



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Marriage and Divorce- 04 Divorce - 02

One of the ways in which God assures His people of His love for them is to describe Himself as their husband.

**Isaiah 54:5,**

**Jeremiah 3:14,**

#### **The First Marriage Contract**

A marriage contract between God and Israel established when they got married at Sinai.

How do we know that “Old Covenant” was a marriage covenant?

**Hosea 2:2,**

Because of their subsequent divorce where God stated that Northern Israel “is **not My wife**, nor am I her **Husband!**”

God could only divorce Israel if He had once been wed to her.

In Jeremiah, God specifically stated that He gave the northern Kingdom of Israel a certificate of divorce and put her away.

**Jeremiah 3:8,**

In the New covenant mentioned in Jeremiah God says that He was their Husband.

**Jeremiah 31:32,**

**The Wedding Vows**

At their wedding on Mt Sinai, the groom and bride exchanged vows. Yahweh, the husband, expressed His love for His bride, Israel, when He vowed:

**Exodus 19:5,**

This vow of deep love was reiterated to Israel when they were about to enter the Promised Land:

**Deuteronomy 7:6-8,**

**The Recording of the Vows**

Their marriage was recorded in the “book of the covenant” (a mere four chapters), similar to a Ketubah (Jewish “marriage contract” of today).

Then Moses took the **Book of the Covenant** and read in the hearing of the people.

### **Exodus 24:7,**

It was a marriage contract, complete with prenuptial agreements, (terms and conditions of what was expected) and what would happen in case of infidelity.

### **Deuteronomy 10:12-13,**

All Israel needed to do was to love God by remaining faithful to Him. God also promised that if they would be faithful then Israel would “be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.”

Their marriage contract was cut and the vows (contract) were ratified with blood:

### **Exodus 24:8,**

## **God’s Divorce**

Unfortunately, Israel was unfaithful to her husband from the beginning, and then after some time, His wife (United Israel) was divided into two kingdoms.

The Kingdom of Judah in the south which included the tribe of Benjamin.

The Kingdom of Israel in the north which included the remaining ten tribes.

God in His patient love and sovereignty waited while Israel (the northern kingdom) committed her adulteries time and again. God explained this in the book of Ezekiel, speaking of the two daughters of one mother who both practiced harlotry and defiled themselves.

**Ezekiel 23:2-4, 7 & 9,**

Ultimately, after 700 years of Northern Israel's backsliding and adultery God divorced.

**Jeremiah 3:8,  
2 Kings 17:18,**

Their divorce created a seemingly unsolvable dilemma because, according to His own Instructions in Deuteronomy 24:1-4, a husband cannot take back his wife who has been with another husband! We did this through study last week.

Consequently, there was no conceivable hope for Israel to return to a marriage covenant with God or for Judah and Israel to ever reunite. Reconciliation with her groom would, according to God's own commandments, result in abomination and the land becoming defiled.

Nevertheless, God passionately calls His wayward wife to return (repent) to him and presumably, He would have to find a way to work things out.

God gives the answer in His question itself!

**Jeremiah 3:1-5,**

**Jeremiah 3:6-8,**

The Assyrians had come in 722 B.C. and they had taken the northern kingdom into captivity and gone forever. They never came back.

Why did they go into captivity?

Because of their adultery.

**Jeremiah 3:10-14,**

God waited 700 years before He divorced Israel.

## **Conclusion**

Divorce for adultery was allowed as an act of mercy to the guilty who, if the law of God was enacted, would be executed, according to Leviticus 20:10.

Divorce was an act of mercy toward the guilty.

It was also an act of mercy toward the innocent so that a person married to an inveterate, unrepentant adulterer didn't have to spend their whole life in that condition, but they had

the option of divorce for adultery and could go on and marry another when there was impenitent adultery.

We believe that's affirmed by the fact that God divorced Israel for adultery.

But we also believe there's an attitude conveyed by Hosea and Gomer – illustrating God and Judah – Which we will look in details next time.

God though He separated from Judah was immensely patient waiting for the repentance and the restoration.

God wants us to wait 700 years or maybe even seven years. But I think there needs to be some exercise of patience to see what God might do.

**Isaiah 50:1,**

Babylonian captivity. They were going to go into the captivity into Babylon. They were going to be sent away, a separation. It was the end of the theocracy. 586 B.C. Jerusalem was destroyed. Jews, three deportations from 603, 597, 586, all carried out to Babylon. The theocracy has come to an end. And these people are separated from God.

God divorced Israel. Never divorced Judah. had a temporary separation but never a divorce.

**Isaiah 54:5-8,**

It's been going on the 500 years that ended the Old Testament era, the 2,000 years now, and they're still separated from God. Yes, but that's just a moment in light of eternity and in the purposes of God. There is a separation but not a divorce, and this is only for a while, and the Lord will redeem His people.

**Isaiah 59:1-2,**

**God did not divorce Judah**

While Jesus death and resurrection resolved the divorce of God and Israel, what about Judah's (the Southern Kingdom) relationship with God?

Does she get a new marriage covenant?

She certainly needed it based on Jeremiah 3:9,

In fact, Judah's adulterous conduct, according to God, was actually worse than Israel's.

**Jeremiah 3:10-11,**

Let there be no doubt, Judah most certainly *deserved* to be divorced because of her adulterous heart and wandering eyes which deeply hurt God.

**Ezekiel 6:9,**

But God never did divorce Judah because of the promise that he made to King David.

**Psalms 89:29-33,**

**Jeremiah 5:11,**

**Jeremiah 11:10,**

Furthermore, the two sister nations needed to be reunited into one nation: one wife. God declared that He would in fact make a new marriage contract with both houses!

**Jeremiah 31:31,**

Yahweh also promised that he would join the two houses back together as depicted in the imagery of a stick, broken in two, which becomes one again:

**Ezekiel 37:19,**

## **The Divine Dilemma**

How could Israel be brought back into a marriage covenant without God violating His own law which God explained in Deuteronomy 24?

The only way the Israel, wife, could be released of her fate of having been put away and divorced by God by the death of her Husband namely God Himself.

Death of a husband would annul and dissolve original marriage contract.

Paul understood that when, using the law to explain, he reminded the Jews that the law only has jurisdiction over a person until their death. When the person dies, any judgments, contracts, or obligations are then dissolved.

**Romans 7:1-2,**

Paul then explains how a woman is covenanted to her husband only as long as he lives. When he dies, she is free to remarry at will.

So then if, while her husband [God] lives, she [Israel] marries another man [Baal etc.], she will be called an adulteress.

**Romans 7:3,**

Paul reaches climax with his exciting conclusion that through Jesus, the wife, Israel, can be married to a different man which is none other than the Risen Jesus Christ.

Wow!

**Romans 7:4,**

In other writings Paul explains how the curses of the broken marriage covenant died with Jesus, being nailed to the cross.

**Colossians 2:14,**