

## Matthew 19:3-12 **Divorce and Remarriage**

### Is Divorce legal?

<sup>3</sup> The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"

### Jesus' answer

<sup>4</sup> And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' <sup>5</sup> and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? <sup>6</sup> So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

### Moses allowed Divorce

<sup>7</sup> They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" <sup>8</sup> He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so."

### Divorce and remarriage is adultery

<sup>9</sup> And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

### It is better not to marry

<sup>10</sup> His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

### He who is able to accept it, let him accept it

<sup>11</sup> But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given: <sup>12</sup> For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it." NKJV

### Facts Revealed:

- ✚ Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem for the last Passover. [Matthew 19:1-2, Mark 10:1, Luke 17:11, John 11:55]
- ✚ Jesus left Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.
  - ✧ That would be east of the Jordan River where Moses wrote the book of Deuteronomy before the Children of Israel crossed over into the land of Canaan, from the area of Acacia Grove in plain of Moab. [Numbers 22:1, Deuteronomy 32:48-52, 34:1-8, Joshua 2:1, 3:1, 14-17]
  - ✧ This would also be near Bethabara where John the Baptist had been baptizing the people. [John 1:28]
- ✚ Great multitudes followed Him and He healed them there. [Matthew 19:2]
  - ✧ As was His custom Jesus taught them there. [Mark 10:1]

### Is Divorce legal? [Matthew 19:3-12, Mark 10:2-12]

- ✚ The question posed by the Pharisees was, "**Is divorce legal?**" [Matthew 19:3, Mark 10:2]
  - ✧ The Pharisees were the interpreters of the Laws both the Written laws and the Oral laws.
    - ✧ The Scribes are the ones who copied the Laws from one scroll to another, being meticulously careful to copy the text exactly and precisely to the least jot and tittle.
    - ✧ By doing so, the Scribes were aware of the least mark in the Written and Oral laws. That made them authorities in the written Word of God as well as the traditions of men.

- ✧ The Pharisees took the written laws from the Scribes, and made traditional rules and regulations of interpretation to regulate the parameters that decided how far one could go before they broke the commandment of the law.
- ✧ Of the Pharisees and Scribes, Jesus said, “by your tradition you have made the commandment of God of no effect.” [Matthew 15:1-6, Mark 7:5-13]
- ✧ The Scribes and Pharisees taught the doctrine of men, which were debated and open to other controversial views, which are still today debated in the various sects of Judaism and based on human interpretation.
- ✧ The Scribes and Pharisees taught primarily what was known as the “Oral Law” which today has been compiled in the books of the Talmud and the Shulhan Aruk. These are interpretations, and interpretations of the interpretations.
- ✧ The question of the Pharisees was to test Jesus to see if He adhered to their own interpretations of the law according to their own rules on the subject. [Matthew 19:3]
- ✧ By their tradition a man was allowed to divorce his wife for any reason he chose.

### Jesus' question

- ✧ "What did Moses command?" [Mark 10:3]
- ✧ They said" "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her." [Mark 10:4]

### Moses allowed Divorce

- ✧ The Pharisees knew the commandment by Moses in the Law that allowed for divorce, so they asked, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" [Deuteronomy 24:1-4]

### Jesus' answer

- ✧ Jesus said: "Because **of the hardness of your heart Moses wrote you this precept, but from the beginning it was not so.**" [Matthew 19:8, Mark 10:5]
- ✧ Jesus took them back to the very beginning of the marriage relationship. [Matthew 19:4, Mark 10:5-9]
- ✧ Jesus interpreted the intent of the original Law.
  - ✧ "Have you not read that **He who made them at the beginning** 'made them male and female,' and **said**, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and **the two shall become one flesh**'? [Matthew 19:4-5, Mark 10:5-9]
  - ✧ So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh.
  - ✧ **Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.**
  - ✧ In the answer Jesus gave them we discover an interesting fact.
    - ✧ In the beginning **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." [Genesis 2:23]
    - ✧ It was **God Himself** Who said, "**Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**" [Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-5]
  - ✧ God made the woman from the rib of the man, brought her to the man, and the man accepted her
  - ✧ God did not force them together as joined into one flesh, but by the sexual joining which God enabled, they became one union and viewed by God as one flesh.
  - ✧ This is confirmed by Paul when he taught on the subject and informed us that when a man is sexually joined to a prostitute they become one flesh or married in the eyes of God.
    - Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." [1 Corinthians 6:16]

- ✧ We must take our sexual relationships very seriously, because God holds it as a marriage commitment which should not thereafter be separated except by death.
- ✚ Therefore we know that divorce has never been God's will for us.
- ✧ Divorce was simply allowed to accommodate the hardness of the heart of man and to provide a way out of an abusive and intolerable situation, which in itself is not in God's will.
- ✧ God has called us to be in peace in our marriage relationship. [1 Corinthians 7:15]

**Divorce and remarriage is adultery** [Matthew 5:31-32, 19:9, Mark 10:2-12, Luke 16:18, Romans 7:1-3]

- ✚ In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter. So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." [Mark 10:10-12]

And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." [Matthew 19:9]

- ✚ The only exception that is acceptable grounds for divorce, is sexual immorality (adultery).
- ✚ To divorce for any other cause and marry another is Adultery.
- ✚ Whoever marries the divorced adulterer or adulteress, commits Adultery.
- ✚ Apparently, the innocent party may marry another and it not be viewed as adultery.

**It is better not to marry**

- ✚ His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry." [Matthew 19:10]

**He who is able to accept it, let him accept it** [Matthew 19:11-12]

- ✚ Jesus said that this teaching is not for everyone, but for those who are able to accept it.
  - ✧ The exception Jesus gave is in regard to those who are eunuchs, whether naturally or man made.
  - ✧ Whoever is able to accept it, let it be so.
  - ✧ Only "some" are given the ability to stay single.

- ✧ Adultery is a sin, but it is not unforgivable sin, repentance is in order, do not do it again. [John 8:3-11]
- ✧ It is better to marry than to burn. [1 Corinthians 7:9]