

217. MacCorkle, Douglas *God's Special Secret* (MBM Books, Cocoa Beach, FL 1993)

218. Edersheim, *Life and Times*, ("So, according to many commentators. See Meyer)) Bk. IV: 332

219. Heth; Wehham; *Jesus and Divorce*, p. 157,8

220. NSRB; comment on II Pet. 1:20 p.1339

221. J. Carl Laney; *The Divorce Myth*, (Bethany House, Minn. Minn. 1981) p. 53

222. Heth, Wenham, *Jesus and Divorce*: The reader should refer to this work as the modern foundation of the divorce debate. Heth and Wenham lay out all the elements of the ancient and modern controversy on the divorce texts. They side with the primary concept of the Early Church View, which Heth refers to as "*no-remarriage-this-side-of-death*."

223. Ibid, p. 19

224. Ibid. p 21 ; Heth and Wenham acknowledge that the early church father's had the advantage of living and learning in an era where the ancient languages were their common tongue. Therefore their understanding of the (Matt. 5:32;19:9) texts may have been more clear to them. After stating that there were long debates among the fathers about some doctrines, but regarding divorce and remarriage this was not so: "In contrast, on the subject of divorce and remarriage there was practically no dispute in the early church: for the first five centuries there was virtual unanimity on this issue from one end of the Roman empire to the other

225. Ibid. p. 22

226. Ibid. p. 73

227. Ibid. p. 75

228. Ibid. p. 38

229. Ibid. p. 42 Heth and Wenhan quoting *Stromata*

230. Ibid. p. 44

231. Ibid. p. 167