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COMPILED BY R. LEE - 2011.

NOTE: - ALL BIBLE TEXTS ARE TAKEN FROM THE KING JAMES VERSION; AND ALL EMPHASIS HAS BEEN SUPPLIED BY THE COMPILER.

## **1. COMPILER'S INTRODUCTION.**

Over the last few generations of Sabbath-keeping Adventists [both among those within the organized structure, or among those who worship independently of the organized structure], the breakdown of marriages, leading to divorce and then subsequent remarriages has become rife. It is a sad reflection upon the professed people of God, that Satan has been so successful in attacking and breaking down the heaven ordained institution of marriage and the family. This has led to many, many confused family situations among Sabbath-keepers, which mirrors in many ways, the breakdown of the sacred family unit in our secular, Western Industrialized Societies. These things ought not to be so!

It is the compiler's personal conviction that God's Seventh Commandment is being violated by his professed Commandment-keeping people, by the many broken and confused family situations involving divorce and subsequent remarriages. I realize that this is a hard saying for many people to accept. Generally the Biblical truth on this subject is hard to accept because, either they themselves are enmeshed in a divorce and remarriage situation; or because some other family member or close personal friends find themselves in this situation. But getting angry at the Bible truths on this subject, because "*they hit too close to home,*" will not change the truth of God into a lie!

The inevitable consequences of liberalizing the stand on divorce and remarriage among Sabbath-keeping Adventists over the last few generations, is that: -

- i. People are not as careful in evaluating and selecting a potential marriage partner, if they are taught that if things don't work out, they can get out of it, and find some one else later on and remarry. If you teach people the Bible standard of one husband or wife for life, *till death do us part*, then many more people would be more circumspect in the evaluation and selection of a marriage partner.
- ii. When difficulties arise within a marriage, if people are taught that they can get out of the situation, putting it in the too hard basket, and find someone else to remarry, fallen human nature being what it is, they will more than likely take the easy way out, and divorce and subsequently remarry. On the other hand, if people are taught as the apostle Paul taught, to either reconcile with their marriage partner or remain unmarried [see 1 Corinthians 7: 10 & 11], they may very well make more diligent efforts to solve their marriage difficulties.

The following inspired principle should be our guide on this and every Bible subject: - ***"Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord" in its support."***  
 - 1884 Great Controversy, p. 413.

I take it from this inspired principle, that the ***plain Thus SAITH THE LORD***, should be as explicit as “*the seventh day [is] the sabbath of the LORD thy God*” – Exodus 20:10; or, “*the dead know not any thing*” – Ecclesiastes 9:5.

So in light of this inspired principle, I would pose a number of questions on this issue: -

- i. Where is found the plain and explicit THUS SAITH THE LORD, for those who believe that divorce and remarriage for any grounds [which mirrors the actions and attitudes of our secular, Western Industrialized Societies] is acceptable with God?
- ii. Where is found in the New Testament, the plain and explicit THUS SAITH THE LORD for those who believe that the *innocent party* who obtained a divorce on the grounds of adultery, can then remarry, and this subsequent remarriage be acceptable with God?

If no plain and explicit THUS SAITH THE LORD can be produced in favor of the above two positions concerning divorce and remarriage, then it would be a reasonable conclusion to draw that these positions are unbiblical, and are not acceptable to God.

It is not the purpose of this Study Document to fulfill the role of a marriage counselor in people's own personal situations; or to be drawn into answering and dealing with hypothetical situations. The purpose of this Study Document is to present the plain, unambiguous truth on this subject from the Word of God and the **original** Testimony of Jesus. In other words, to present a plain THUS SAITH THE LORD, to reveal what is God's position on this whole issue. Then each individual who may read this Study Document can wrestle with the Lord upon their knees in prayer with their Bible, to resolve any personal situations which may be touched upon by the truths of inspiration on this subject.

May the Lord guide every honest in heart reader of this Study Document with his Holy Spirit, in a careful and prayerful examination of this subject is the hope of the compiler.

**R. LEE - 2011.**

## **2. THE SACREDNESS OF THE MARRIAGE COVENANT AS GOD ORIGINALLY ESTABLISHED IT.**

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

The Lord himself stated "*it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him*" - Genesis 2:18.

Before the Lord made a helper for Adam, the Scriptures record the incomplete condition of the first man as follows, "*for Adam there was not found an help meet for him*" - Genesis 2:20.

**NOTE**: - The Hebrew word for "help meet" in both of the above verses is the word עֵזֶר - "**ezer**" - Strong's Concordance, Hebrew No. 5828. It is defined as "help, succour; ... *one who helps*"<sup>1</sup>

☞ Therefore God created Eve to be a helpmeet or helper for Adam.

The apostle Paul has reinforced this truth in the New Testament, by teaching us that "*neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man*" - 1 Corinthians 11:9. The word "for" in this verse means *because of* or *for the sake of the man*. This truth harmonizes perfectly with Genesis 2:18 & 20.

An interesting Biblical fact is that the word "*companion*" occurs 13 times in the King James Version. Yet nowhere in the entire Bible is the husband referred to as the "*companion*" of the wife; but the wife is referred to as the "*companion*" of the husband, "*the wife of thy youth*" who is "*thy companion*" - Malachi 2:14. This little fact would be based upon the reason for the first woman's creation to be a helper for the first man Adam.

### **THE "ONE FLESH" EXPERIENCE: -**

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

**NOTE** - The Hebrew word that is translated as "shall cleave" is the word דָּבַק - "**dâbaq**" - Strong's Concordance; Hebrew, No. 1692. This verb is defined as "cling, cleave, keep close."<sup>2</sup>

Jesus repeated this verse from the book of Genesis in his controversy with the Pharisees on the question of divorce in the New Testament Scriptures. We notice in the following passage from Matthew's gospel, that Jesus points the Pharisees back to the creation of marriage in the Garden of Eden, and to God's joining the man and woman together to become one flesh. Because God has coupled

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<sup>1</sup> The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon, page 740. The initials "BDBG" shall refer to this Lexicon from now on.

<sup>2</sup> BDBG, page 179.

together the husband and wife, man was **NOT** to separate or divide by divorce those whom God has joined together as husband and wife.

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.***"

**NOTE:** - The Greek word that is translated in this verse as "shall cleave to" is the word – "**prōskōllaō**" – See Strong's Concordance; Greek No, 4347. This verb is defined as "figurative *adhere closely to, be faithfully devoted to, join someone*".<sup>3</sup> The English word "**CLEAVE**" means: - "To adhere or cling to (a person, party, principle etc.); to remain attached to".<sup>4</sup>

✎ From both the original Biblical languages (that is, in both the Hebrew and the Greek), and in the English translation, the word "**CLEAVE**" means to unite, join to or adhere to. The purpose to be obtained by a man cleaving to his wife is to achieve the "one flesh" experience – unity in all the major areas of life – sexually, spiritually, and for companionship – to be soul mates for life.

This "*one flesh*" experience was also designed by the Lord to fulfill his command to our first parents to "*be fruitful, and multiply*" - Genesis 1:28, that they might produce "*a godly seed*" - Malachi 2:15.

God himself "*called their name Adam, in the day when they were created*" - Genesis 5:2. Adam called his wife's name Eve - See Genesis 3:20, but God himself called **their names** "ADAM". God knew them, as *Mr. and Mrs. Adam*, and this is undoubtedly where we get the long established custom of a wife taking her husband's surname. It is from what God did at the creation of our first parents and when he instituted the sacred covenant of marriage between a man and his wife, that this custom originated.

### **MARRIAGE IS A SACRED COVENANT MADE BEFORE GOD: -**

Marriage is indeed a sacred covenant between a husband and a wife before God. The unfaithful wife who "*forsaketh the guide of her youth*", is guilty of forgetting "*the covenant of her God*" - Proverbs 2:16 & 17.

The prophet Malachi reinforces this covenant relationship, when he refers to the wife as being "*thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant*" - Malachi 2:14.

The Testimony of Jesus clearly reveals the truth that marriage is to be for life – one marriage partner for life, with nothing by death being able to sever the marriage vows. This was God's original intention for the marriage covenant, when he created the sacred institution of marriage.

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<sup>3</sup> A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, by W. Bauer, Translated and revised by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker; page 716. From now on, the following initials shall refer to this Lexicon: - "BAGD."


<sup>4</sup> The Oxford Universal Dictionary Illustrated, Volume 1, page 322 – 1970 edition.

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, p. 93: - "In the beginning, God gave to Adam one wife, thus showing his order. He never designed that man should have a plurality of wives." {1SP 93.2}

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, pp. 63 & 64: - "When the Pharisees afterward questioned Him concerning the lawfulness of divorce, ***Jesus pointed His hearers back to the marriage institution as ordained at creation.*** "Because of the hardness of your hearts," He said, Moses "suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." Matthew 19:8. ***He referred them to the blessed days of Eden, when God pronounced all things "very good."*** ***Then marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity. Then, as the Creator joined the hands of the holy pair in wedlock, saying, A man shall "leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one" (Genesis 2:24), He enunciated the law of marriage for all the children of Adam to the close of time.*** That which the Eternal Father Himself had pronounced good was the law of highest blessing and development for man." {MB 63.2}

Original Testimony, No. 29, p. 171: - "In the youthful mind, marriage is clothed with romance, and it is difficult to divest it of this feature, with which imagination covers it, and to impress the mind with a sense of the weighty responsibilities involved in ***the marriage vow. This vow links the destinies of the two individuals with bonds which naught but the hand of death should sever.***"

Spiritual Gifts, Volume 3, p. 120: - "There are many unhappy marriages because of so much haste. ***Two unite their interest at the marriage altar, by most solemn vows before God,*** without previously weighing the matter, and devoting time to sober reflection and earnest prayer. Many move from impulse. They have no thorough acquaintance with the dispositions of each other. They do not realize that the happiness of their whole life is at stake. ***If they move wrong in this matter, and their marriage life proves unhappy, it cannot be taken back. If they find they are not calculated to make each other happy, they must endure it the best they can.***" {3SG 120.1}

 It would indeed appear that among God's professed Commandment-keeping people, the sacredness of the marriage covenant as God originally established it, has been greatly violated and marred, following in the footsteps of the world's practices.

### **3. POLYGAMY IS CONTRARY TO GOD'S ORIGINAL DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE.**

**NOTE:** - As we have now established from inspiration God's original design for the sacred covenant of marriage: -That **two** individuals, one man and one woman, are to be joined together into one flesh for life in the sight of God, it should be clear to the thoughtful reader, why polygamy is contrary to God's original design for the sacred covenant of marriage. **This sin involves more than two individuals be joined together as husband and wife.** We shall give a few pertinent thoughts from the pen of inspiration under this PART of the Study Document, dealing with this practise.

Lamech was the first individual as recorded in the Scriptures, who started the practise of having a plurality of wives.

Genesis 4:19: - "And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one [was] Adah, and the name of the other Zillah."

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, pp. 93 & 94: - "***In the beginning, God gave to Adam one wife, thus showing his order. He never designed that man should have a plurality of wives. Lamech was the first who departed in this respect from God's wise arrangement. He had two wives, which created discord in his family. The envy and jealousy of both made Lamech unhappy.*** When men began to multiply upon the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, they took them wives of all which they chose. This was one of the great sins of the inhabitants of the old world, which brought the wrath of God upon them. ***This custom was practiced after the flood, and became so common that even righteous men fell into the practice, and had a plurality of wives. Yet it was no less sin because they became corrupted, and departed in this thing from God's order.***" {1SP 93.2}

In contrast to the wide-spread practice of polygamy before the flood, Noah had only one wife, and the Testimony of Jesus has plainly stated that God never sanctioned polygamy in a single instance.

Genesis 6:18: - "But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, ***and thy wife***, and thy sons' wives with thee."

Spirit of Prophecy, p. 94: - "The Lord said of Noah and his family who were saved in the ark, "For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." ***Noah had but one wife; and their united family discipline was blessed of God.*** Because Noah's sons were righteous, they were preserved in the ark with their righteous father. **God has not sanctioned polygamy in a single instance. It was contrary to his will. He knew that the happiness of man would be destroyed by it. Abraham's peace was greatly marred by his unhappy marriage with Hagar.**" {1SP 94.1}

Abraham's course in following the counsel of Sarah in taking Hagar as a second wife, brought nothing but trouble and strife in the camp, and was **NOT** approved by the Lord. The only way Abraham could restore peace within his family was to separate Hagar and her son Ishmael from his true wife Sarah, and send them away. This clearly demonstrates that God did **NOT** sanction polygamy, even though practiced by Abraham.

Genesis 16:1 – 3: - "Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name [was] Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. ***And***

***Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife."***

Genesis 21:9 – 12: - "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. ***Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, [even] with Isaac.*** And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. ***And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."***

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, p. 98: - "***If God had sanctioned polygamy, he would not have thus directed Abraham to send away Hagar and her son.*** He would teach all a lesson in this, that the rights and happiness of the marriage relation are to be ever respected and guarded, even at a great sacrifice. ***Sarah was the first and only true wife of Abraham. She was entitled to rights, as a wife and mother, which no other could have in the family.*** She revered her husband, calling him lord; but she was jealous lest his affections should be divided with Hagar. God did not rebuke Sarah for the course she pursued. Abraham was reproved by the angels for distrusting God's power, which had led him to take Hagar as his wife, and to think that through her the promise would be fulfilled." {1SP 98.2}

When Laban caught up with Jacob and his family after the patriarch left him, Jacob made a solemn covenant with Laban before the Lord, not to take any more wives to himself.

Genesis 31:44 – 53: - "Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee. And Jacob took a stone, and set it up [for] a pillar. And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. And Laban said, This heap [is] a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; And Mizpah; for he said, ***The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take [other] wives beside my daughters, no man [is] with us; see, God [is] witness betwixt me and thee.*** And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold [this] pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee; This heap [be] witness, and [this] pillar [be] witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac."

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, pp. 116 & 117: - "***Laban understood the wrong of polygamy, although it was alone through his artifice that Jacob had taken two wives. He well knew that it was the jealousy of Leah and Rachel that led them to give their maids to Jacob, which confused the family relation, and increased the unhappiness of his daughters.*** And now as his daughters are journeying at a great distance from him, and their interest is to be entirely separate from his own, he would guard, as far as possible, their happiness. ***Laban would not have Jacob bring still greater unhappiness upon himself, and upon Leah and Rachel, by taking other wives.*** And Laban said, "The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters; or if thou shalt take other wives besides my daughters; no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee." {1SP 116.3}

***"Jacob made a solemn covenant before the Lord, that he would not take other wives.*** "And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee; this heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob swear by the fear of his father Isaac." {1SP 117.1}



Moses instructed the children of Israel, that if they ever had a future king, he was **NOT** to multiply wives to himself, because the inevitable consequence of practicing this sin, would be to turn his heart away from the Lord, as was evidenced in the later transgressions of kings David and Solomon.

Deuteronomy 17:17: - ***“Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.”***

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, pp. 377 – 379: - “He [that is David – compiler] often conquered, and triumphed. He increased in wealth and greatness. But his prosperity had an influence to lead him from God. His temptations were many and strong. ***He finally fell into the common practice of other kings around him, of having a plurality of wives, and his life was imbittered by the evil results of polygamy. His first wrong was in taking more than one wife, thus departing from God's wise arrangement. This departure from right, prepared the way for greater errors. The kingly idolatrous nations considered it an addition to their honor and dignity to have many wives, and David regarded it an honor to his throne to possess several wives. But he was made to see the wretched evil of such a course, by the unhappy discord, rivalry and jealousy among his numerous wives and children.***” {1SP 377.3}

***“His crime in the case of Uriah and Bath-sheba, was heinous in the sight of God. A just and impartial God did not sanction or excuse these sins in David, but sent a reproof and heavy denunciation by Nathan, his prophet, which portrayed in living colors his grievous offense.*** David had been blinded to his wonderful departure from God. He had excused his own sinful course to himself, until his ways seemed passable in his own eyes. One wrong step had prepared the way for another, until his sins called for the rebuke from Jehovah through Nathan. David awakens as from a dream. He feels the sense of his sin. He does not seek to excuse his course, or palliate his sin, as did Saul; but with remorse and sincere grief, he bows his head before the prophet of God, and acknowledges his guilt. Nathan tells David that, because of his repentance and humble confession, God will forgive his sin, and avert a part of the threatened calamity, and spare his life; yet he should be punished, because he had given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. This occasion has been improved by the enemies of God, from David's day until the present time. Skeptics have assailed Christianity, and ridiculed the Bible, because David gave them occasion. They bring up to Christians the case of David, his sin in the case of Uriah and Bath-sheba, his polygamy, and then assert that David is called a man after God's own heart, and that if the Bible record is correct, God justified David in his crimes.” {1SP 378.1}

***“I was shown that it was when David was pure, and walking in the counsel of God, that God called him a man after his own heart. When David departed from God, and stained his virtuous character by his crimes, he was no longer a man after God's own heart. God did not in the least degree justify him in his sins, but sent Nathan, his prophet, with dreadful denunciations to David because he had transgressed the commandment of the Lord. God shows his displeasure at David's having a plurality of wives, by visiting him with judgments, and permitting evils to rise up against him from his own house.*** The terrible calamity that God permitted to come upon David, who, for his integrity, was once called a man after God's own heart, is evidence to after generations that God would not justify any one in transgressing his commandments; but that he would surely punish the guilty, however righteous and favored of God they might once have been while they followed the Lord in purity of heart. When the righteous turn from their righteousness and do evil, their past righteousness will not save them from the wrath of a just and holy God.” {1SP 379.1}

1 Kings 11:1 – 4: - “But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, [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.*** 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."

👉 To finish this PART of the Study Document, I repeat that polygamy is wrong because it is a violation of God's sacred covenant of marriage, between two individuals - one man and one woman, to become joined together as one flesh for life.

#### **4. GOD HATES DIVORCE.**

Malachi 2:14 – 16: - "Yet ye say, Wherefore? ***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 wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. ***Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away:*** for [one] covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously."

The prophet Malachi in this passage has recorded several fundamental truths concerning marriage and God's attitude to divorce, which I shall briefly outline in point form below: -

- A. The Lord is the witness between the husband and the wife of his youth. The phrase or its equivalent "*the wife of thy youth*" appears twice in this passage, which are obvious references to the husband's first wife, who he married in his youth.
- B. This first wife **is** the husband's companion and "*the wife of thy covenant*". This clearly reveals the truth that when one enters into marriage, one is entering into a covenant relationship between the husband and the wife, with God as the witness to the vows exchanged between the two parties.
- C. In VS. 15 we have a clear reference back to the creation of the marriage relationship in the Garden of Eden and the one flesh experience to be found within marriage, "*And did not he make one?*" ... "*And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed.*" One of the objectives that the marriage relationship was created by God was to raise up godly offspring for the Lord. – "*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*" – Genesis 2:24.
- D. The husband in this passage has dealt treacherously against the wife of his youth, by putting her away [that is, by divorcing her]. Yet **she is still** "*thy companion*".
- E. The reason the husband in exhorted not to deal treacherously against the wife of his youth, is "***For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away***". What can be clearer than this statement? **GOD HATES DIVORCE!**

## **5. THE REFORMATORY ACTIONS OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH CONCERNING THE UNBIBLICAL MARRIAGES OF THE RETURNED EXILES.**

Ezra was a faithful reformer. When he came to Jerusalem, he found that some of the returned exiles, including some of the leaders of the people had transgressed God's Commandments, ***and were living in open sin***, having entered into unlawful marriages with heathen wives, and these unlawful alliances had produced offspring. The following accounts from the Scriptures and the Testimony of Jesus outline how Ezra carried out in this reformation in dealing with these unlawful alliances.

Ezra 9:1 – 15: - 9:1 Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, [doing] according to their abominations, [even] of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

9:2 ***For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of [those] lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.***

9:3 And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished.

9:4 Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice.

9:5 And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God,

9:6 And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over [our] head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.

9:7 Since the days of our fathers [have] we [been] in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, [and] our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as [it is] this day.

9:8 And now for a little space grace hath been [showed] from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

9:9 For we [were] bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

9:10 And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,

9:11 Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness.

9:12 ***Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave [it] for an inheritance to your children for ever.***

9:13 And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities [deserve], and hast given us [such] deliverance as this;

9:14 ***Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed [us], so that [there should be] no remnant nor escaping?***

9:15 O LORD God of Israel, thou [art] righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as [it is] this day: behold, we [are] before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.

Ezra 10:1 – 5, 10 – 12 & 19: - 10:1 Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for the people wept very sore.

10:2 ***And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, [one] of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.***

10:3 ***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 that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.***

10:4 Arise; for [this] matter [belongeth] unto thee: we also [will be] with thee: be of good courage, and do [it].

10:5 ***Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they sware. ...***

10:10 ***And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel.***

10:11 ***Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.***

10:12 ***Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do. ...***

10:19 ***And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives;*** and [being] guilty, [they offered] a ram of the flock for their trespass.

R. & H., February 20, 1908: - "***The coming of Ezra and his company to Jerusalem brought courage and hope into the hearts of many who had long labored under trying difficulties.*** Since the first company of exiles had returned with Zerubbabel and Joshua, over seventy years before, much had been accomplished in the work of restoration. The temple had been finished; the walls of the city had been partially repaired. Yet much remained undone. At times, the people had become disheartened, and had well-nigh ceased all effort to restore the city. Even during the years of comparative peace following the troublous times of Queen Esther, but little was done to upbuild the wall." {RH, February 20, 1908 par. 1}

***"The indifference of many of the Israelites who had returned, is directly traceable to their violation of the plain precepts of the law given at Sinai. Some who had returned, remained faithful; but many of their children and children's children, lost sight of the law of heaven. The Mosaic code, given for the good of the people, was sadly disregarded. Sin was in the camp. Even some of the men who had been entrusted with sacred responsibilities, lived in open sin.*** Their course of action largely neutralized the efforts of others to advance the cause of God; for so long as flagrant violations of

God's law were allowed to go on unrebuked, the blessing of heaven could not rest richly upon the people." {RH, February 20, 1908 par. 2}

"... Ezra's arrival at Jerusalem was opportune. His brethren were in great need of the influence of his presence. Soon after his return, some of the chief men of Israel approached him with a serious complaint. Some of "the people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites," had so far lost sight of the holy character of the commands of Jehovah given them through Moses, that they had intermarried with the surrounding heathen peoples. "They have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons," Ezra was informed, "so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people" of heathen lands; "yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass." {RH, February 20, 1908 par. 6}

**"... The sorrow of Ezra and of his associates over the evils that had insidiously crept into the very heart of the Lord's work, wrought repentance. Many of those who had sinned, were deeply affected.** "The people wept very sore." They had begun to realize, in a limited degree, the heinousness of sin, and the horror with which God regards it. The sacredness of the law spoken at Sinai was brought clearly before their minds, and many trembled at the thought of their transgressions." {RH, February 20, 1908 par. 14}

"One of the company, Shechaniah by name, acknowledged that all the words spoken by Ezra were true. "We have trespassed against our God," he confessed," and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing." **Shechaniah proposed that all who had transgressed, should make a covenant with God to forsake their lives of sin, and to be adjudged "according to the law."** "Arise," he bade Ezra, "for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it." {RH, February 20, 1908 par. 15}

"Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word." {RH, February 20, 1908 par. 16}

**"This was the beginning of a wonderful reformation. With infinite patience and tact, and with careful consideration for the rights and welfare of every individual concerned, Ezra and his associates labored to lead the repentant of Israel into a right way of living.** Above all things else, Ezra was a teacher of the law; and as he gave personal attention to the examination of every case, he sought to impress upon the mind of the sinner the holiness of the law of heaven, and the blessings to be gained through obedience to this law." {RH, February 20, 1908 par. 17}

Nehemiah was another faithful reformer, who continued the reform effort of Ezra relating to these unlawful alliances with heathen wives. He didn't carry out this reformation without opposition from some of the leading men in the Lord's work. But he would not be diverted from his mission, and those in sacred office who would not dissolve their unlawful alliances, were removed from their position. Others were banished or expelled from the congregation of Israel, and some chose to follow their heathen wives into exile. The following accounts from the Scriptures and the Testimony of Jesus outline the reformation that Nehemiah carried out in relation to these **unlawful marriages**.

**Nehemiah 13:23 – 31: - 13:23 *In those days also saw I Jews [that] had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, [and] of Moab:***

13:24 And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.

13:25 ***And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, [saying], Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.***

13:26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

13:27 Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?

13:28 And [one] of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, [was] son in law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from me.

13:29 Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites.

13:30 Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;

13:31 And for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

S. T. January 24, 1884: - **"Another subject to which Nehemiah's attention was called on his return to Jerusalem, was the danger that threatened Israel from intermarriage and association with idolaters.**" "In those days," says Nehemiah, "saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab; and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people." This assimilation to the language of the heathen was an indication of the inroads made by heathenism. In many families, children, trained by heathen mothers, were prattling around them in the tongue of the several idolatrous nations with whom the Israelites had intermarried. These children, as they grew up in the habits and customs of heathenism, became idolaters of the most dangerous class, because they were connected with the people of God." {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 1}

***"These unlawful alliances caused great confusion; for some who entered into them were persons in high position, rulers of the people and men connected with service of God, to whom, in the absence of Nehemiah, the people had a right to look for counsel and correct example.*** God had carefully excluded the heathen from uniting with his faithful worshipers; but the divinely erected barriers had been broken down, and as a consequence of mingling and intermarrying with other nations, the Israel of God were fast losing their peculiar, holy character. Nehemiah knew that ruin was before the nation if this evil were not put away, and he reasoned with these men on the subject. He firmly and fearlessly declared, "Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves." He presented the case of Solomon, and reminded them that among many nations there had arisen no king like this man, whom God had favored, and to whom he had given great wisdom. But the idolatrous women whom he connected with his house by marriage, led his heart astray from God, and his example had a corrupting influence on all Israel. ***The commands and threatenings of the Lord, and the fearful judgments visited upon Israel in past generations, aroused the consciences of the people. The strongest and most endearing ties that bound them to idolaters were broken. Not only were future marriages with the heathen forbidden, but marriages already formed were dissolved.***" {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 2}

***"Some men in sacred office pleaded for their heathen wives, declaring that they could not bring themselves to separate from them.*** Nehemiah replied, with solemn sternness, "Shall we then hearken unto you, to do all this great evil to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?" {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 3}

***"A grandson of the high priest, having married a daughter of the notorious Sanballat, was not only removed from office; but promptly banished from Israel.*** "Remember them, O my God,"

exclaimed Nehemiah, "because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites." He adds: "Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business." ***No respect was shown for rank or position. No distinction was made. Whoever among the priests and rulers refused to sever his connection with idolaters, was immediately separated from the service of the Lord.*** {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 4}

"How much anguish of soul this needed severity cost the faithful workers for God, the Judgment alone will reveal. ***Every advance step was gained only by fasting, humiliation, and prayer. There was a constant struggle with opposing elements.***" {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 5}

***"Many who had married idolaters chose to go with them into exile; and, with those who had been expelled from the congregation, they joined the Samaritans, a heathen people who had combined with their idolatrous worship many of the customs of the Jews. Hither some who had occupied high positions in the work of God now found their way, and after a time they cast in their lot fully with them.*** Desiring to strengthen this alliance, the Samaritans promised to adopt more fully the Jewish faith and customs; and the apostates, determined to outdo their former brethren, erected a temple on Mount Gerizim, in opposition to the house of God at Jerusalem. This spurious religion continued to be a mixture of Judaism and heathenism; and their claims to be the people of God were the source of schism, emulation, and enmity between the two nations from generation to generation." {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 6}

***"The servants of God today encounter difficulties very similar to those against which Nehemiah contended.*** Human nature is still the same. And Satan is as active, earnest, and persevering now as at any period in the past. Nay, rather, the word of God declares that his power and enmity increase as we near the close of time. The greatest danger of God's ancient people arose from their inclination to disregard his direct requirements and to follow, instead, their own desires. Such is the sin and danger of his people at the present time. ***The indolence, backsliding, and degeneracy in our churches may be traced, in a great degree, to the lax sentiments which have been coming in as a result of conformity to the world. The Sabbath is not as sacredly regarded as it should be. Improper marriages, with their train of evils, have dragged down some of the most useful men to apostasy and ruin.***" {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 7}

***"Before contracting marriage, every wise person will consider the matter in all its bearings: Will the relation I am about to form lead Heavenward, or toward perdition? Will it bring in sacred and devotional influences, or the corrupting influence of the world?"*** {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 8}

***"In the existing state of religious declension, there is crying need of earnest, faithful Nehemiahs and Ezras,--men who will not shun to call sin by its right name, and who will not shrink from vindicating the honor of God. Those upon whom God has laid the burden of his work are not to hold their peace, and cover prevailing evils with a cloak of false charity. Men of courage and energy are needed to expose fashionable sins. Iniquity must not be palliated and excused.*** Those who lead the church of God to follow the customs and practices of the world, are not to be lauded and exalted. No regard for family or position will hinder the faithful servants of Christ from guarding the interests of his people. God is no respecter of persons. Great light and special privileges bring increased responsibility. When those who have been favored or honored of God, commit sin, their influence goes very far to encourage others in transgression. And if, by their example, the faith of another is weakened, and moral and religious principle is broken down, the wrath of God will surely come upon those betrayers of their sacred trust." {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 9}

"Severity to a few will often prove mercy to many. Yet we must be careful to manifest the spirit of Christ, and not our own hasty, impetuous disposition. We must rebuke sin, because we love God, and love the souls for whom Christ died." {ST, January 24, 1884 par. 10}



## **6. THE INSPIRED TEACHINGS OF JESUS.**

Matthew 5:27 - 32: - "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.***"

According to the Testimony of Jesus, our Saviour in the above passage from his Sermon on the Mount is discussing the **ONLY** legal or lawful grounds for divorce being adultery. Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 2, pp. 221 & 222: - "While Jesus is teaching, there are pleasure-boats upon the water, and it is evident to all that the idlers who occupy them are disreputable characters. The listening people expect Jesus to severely denounce this class, but are surprised when he declares: "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." Those who have looked upon the guilty characters who lead lives of sensual dissipation as sinners above all others, are astonished to hear Jesus assert that those who cherish lascivious thoughts are as guilty at heart as the shameless violators of the seventh commandment. ***Jesus condemned the custom then existing of a man putting away his wife for trivial offenses. This practice led to great wretchedness and crime.*** Jesus strikes at the primary cause of the laxness with which the marriage relation was held, when he condemns the unholy passions which find the marriage institution a barrier to the gratification of their lust. ***Christ would have the marriage relation hedged about with judicial restrictions, so that there could be no legal separation between husband and wife, save for the cause of adultery.***" {2SP 221.1}

**NOTE:** - We observe from a careful reading of the above Bible passage and the statement from the messenger of the Lord, ***that there is no discussion at all of the supposed permission for remarriage*** in either of these inspired sources. That issue was **NOT** the subject that Jesus was speaking on in his Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 19:3 - 12: - "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?*** 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. 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. ***And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except [it be] for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*** His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with [his] wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All [men] cannot receive this saying, save [they] to whom it is given. 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]."

Mark 10:2 - 12: - "And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, ***Is it lawful for a man to put away [his] wife? tempting him.*** And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And

they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put [her] away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same [matter]. ***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.***"

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."

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, pp. 63 & 64: - "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" Matthew 19:3."

***"Among the Jews a man was permitted to put away his wife for the most trivial offenses, and the woman was then at liberty to marry again. This practice led to great wretchedness and sin. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus declared plainly that there could be no dissolution of the marriage tie, except for unfaithfulness to the marriage vow. "Everyone," He said, "that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery." R.V." {MB 63.1}***

***"When the Pharisees afterward questioned Him concerning the lawfulness of divorce, Jesus pointed His hearers back to the marriage institution as ordained at creation. "Because of the hardness of your hearts," He said, Moses "suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." Matthew 19:8. He referred them to the blessed days of Eden, when God pronounced all things "very good." Then marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity. Then, as the Creator joined the hands of the holy pair in wedlock, saying, A man shall "leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one" (Genesis 2:24), He enunciated the law of marriage for all the children of Adam to the close of time. That which the Eternal Father Himself had pronounced good was the law of highest blessing and development for man." {MB 63.2}***

**NOTE**: - A careful reading of the passages from Matthew 19:3 – 12 and Mark 10:2 - 12 including the above statement from the Testimony of Jesus, brings out a number of important truths that we need to understand correctly to arrive at the true Biblical position on this issue.

- A. The Pharisees questioned Jesus concerning the legality of the prevailing custom among the Jews of a man being able to divorce his wife for *"the most trivial offenses"*.
- B. Jesus challenges the entire principle of divorce, by pointing his hearers back to the creation of male and female and God's instituting the first marriage in Genesis 2:24 – *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."* Whom God has joined together as one flesh, man is **NOT** to separate by divorce.
- C. The Pharisees object to Jesus' fundamental principle concerning no divorce, with a counter argument in the form of a question, relating to WHY Moses allowed the Jews to divorce their wives, which command is found in Deuteronomy 24:1 – *"When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give [it] in her hand, and send her out of his house."*
- D. Jesus dismissed the Pharisees' objection, by stating the reason WHY Moses allowed this permission for divorce, and again points his hearers back to the institution of marriage in the

Garden of Eden, when divorce was **NOT** permitted – *“Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: **but from the beginning it was not so.**”*

- E. Jesus then gives the **ONLY** legal or lawful grounds for divorce which is adultery.
- F. Permission for remarriage after divorce is **NOT** the subject of Jesus’ teachings at all in any of these passages.

✎ It should be noted that Jesus is discussing the **ONLY** legal or lawful grounds for divorce, and is **NOT** giving permission for remarriage in Matthew 5:31 & 32; 19:3 – 12; Mark 10:2 – 12 and Luke 16:18. There is **NO** explicit or implied permission for the so called “innocent party” to remarry in these passages, as that is **not** the subject of his discourses. Jesus plainly teaches in these passages that those who enter into an unbiblical remarriage **are living in a continual state of adultery!**

## **7. THE SAMARITAN WOMAN AT THE WELL.**

John 4:7 – 19: - "There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. **Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. 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. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet."

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 2, p. 142: - "Jesus now abruptly changed the subject of conversation, and bade her call her husband. The woman answered frankly that she had no husband. Jesus had now approached the desired point where he could convince her that he had the power to read her life history, although previously unacquainted with her. He addressed her thus: "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." {2SP 142.1}

"Jesus had a double object in view; **he wished to arouse her conscience as to the sin of her manner of life**, as well as to prove to her that a sight wiser than human eyes had read the secrets of her life. **But the woman, although not fully realizing the guilt of her manner of living, was greatly astonished that this stranger should possess such knowledge.** With profound reverence she said, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." {2SP 142.2}

IBID., p. 147: - "It was not merely the fact that Jesus told her concerning the secrets of her life which inspired the confidence of this woman in him, but it was also his look and his solemn words that reached her soul and convinced her that he was a superior being. **At the same time she felt that he was her friend, pitying and loving her. This is the character of the world's Redeemer; while he condemned her life of sin, he directed her to his divine grace as the sure and perfect remedy.** The pitying love of the Saviour is not confined to sect or party." {2SP 147.2}

## 8. **“NEITHER DO I CONDEMN THEE: GO, AND SIN NO MORE.”: -**

John 8:1 – 11: - “Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. **And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery;** and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, **Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?**<sup>5</sup> This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with [his] finger wrote on the ground, [as though he heard them not]. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard [it], being convicted by [their own] conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, [even] unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. **And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.**”

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 2, pp. 351 - 353: - “**Jesus did not palliate sin nor lessen the sense of crime; but he came not to condemn; he came to lead the sinner to eternal life.** The world looked upon this erring woman as one to be slighted and scorned; but **the pure and holy Jesus stooped to address her with words of comfort, encouraging her to reform her life. Instead of to condemn the guilty, his work was to reach into the very depths of human woe and degradation, lift up the debased and sinful, and bid the trembling penitent to “sin no more.”** When the woman stood before Jesus, cowering under the accusation of the Pharisees and a sense of the enormity of her crime, she knew that her life was trembling in the balance, and that a word from Jesus would add fuel to the indignation of the crowd, so that they would immediately stone her to death.” {2SP 351.2}

“Her eyes droop before the calm and searching glance of Christ. Stricken with shame, she is unable to look upon that holy countenance. As she thus stands waiting for sentence to be passed upon her, the words fall upon her astonished ears that not only deliver her from her accusers, but send them away convicted of greater crimes than hers. After they are gone, she hears the mournfully solemn words: “Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more.” Her heart melts with penitential grief; and, with gratitude to her Deliverer, she bows at the feet of Jesus, sobbing out in broken accents the emotions of her heart, and confessing her sins with bitter tears.” {2SP 352.1}

**“This was the beginning of a new life to this tempted, fallen soul, a life of purity and peace, devoted to the service of God. In raising this woman to a life of virtue, Jesus performed a greater act than that of healing the most grievous bodily malady; he cured the sickness of the soul which is unto death everlasting.** This penitent woman became one of the firmest friends of Jesus. She repaid his forgiveness and compassion, with a self-sacrificing love and worship. Afterward, when she stood sorrow-stricken at the foot of the cross, and saw the dying agony on the face of her Lord, and heard his bitter cry, her soul was pierced afresh; for she knew that this sacrifice was on account of sin; and her

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<sup>5</sup> The command found in Moses’ writings to put to death **both parties** who had committed the sin of adultery to which the Pharisees referred to in John 8:5, is recorded in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

Leviticus 20:10: - “And the man that committeth adultery with [another] man’s wife, [even he] that committeth adultery with his neighbour’s wife, **the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.**”

Deuteronomy 22:22: - “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.”  
**NOTE:** - The reason why the innocent party in a case of adultery could remarry under the Mosaic dispensation, was because their guilty adulterous spouse was to have been put to death, and would therefore be no longer alive.

responsibility as one whose deep guilt had helped to bring about this anguish of the Son of God, seemed very heavy indeed. She felt that those pangs which pierced the Saviour's frame were for her; the blood that flowed from his wounds was to blot out her record of sin; the groans which escaped from his dying lips were caused by her transgression. Her heart ached with a sorrow past all expression, and she felt that a life of self-abnegating atonement would poorly compensate for the gift of life, purchased for her at such an infinite price." {2SP 352.2}

## **9. THE INSPIRED TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST: -**

Matthew 14:3 & 4: - "For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put [him] in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her."

Mark 6:17 & 18: - "For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife."

Luke 3:19 & 20: - "But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison."

1858 Great Controversy, p. 30: - "Herod was affected as he listened to the powerful, pointed testimonies of John. With deep interest he inquired what he must do to become his disciple. ***John was acquainted with the fact that he was about to marry his brother's wife, while her husband was yet living, and faithfully told Herod that it was not lawful.*** Herod was not willing to make any sacrifice. He married his brother's wife, and, through her influence, seized John and put him in prison." {1SG 30.1}

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 2, pp. 69 & 70: - "Herod was affected as he listened to the pointed testimony of John, and, with deep interest, he inquired what he must do to become his disciple. He was convicted by the plain truths uttered by John. His conscience condemned him, for a woman of vile passions had gained his affections and controlled his mind. This unprincipled woman was ambitious for power and authority, and thought if she became the wife of Herod her object would be gained. ***As Herod listened to the practical truths proclaimed by John, reproving the transgression of the law of God, and setting forth the future punishment which the guilty must suffer, he trembled, and greatly desired to break the chain of lust which held him. He opened his mind to John, who brought Herod to the law of God, face to face, and told him it would be impossible for him to have part in the kingdom of the Messiah unless he should break away from the unlawful connections with his brother's wife, and, with his whole heart, obey the commandments of God.***" {2SP 69.2}

***"Herod was inclined to act upon the advice of John, and stated to Herodias that he could not marry her in defiance of the law of God.*** But this determined woman would not be thwarted in her designs. Intense hatred was awakened in her heart toward John. Herod was weak in principle, vacillating in mind, and Herodias had no great difficulty in re-establishing herself in his favor, and holding her influence over him. ***Herod yielded to the pleasures of sin, rather than submit to the restrictions of the law of God.***" {2SP 70.1}

According to the Testimony of Jesus, Herod and Herodias' marriage was accounted by God as ***"living in sin."*** And it was because John gave the faithful rebuke to the king that it was not lawful for him to marry his brother's wife while her first husband was still living, that cost the prophet John his life.

R. & H., October 22, 1901: - "Many of those who profess to believe the truth would say, if they expressed their real sentiment, "What need is there of speaking so plainly?" They might as well ask, Why need ***John*** have said to the Pharisees, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ***Why need he have provoked the anger of Herodias by telling Herod that it was unlawful for him to live with his brother's wife? He lost his life by speaking so plainly. Why could he not have moved along without incurring the wrath of Herodias?"*** {RH, October 22, 1901 par. 13}

R. & H., September 11, 1913: - "There are many professed Christians who, if they should express their real feelings would say, What need is there of speaking so plainly? They might as well ask, Why need **John the Baptist** have said to the Pharisees, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" **Why need he have provoked the anger of Herodias by telling Herod that it was unlawful for him to live with his brother's wife? The forerunner of Christ lost his life by his plain-speaking. Why could he not have moved along without incurring the displeasure of those who were living in sin?**" {RH, September 11, 1913 par. 14}

Christ's silence when brought before Herod was the most severe rebuke he could give to the king, who had gone directly contrary to the reproof John the Baptist had given him concerning his living in sin.

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 3, pp. 136 & 137: - "**But Jesus stood calmly before the haughty ruler as one who neither saw nor heard.** Herod repeatedly urged his proposition upon Jesus, and reiterated the fact that he had the power to release or to condemn him. He even dared to boast of the punishment he had inflicted upon the prophet John for presuming to reprove him. **To all this, Jesus made no answer either by word or look. Herod was irritated by the profound silence of the prisoner, which indicated an utter indifference to the royal personage before whom he had been summoned. Open rebuke would have been more palatable to the vain and pompous ruler than to be thus silently ignored.**" {3SP 136.2}

"Had Jesus desired to do so, he could have spoken words which would have pierced the ears of the hardened king. He could have stricken him with fear and trembling by laying before him the full iniquity of his life, and the horror of his approaching doom. **But Jesus had no light to give one who had gone directly contrary to the knowledge he had received from the greatest of prophets. The ears of Christ had ever been open to the earnest plea of even the worst sinners; but he had no ear for the commands of Herod. Those eyes, that had ever rested with pity and forgiveness upon the penitent sinner, however defiled and lowly, had no look to bestow upon Herod.** Those lips, that had dropped precious words of instruction, and were ever ready to answer the questions of those who sought knowledge, and to speak comfort and pardon to the sinful and desponding, had no words for proud and cruel Herod. That heart, ever touched by the presence of human woe, was closed to the haughty king who felt no need of a Saviour." {3SP 137.1}



## **10. THE INSPIRED TEACHINGS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.**

The wife is bound by the law of marriage to her husband, as long as he is alive. If her husband dies, then she is free to marry another man without being called an adulteress. But if while her husband is alive, she is married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress.

Romans 7:1 - 3: - "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? ***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. 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.***"

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

To the married, the Lord commands through Paul, that the wife is not to depart [that is to separate] from her husband; but if she does depart she is to be either reconciled to her husband, or to remain unmarried. The husband is not to divorce his wife. [No doubt, this command from the Lord would apply to the husband to not depart from his wife, but if he does depart let him be reconciled to her, or remain unmarried.] Paul then gives his judgment to those believers who are living with an unbelieving marriage partner: - If the unbelieving spouse is pleased to live with the believing spouse, the believer is not to leave or divorce them. But if the unbelieving departs from them, the believer is not under bondage in such situations.

1 Corinthians 7:10 – 15: - "***And unto the married I command, [yet] not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from [her] husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to [her] husband: and let not the husband put away [his] wife.*** 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. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 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. 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."

**NOTE:** - If more Christian couples followed the Lord's command through Paul contained in VS. 10 & 11, there would be further divorces in Christian homes, and more efforts would be made to reconcile and overcome marital difficulties between the two parties.

## **11. AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH.**

Jesus warned his followers that as it was before the flood in the days of Noah, so it shall be just before his 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. And Jesus specifically mentions the fact that those who perished in the flood waters, were marrying and being given in marriage right up until the day Noah and his family entered into the ark.

Matthew 24:37 – 39: - ***“But as the days of Noe [were], so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, **marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,** and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”***

Luke 17:26 & 27: - ***“And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, **they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,** and the flood came, and destroyed them all.”***

The immoral condition of the world before the flood is clearly outlined for us in the Book of Genesis.

Genesis 6:5, 12 & 13: - ***“And God saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually. ... And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; **for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.** And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; **for the earth is filled with violence through them;** and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.”***

One of the causes of this upsurge in wickedness before the flood was because the sons of God intermarried with unbelieving wives, taking for themselves *“wives of all which they chose”*. They violated God’s original design for the marriage covenant, by having a plurality of wives and marrying unbelievers.

Genesis 6:1 & 2: - ***“And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, **that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they [were] fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.**”***

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, p. 66: - ***“The descendants of Seth were called the sons of God--the descendants of Cain, the sons of men. **As the sons of God mingled with the sons of men, they became corrupt, and by intermarriage with them, lost, through the influence of their wives, their peculiar, holy character, and united with the sons of Cain in their idolatry. Many cast aside the fear of God, and trampled upon his commandments.**”*** {1SP 66.1}

Elder James White has made the following pertinent comments on the role this intermarriage between the sons of God with unbelievers before the flood, had in helping to morally corrupt the world.

R. H., August 4, 1863; By Elder James White: Article Entitled – “ONLY IN THE LORD.”: - ***“Marriage was most certainly right in the days of Noah. It was the abuse of the institution that kindled the wrath of God and called for destruction by the flood. If the men of that age had married “only in the Lord,” instead of taking “wives of all which they chose,” Heaven would have smiled upon them instead of giving them a watery grave. And we would suggest that if those who had a knowledge of the true God at that time had repudiated polygamy, and intermarrying with the worshippers of idols – had the glory and honor of God ruled in the marriage of these – they would have been sufficient salt to save the world from the***

flood. But with their abuses of the original design of the marriage institution, they were not only guilty of wrong which separated them from God, but they were brought into close connection with the powers of darkness, so that they could not retain purity and holiness of life. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

As God created the marriage institution in the Garden of Eden [See Genesis 2:20 – 24], and as the apostle Paul informs as that "*Marriage [is] honourable in all, and the bed undefiled*" – Hebrews 13:4. I ask the following question: -

What was it about the practice of the people before the flood that perverted the heaven ordained institution of marriage, that led Jesus to list the "*marrying and giving in marriage*" by the antediluvians as a sign of the end of the world?

We are informed by the Testimony of Jesus, that before the flood, men indulged in the sin of having a plurality of wives, which was directly contrary to God's order of one wife for one man in the marriage relation. It should be noted, that righteous Noah had only one wife following God's original order for marriage, which was in stark contrast to the common practise of the antediluvians having more than one wife.

Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 1, p. 68 & 69: - "Instead of doing justice to their neighbors, they carried out their own unlawful wishes. ***They had a plurality of wives, which was contrary to God's wise arrangement. In the beginning, God gave to Adam one wife--showing to all who should live upon the earth, his order and law in that respect.*** The transgression and fall of Adam and Eve brought sin and wretchedness upon the human race, and man followed his own carnal desires, and changed God's order. ***The more men multiplied wives to themselves, the more they increased in wickedness and unhappiness.*** If any one chose to take the wives, or cattle, or anything belonging to his neighbor, he did not regard justice or right, but if he could prevail over his neighbor by reason of strength, or by putting him to death, he did so, and exulted in his deeds of violence." {1SP 68.1}

IBID., pp. 93 & 94: - "***In the beginning, God gave to Adam one wife, thus showing his order. He never designed that man should have a plurality of wives.*** Lamech was the first who departed in this respect from God's wise arrangement. He had two wives, which created discord in his family. The envy and jealousy of both made Lamech unhappy. ***When men began to multiply upon the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, they took them wives of all which they chose. This was one of the great sins of the inhabitants of the old world, which brought the wrath of God upon them.***" {1SP 93.2}

"...The Lord said of Noah and his family who were saved in the ark, "For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." ***Noah had but one wife; and their united family discipline was blessed of God.***" {1SP 94.1}

The following article from the Testimony of Jesus is entitled "**MARRYING AND GIVING IN MARRIAGE.**" It is an inspired commentary on this prophecy of Jesus and sheds much light concerning the sins of the antediluvians in regard their perversion of the marriage relationship, and how it is being perverted among the professed followers of Jesus in the last days.

**REVIEW AND HERALD, SEPTEMBER 25, 1888 - MARRYING AND GIVING IN MARRIAGE.**

**BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.**

The testimony of Noah, in regard to the judgments that were to fall upon the antediluvian world, was not received by the people as the message of God. The servant of God gave to the transgressors of

the law of Jehovah, a warning which announced that in one hundred and twenty years the world would be destroyed by a flood. His warning was scoffed at, ridiculed, and rejected. The preacher of righteousness was proclaimed to be an ignorant fanatic, who had no knowledge of the laws of nature. The wise men of that time argued that it was an impossibility for water to rise high enough to deluge the world. They reasoned from scientific principles, that the world could not be destroyed, and that no attention should be paid to the predictions of Noah. This philosophy, or science falsely so called, exalted the law above the Lawgiver, and things created above the Creator. {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 1}

Unmindful of the solemn words of the man of God, the people of that age continued their course of merriment, gratifying the desires of their carnal natures, and following the corrupt imaginations of their hearts. After rejecting the messenger of truth, they plunged more deeply than ever into the business of planting, and building, marrying, and giving in marriage. They spent the time of their probation as if it were one long holiday; and Noah and his predictions were the jest of the careless, wicked scoffers of the age. But while the people were lulled to sleep in the cradle of carnal security, the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up; and the prophecy was fulfilled, and "the world that then was being overflowed with water, perished." {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 2}

"As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Then, the world was destroyed by a flood; in our day, it is to be destroyed by fire. The message of warning is going forth to the world, to prepare a people who will be saved out of the general ruin of earthly things. We are living in a very solemn time, and solemn thoughts should occupy the mind; the earnest inquiry should be made by every soul, "What shall I do to be saved?" The message that the coming of Christ is at hand, is not received. The thought that he is at the door, is not a welcome thought. As the message of the coming deluge was rejected, in the time of Noah, so the announcement of the final destruction of this world, is disbelieved. Thousands will reason after the same manner as did the people in the days prior to the flood. The message of truth is refused; and one turns away to his merchandise, another to his farm, another to his cattle, and another to the pleasures of life. While one is absorbed in business, and in the cares of this world, another is taken up with thoughts and plans for marriage, and he has no disposition to heed the warning of truth. He responds to the invitation of God to come, for the feast is now ready, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 3}

***Christ declared, "For as it was in the days that were before the flood, they were eating, and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." He foresaw that men would be engaged in every selfish work, living without fear of God, eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, when the day of final judgment was about to break.*** "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, false-accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." And while they are crying, "Peace and safety," sudden destruction shall come upon them, and they shall not escape. {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 4}

In the days of Noah, the earth was filled with violence. Is it not in a similar condition today? Of the vast population in the world before the flood, only eight persons were saved from the general destruction. In the days of Noah, the mass of mankind would not listen to the warning of the servant of the Lord. In our own day, the majority of men will "turn away their ears from hearing the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." ***In the time of Noah, the people were intensely worldly. They were without the fear of God. God was not in all their thoughts. They had no care whether he approved their course or not. They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, with no thought of their Creator, or of their responsibility to him.*** {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 5}

***There is in itself no sin in eating and drinking, or in marrying and giving in marriage. It was lawful to marry in the time of Noah, and it is lawful to marry now, if that which is lawful is***

**properly treated, and not carried to sinful excess. But in the days of Noah, men married without consulting God, or seeking his guidance and counsel. So it is at the present day; marriage ceremonies are made matters of display, extravagance, and self-indulgence.** But if the contracting parties are agreed in religious belief and practice, and everything is consistent, and the ceremony be conducted without display and extravagance, marriage at this time need not be displeasing to God. "But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 6}

The fact that all the relations of life are of a transitory nature, should have a modifying influence on all we do and say. **In Noah's day it was the inordinate, excessive love of that which in itself was lawful, when properly used, that made marriage sinful before God. There are many who are losing their souls in this age of the world, by becoming absorbed in the thoughts of marriage, and in the marriage relation itself. In the days of Noah the people indulged the appetite and the baser passions, until they were an abhorrence in the sight of the holy God.** They became the slaves of that which was vile, and they made a god of this world. The inhabitants of the earth are doing the same thing today. Eating, drinking, and amusement are the supreme order of the time. Men do not manifest an interest in the things that pertain to their eternal welfare. {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 7}

God has placed men in the world, and it is their privilege to eat, to drink, to trade, to marry, and to be given in marriage; but it is safe to do these things only in the fear of God. We should live in this world with reference to the eternal world. **The great crime in the marriages of the days of Noah, was that the sons of God formed alliances with the daughters of men. Those who professed to acknowledge and revere God, associated with those who were corrupt of heart; and without discrimination, they married whom they would. There are many in this day who have no depth of religious experience, who will do exactly the same things as were done in the days of Noah. They will enter into marriage without careful and prayerful consideration.** Many take upon themselves the sacred vows as thoughtlessly as they would enter into a business transaction; true love is not the motive for the alliance. {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 8}

**The thought of marriage seems to have a bewitching power upon the minds of many of the youth.** Two persons become acquainted; they are infatuated with each other, and their whole attention is absorbed. Reason is blinded, and judgment is overthrown. They will not submit to any advice or control, but insist on having their own way, regardless of consequences. Like some epidemic, or contagion, that must run its course, is the infatuation that possesses them; and there seems to be no such thing as putting a stop to it. Perhaps there are those around them who realize that, should the parties interested be united in marriage, it could only result in life-long unhappiness. But entreaties and exhortations are given in vain. Perhaps, by such a union, the usefulness of one whom God would bless in his service, will be crippled and destroyed; but reasoning and persuasion are alike unheeded. All that can be said by men and women of experience proves ineffectual; it is powerless to change the decision to which their desires have led them. They lose interest in the prayer-meeting, and in everything that pertains to religion. They are wholly infatuated with each other, and the duties of life are neglected, as if they were matters of little concern. Night after night, these young people burn the midnight oil to talk with each other,--in reference to subjects of serious and solemn interest?--O no. Rather of frivolous things, that are of no importance. Satan's angels are keeping watch with those who devote a large share of the night to courting. Could they have their eyes opened, they would see an angel making a record of their words and acts. **The laws of health and modesty are violated. It would be more appropriate to let some of the hours of courtship before marriage run through the married life. But as a general thing, marriage ends all the devotion manifested during the days of courtship. These hours of midnight dissipation, in this age of depravity, frequently lead to the ruin of both parties thus engaged. Satan exults, and God is dishonored when men and women dishonor themselves. The good name of honor is sacrificed under the spell of this infatuation, and the marriage of such persons cannot be solemnized under the approval of God.** They are married because passion moved

them, and when the novelty of the affair is over, they will begin to realize what they have done. In six months after the vows are spoken, their sentiments toward each other have undergone a change. Each has learned in married life more of the character of the companion chosen. Each discovers imperfections that, during the blindness and folly of their former association, were not apparent. ***The promises at the altar do not bind them together. In consequence of hasty marriages, even among the professed people of God, there are separations, divorces, and great confusion in the church.*** {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 9}

***This kind of marrying and giving in marriage is one of Satan's special devices, and he succeeds in his plans almost every time.*** I have the most painful sense of helplessness when parties come to me for counsel upon this subject. I may speak to them the words that God would have me; but they frequently question every point, and plead the wisdom of carrying out their own purposes; and eventually they do so. They seem to have no power to overcome their own wishes and inclinations, and will marry at all hazards. They do not consider the matter carefully and prayerfully, leaving themselves in the hands of God, to be guided and controlled by his Spirit. The fear of God does not seem to be before their eyes. They think they understand the matter fully, without wisdom from God, or counsel from man. When it is too late, they find that they have made a mistake, and have imperiled their happiness in this life and the salvation of their souls. They would not admit that any one knew anything about the matter but themselves, when if counsel had been received, they might have saved themselves years of anxiety and sorrow. But advice is only thrown away on those who are determined to have their own way. ***Passion carries such individuals over every barrier that reason and judgment can interpose.*** {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 10}

***Love is a plant of heavenly origin. It is not unreasonable; it is not blind. It is pure and holy. But the passion of the natural heart is another thing altogether, While pure love will take God into all its plans, and will be in perfect harmony with the Spirit of God, passion will be headstrong, rash, unreasonable, defiant of all restraint, and will make the object of its choice an idol. In all the deportment of one who possesses true love, the grace of God will be shown. Modesty, simplicity, sincerity, morality, and religion will characterize every step toward an alliance in marriage. Those who are thus controlled, will not be absorbed in each other's society, at a loss of interest in the prayer-meeting and the religious service. Their fervor for the truth will not die on account of the neglect of the opportunities and privileges that God has graciously given to them.*** {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 11}

***If men and women are in the habit of praying twice a day before they contemplate marriage, they should pray four times a day when such a step is anticipated. Marriage is something that will influence and affect your life, both in this world, and in the world to come. A sincere Christian will not advance his plans in this direction without the knowledge that God approves his course. He will not want to choose for himself, but will feel that God must choose for him. We are not to please ourselves, for Christ pleased not himself, I would not be understood to mean that any one is to marry one whom he does not love. This would be sin. But fancy and the emotional nature must not be allowed to lead on to ruin. God requires the whole heart, the supreme affections.*** {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 12}

***The majority of the marriages of our time, and the way in which they are conducted, make them one of the signs of the last days. Men and women are so persistent, so headstrong, that God is left out of the question. Religion is laid aside, as if it had no part to act in this solemn and important matter.*** But unless those who profess to believe the truth are sanctified through it, and exalted in thought and character, they are not in as favorable a position before God as the sinner who has never been enlightened in regard to its claims. We are rapidly approaching the close of this world's history. Every moment is of the most solemn importance to the child of God. The questions that should come to every heart are, "Am I a Christian? Is the word of God my study? Is Christ dwelling in my heart by faith? Is the law of God the rule of my life? Do the searching truths I profess to believe, penetrate into the very secret places of my life? Do I carry out its principles in my business life? Is the influence I exert,

having a saving power on those with whom I associate? Unless the truth does have a marked and decided influence upon the character and life of its recipient, it is not doing its office work in the life, as it should be; and those who are not being sanctified through obedience to the truth, must be converted, or they will be lost. {RH, September 25, 1888 par. 13}

## **12. THE UNITED TESTIMONY OF JAMES AND ELLEN G. WHITE: -**

### **Review & Herald, March 24, 1868: -**

#### Dealing With Those Overtaken in the Sin of Adultery

In regard to the case of the injured sister A. G., we would say in reply to the questions of J. H. W., that it is a feature in the cases of most who have been overtaken in sin, as her husband has, that they have no real sense of their villainy. Some, however, do, and are restored to the church; but not till they have merited the confidence of the people of God by unqualified confessions, and a period of sincere repentance. This case presents difficulties not found in some, and we would add only the following: {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 1}

1. In cases of the violation of the seventh commandment, where the guilty party does not manifest true repentance, if the injured party can obtain a divorce without making their own cases and that of their children, if they have them, worse by so doing, they should be free. {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 2}

2. If they would be liable to place themselves and their children in worse condition by a divorce, we know of no scripture that would make the innocent party guilty by remaining. {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 3}

3. Time, and labor, and prayer, and patience, and faith, and a godly life, might work a reform. To live with one who has broken the marriage vows, and is covered all over with the disgrace and shame of guilty love, realizes it not, is an eating canker to the soul; and yet, a divorce is a life-long, heart-felt sore. God pity the innocent party. Marriage should be considered well before contracted. {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 4}

4. Why! oh, why! will men and women who might be respectable, and good, and reach Heaven at last, sell themselves to the Devil so cheap, wound their bosom friends, disgrace their families, bring a reproach upon the cause, and go to hell at last? God have mercy. Why will not those who are overtaken in crime manifest repentance proportionate to the enormity of their crime, and fly to Christ for mercy, and heal, as far as possible, the wounds they have made? {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 5}

5. But, if they will not do as they should, and if the innocent have forfeited the legal right to a divorce, by living with the guilty after his guilt is known, we do not see that sin rests upon the innocent in remaining, and her moral right in departing seems questionable, if her health and life be not greatly endangered in so remaining. {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 6}

6. As in the days of Noah, one of the signs of these times is a passion for injudicious and hasty marriages. Satan is in this. If Paul could remain single, and recommend the same to others, that he and they might be wholly the Lord's, why not those who would be wholly his, and wish to make a sure thing of avoiding the cares, trials, and bitter anguish, so frequent in the experiences of those who choose the married life, remain as he was? And more, if he chose to remain so, and could recommend it to others, eighteen centuries since, would not to remain as he was, be a commendable course for those who are waiting for the coming of the Son of man, unless evidences were unquestionable that they were bettering their condition, and making Heaven more sure by so doing? When so much is at stake, why not be on the sure side every time?

James White,

Ellen G. White. {RH, March 24, 1868 par. 7}



### **13. IS THIS A SALVATION ISSUE? A CONCLUDING THOUGHT.**

1 Corinthians 6:9 & 10:- "***Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived:*** neither fornicators, nor idolaters, ***nor adulterers***, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Galatians 5:19 – 21:- "***Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are [these]; Adultery***, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told [you] in time past, ***that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.***"

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

James 2:8 - 12:- "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. ***For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one [point], he is guilty of all.*** For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."

Revelation 14:12:- "Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Revelation 22:14:- "Blessed [are] they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Gospel Workers, 1915 Edition, p. 315:- "***The only question asked in the judgment will be, "Have they been obedient to My commandments?"***" {GW 315.1}

## APPENDIX: -

### ELLEN G. WHITE'S LETTER 175, 1901 REPRODUCED IN ITS ENTIRETY WITH AN OUTLINE OF THE PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES INVOLVED IN THIS CASE.

As this **private letter** from Sr. White which she wrote to her son James Edson White, has been reproduced in part in 2<sup>nd</sup> Selected Messages, pp. 341 & 342; Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery and Divorce, pp. 225 – 227; and also in Manuscript Releases, Volume 1, pp. 165 & 166. It has been relied upon as “proof” that unscriptural remarriages should not be frowned upon. Therefore, the entire letter shall be reproduced, with James Edson's White original letter written to his mother on October 30, 1901, which prompted his mother's letter.

In this letter by James Edson White, he outlines the personal circumstances of this man, which the reader should be aware of, as this explains why Sr. White would write what she did.

1. This individual's first wife was a controlling woman who tried to control even the smallest details of his life – See Page 1 of letter.
2. He could no longer endure this kind of treatment from his first wife, and he formed an attachment with a woman, with whom he lived with for some time without getting married. [This would have involved a tremendous social stigma to be living together in sin in the late 1800's.] His first wife secured a divorce from him and then she married another man - See Page 1 of letter.
3. This individual then married this woman with whom he had been living in sin with, as she was ruined. [I believe this may be referring to her reputation in society being ruined.] – See Pages 1 & 2 of letter.
4. This individual's brother George, who had been a “renegade” in his earlier life, had become converted, and he and his wife were baptized. – See Page 5 of letter.
5. This individual's father [who appears to have been a busybody for some years] and his brother George, were stirring up the brethren against this individual's family relation. They seemed absolutely determined to break up this second marriage. This individual did not feel that his

brother was a proper guide in this situation, because he himself was living with his third wife. –

See Page 5 of letter.

6. If this individual was to leave his present second wife, her life would be practically ruined. – See Page 6 of letter.
7. This individual in his past had committed fornication with a woman some years previously, with whom he had fathered an illegitimate daughter, whom he was supporting financially. This woman was determined to separate this individual from his present wife, and connect with him again. – See Page 7 of this letter.
8. If this individual was to leave this second wife, her life would be ruined. – See Page 7.
9. This individual wanted to do what was right as far as the Lord was concerned in relation to his present family relations. – See Pages 5 & 9 of letter.

As James Edson White stated, *“It is a singular case and he has placed himself in a peculiar situation.”* – Page 6 of the letter. This individual's tangled personal circumstances [largely of his own making] were unique. Therefore, Sr. White's private letter should **NOT** be used as a precedent regarding present day remarriages, because she was dealing with a unique and tangled web of personal circumstances as she wrote, *“I would gladly do something to help poor Will Wales to make things right, but this can not be done as matters are now situated, without some one being wronged.”* - Page 3 of letter.

Let us follow the following principle concerning what we should build our faith upon concerning Sr. White's Testimonies.

5<sup>th</sup> Testimony, p. 696: - “And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say: Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has done or said or written. ***If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works.***” {5T 696.1}

R. & H., January 26, 1905: - “I said, ***If any of the citizens of Battle Creek wish to know what Mrs. White believes and teaches, let them read her published books.***” {RH, January 26, 1905 par. 19}

OFFICE OF  
**Southern Missionary Society,**  
 (INCORPORATED.)  
 1625-27 Jefferson Street.  
 LONG DISTANCE PHONE, 1787.

J. E. WHITE, President.

B. W. SPIRE, Secretary.

Nashville, Tenn.,

October 30, 1901.

Mrs. E. G. White,  
 Sanitarium, Cal.

Dear Mother:--

Last night I sent the following telegram to you, "Wait upon my letter before answering correspondence about Will Waller". Now, mother, in sending this telegram to you, I did it solely because I had positive information that a number of our people had been writing to you in regard to it, and I felt there were circumstances connected with this case which you should understand, and which I felt sure that his father at least would not present before you in a true and proper light. I do not care to go into the case into long particulars but give you just a few of the main facts in the case. Some of these you are doubtless familiar with but I will try to be free in what I say regarding it.

*Emma Miller*  
 Will Waller was married to ~~Emma~~ a good many years ago. I presume you know what kind of a woman she was. I know myself because I was closely connected with him at the time. She undertook to manage him in every thing he did, and control his actions in even the smaller details of life. In fact at that time he used to sing with a company of singers at that I had at Battle Creek, but if she said he must not go, why then he did not go, that was all there was about it. Of course, this was no excuse for his subsequent course, but it does throw a little light upon some of it.

After enduring this kind of life with his wife for some time, he became acquainted with this woman that he has since married, and they lived together in wrong relations for some time. At last his first wife secured a divorce from him and was married to another man. Will Waller then thought the only proper course there was for him was to marry the woman whose life he



Mother -2-

had ruined and this he did.

Now, of course, he is in a peculiar situation, and the question is, can he better matters by repudiating the present wife with whom he is living. As I have looked over the situation his case seems to me to be an exact parallel with that of Prof. Brownsberger. I can not see any difference in whatever in their relation and position to their family. There is this one difference, however, whether it affects the case or not, and that is the first wife of Will Waffles married another man with whom she is living, but in the case of Prof. Brownsberger, I understand that his wife remains single and has not married again. <

Now, for some thing like five years I have been acquainted with the work that Will Waffles has been trying to do. He came to Vicksburg about five years ago when Brother Palmer and I were there working for the colored people. He was then canvassing for maps and dictionaries and was making a great deal of money and was doing splendid work, but his mind had been turning toward the truth again, and although he had not given up the Sabbath all this time, he had, of course, been working in worldly lines. He there made up his mind that he wanted to be connected with the work of the cause in some way. He came in connection with us and was deeply interested in our work. He gave one or two Bible readings on the boat to colored people and made them very interesting, and at that time he made a humble confession to me for some action that he had taken while he was married to his first wife years before in regard to some position that he had entered into against my connection with some Sabbath School work at Battle Creek. And he said that he saw the wrong of his course and that he wanted that taken out of the way. Of course, that was easily fixed.

Now, it was not a great while after this till he felt that he wanted to enter into the work, but there he met the opposition from his father,

Mother -3-

and you know him, of course, as well as I do; perhaps one of the most meddlesome men that we have in the denomination. He feels perfectly able of stepping in and correcting any thing in the life of any body that comes up while he, himself, has lived such a life that he does not have the utmost confidence from his own brethren. In fact the church where he lived in Ohio has refused to give him a letter from their church so that he can unite with the church in Memphis, and so he is not even a member of the church at Memphis, Tennessee.

Well, Brother Palmer came in contact with him at that time and was very anxious to see him connected with the work, and so he encouraged him to take the canvassing of books and go to one of the West India Islands, and Brother Palmer helped him financially so that he was able to do this. He went to the West India Islands and sold a large number of our books, and so far as I can understand, he did a good work while he was there. He then returned to America and during the time here he has canvassed for our denominational books a part of the time.

It seems that during the last few ~~month~~ months the Lord has been working upon his heart to connect him more closely to the work in his mind and his willingness to do the will of the Lord. He has been canvassing for our denominational works for some time, and a few months ago at the invitation of his father he took his wife and went to Memphis, Tennessee, and began canvassing for our books at that place. While there he became deeply interested in the colored work and began giving them Bible readings <sup>teaching</sup> and working for them, and he was very earnest and energetic in the work.

At the camp-meeting at Franklin, Tennessee, this fall, Brother Palmer and I found him, and he was very earnest and zealous and I had quite a long talk with him there. He said that he wanted and was determined to do just what the Lord would have him to do in his life and his work, and all

Mother ---

that he wanted to know was what was right, and that he was willing to do, and Brother Palmer and I connected with him quite closely for we felt sure that he was a man that could do excellent work in connection with the canvassing interest for our denominational books. We had him go back from the meeting to Nashville, showed him over the office, and made plans with him, and arranged for him to take hold and assist in the canvassing work in this part of the field and to help train workers so that they would be fitted to go in to other parts of the South and take charge of branches of the work there. He was all <sup>su</sup> encouraged in the work and was very happy with the idea that he could be connected with the work in this capacity, and do some thing to help forward the work of present truth.

While here I talked with him about the colored work at Memphis. I called his attention to the colored First Day Adventist church at Memphis where I had done a good deal of work while the boat was at that place on its way to the South. I told him that that church had really accepted the truth almost to every member that was in the church, but when we went away we left the church in the charge of the Tennessee River Conference and they sent a man there who so ignored them and froze them out that nothing came of it. When I was there it was fully understood that it would only take about a week among them to have the whole church to become Adventist, and that the church building which was owned by these people could be turned over to the Seventh Day Adventist people. This could have been accomplished in a short time, but as I say they were frozen out. Their minister had accepted the truth and practically the whole congregation. I told Brother Wailes these circumstances and asked him to hunt up this church and begin work among them. When he returned he did this and became deeply interested in their work, and had begun night schools with them and other work in which they were deeply interested. I have letters from the Elder of the church at Memphis stating



Mother -5-

that Brother Waffles had done an excellent work for the colored people and that he was very sorry that he had been obliged to leave Memphis.

And right in here, seems to me, comes the saddest part of the whole situation. His brother George who had been a <sup>renegade</sup> ~~renegade~~ and one of the worst of characters for years had really become converted and he and his wife ~~was~~ were baptised at the Franklin, ~~KENTUCKY~~ Kentucky, camp-meeting, but when he and their father, the Brother Waffles that you knew at Battle Creek, returned to Memphis they began a line of persecution of Will Waffles in regard to his family relation. From all that I can gather from what I have heard from Will Waffles, and more especially from what Brother Waffles, himself, has written he has talked this matter over with all our leading brethren of the South spreading his views of the case among them and calling for them to decide what the duty of Will Waffles was in the case. He has also stirred it up in the church at Memphis, and just been the regular old busybody that he used to be when he was in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Now, Will Waffles, talked with me very carefully over, the situation and he said that whatever course was shown to him to be right as to the relation that he should occupy toward his present wife, that course he was willing to take and with the help of the Lord he would take it, but he had no confidence in the position that was taken by his father, and as for his brother who was baptised, why he was living with his third wife already and he felt that he was not the proper guide as to what he should do himself. Now, all the people that I talked with in regard to the condition of Will Waffles felt that they was satisfed that the Lord was working in his case, and that his work that he was doing in Memphis was a good work, that the Lord was guiding him in doing it and was prospering and blessing, and all that I talked with said, that under such circumstances they felt that such a case as that should be left between him and his God. But it is evident that his



Mother -6-

father was not satisfied with such a course as that, but at all hazards was determined to rip up the whole situation and settle it in his way.

Now, I felt in regard to the case just as the brethren did, that if the Lord had taken a hold of the case of W. C. Waffles that I ~~fi~~ felt that I should not undertake to give my judgement as to what his duty was. It is a singular case and he has placed himself in a peculiar situation. His first wife is married to another, and he has married a girl whose life is practically ruined if he shall leave her. Now, the question is where his duty lies. He wants to do what is right. Certainly his duty lies along the same lines as the duty of Prof. Brownsberger does, and if a principle is laid down for Will Waffles the same principle will certainly apply to the case of Brother Brownsberger.

Now, understand me, mother, I am not pleading for Will Waffles in his present situation or any thing of the kind. I simply state facts as I see them.

But now it seems so strange to me, mother, that the old man Waffles should be the one to stir up all this difficulty and trouble in regard to his son, and spread it abroad, and keep nagging at it, until finally his son has been obliged to throw up the work that he has undertook at Memphis and has left. Now, I do not know where he has gone. I was in communication with him before that and so was Brother Palmer, but his last letter stated that he was obliged to leave Memphis and by and by he would write to me in regard to his whereabouts, and he simply disappeared so far as I know of the case. Driven away from his work by his father's meddlesome business, and I do not know what the result may be. I felt that the time <sup>came</sup> was <sup>^</sup> when we should throw our arms about him and help him do what he could in connection with the work for it seemed that the Lord was working upon his heart in so marked a manner. And so far as this difficulty of his family relation was concerned, I felt that the Lord, if He was leading him, would teach him what to do in regard to

Mother -7-

that in His own good time.

In regard to the old man Waffles, I have it from those who know in regard to the church at Memphis well, and I think there would be no tears shed by the company there if the old man should leave Memphis. I understand that this is not the only case that he has been meddling with there and I know the man so well that I really believe that it would be impossible for him to go into any place without meddling with every thing that he came in contact with.

There is one chapter in the history of Will Waffles that is perhaps the saddest feature of all, and that is there was a girl that he was illegally intimate with a good many years ago, and she has been determined to get him back to her. He has an illegitimate daughter by this woman, and he has been helping in the support of this daughter. This woman has been determined to separate Will Waffles from his present wife and to herself connect with him. Now, Brother Palmer and I have both felt that the worst thing that could be done would be to have them brought together in any way, but the old man Waffles, so far as I can understand, has been continually nagging upon this point, and I understand that the real thing that compelled Will Waffles to leave Memphis was the fact that old man Waffles had encouraged this woman to leave the North and come down to Memphis where Will Waffles was situated. It has seemed that the Old man is simply crazy to break up the present family relations of his son, and he does not seem to care by whatever way he succeeds in doing it.

Now, I pity Will Waffles very much for he is in a terrible situation. Now, what can be done for such a case? I am sure for myself I do not know. Could he help matters by repudiating this girl which he has married, and whose life is ruined otherwise by him? By doing so would not a worse state of affairs be created than at the present time? I am sure I do not know. I am not capable of giving any advise. I fear for his future if he should do

Mother -8-

should do such a thing as this. Will Wailes is a man of a good deal of mind and I know from the experience that I had with him at the camp-meeting that the Lord was working upon his heart, and that he was tender and wanted to do just what the Lord would have him do. Now, what can we do to try to save and help the man. He is a splendid book man, and can do a good work down here, and if that meddling father of his could <sup>have</sup> ~~not~~ only minded his own business, I feel that the Lord could have settled this matter all right, but the one thing that the old man Wailes does not seem able to do is to attend to his ~~own~~ own business and let the affairs of others alone, and it seems so queer to us that if opposition is to come to his son, that the only source of this opposition would be from his own father, for I have been acquainted with the leading brethren here, and not one of them felt like crowding Will to the wall in any way.

Now, mother I would not have written to you in regard to this at all, and I had decided that I should not write to you at all about it, for I knew that you had so much on your mind, but I have learned that on account of the work that has been done by the old man Wailes, a number of have been writing to you in regard to it, and I felt that there was some particulars connected with the case that you ought to understand fully, and so I have written to you. If you can say any thing to make it appear to the old man Wailes that his business is to keep his mouth shut, and to attend to his own souls salvation and quit his meddling, I wish this could be done for I am sure that it would be a great relief to the church at Memphis and to any other place that he might move.

I remember his connection with the raid that was made on G. H. Bell by the students of the Battle Creek College many years ago. He was sticking his nose into this business on every hand, and he just delighted and reveled in taking a prominent position in saying what ought to be done.

Mother -9--

Well, I will say nothing more in regard to this mother, and perhaps I ought not to have written this, but my only excuse is stated above.

As ever your son,

*J. E. White*

Dictated to Graphophone.

IM.

P. S. -- I will simply add that I wrote a letter to the old man Wailes stating what we had been trying to do for his son, and that I felt that he was going entirely out side of the line of his duty in bringing such a pressure to bear upon him and spreading the case all over among the brethren and in the church so as to cut off any possibility ~~in~~ of any work or of his influence in any way in connection with the cause. He has written me quite voluminous replies, but I see no point in them so far.

As to Will Wailes, himself, I have nothing to urge or suggest as to what he should do. I only feel this, that I have been in difficult places myself in my life, and of course, he is in a terrible position, and if there is any thing possible that I can do to help ~~him~~ <sup>to</sup> save him and make him useful in the Lord's work that I want to do it. I will say that when he came and unburdened himself to me at the camp-meeting, and took his position where he said that he was willing to do what the Lord wanted him to do, and had laid himself and all his family relations and every thing all upon the altar to do what the Lord wanted him to do, I felt like encouraging him with all my heart, and doing every thing that I could to make it possible for him to carry out the resolutions which he had there taken. With this I must ~~leave~~ leave the matter with you. J.E.W.

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-Nov. 20, 1901-2-

27-96

W. -175-01

Elmhaven, Sanitarium, Cal., Nov. 4, 1901.

Dear son Edson,--

> [I have just read your letter concerning Will  
Wales. I regard the matter in the same light that you do, and  
 think it a cruel, wicked thing that the father of Will Wales  
 should take the course that he is taking; <sup>but</sup> I have not dared  
 to answer his letters. If anything can come from me through you  
 to him, > [I would say that his case can not be improved by leaving  
 the present wife. It would not better the case to go to the  
 other woman in the question.

I consider the case of the father one that is singu-  
 lar, and his record is one that he will not be pleased to meet  
 in the day of God. He needs to repent before God of his spirit  
 and his works. The best thing for him to do is to cease to stir  
 up strife. < <sup>etc</sup> But the letters that I might have written to Will  
 Wales, W. C. White said that he would write to him. I have  
 therefore thrown off the matter.

I have decided that I shall leave for New York City  
 to-morrow or next day, and go to the help of Elder Haskell.

Then W. C. left. I felt that I ought to go with him. One

-2-

20-175-01

weeks ago the burden of the Sanitarium rolled off me, and I shall not try to gather it to me again. I shall send this letter in to-day's mail, and to-morrow morning I expect to be on my way to New York City. I shall see you before my return. I can not shake off the impression that the Lord would have me go to New York City just at this time. May the Lord guide and protect me at every step is my prayer.

> [I have not written to Will Wales, but know that if the father would repent before God and do his first works, and cease to consider himself as one that can help his son, he would ask himself the question, "Is my name written there, on the page white and fair"? He might well begin to humbly humble himself before God, and leave Will Wales with God.] > [Let the father and brother make diligent work for themselves. They both need the converting power of God. May the Lord help these poor souls to remove spot and stain from their own characters, and repent of their wrongs, and leave Will Wales with the Lord.

> I am so sorry for the man; for his course is in such a shape that it will not answer to be meddled with, for there are difficulties upon difficulties. I would say that the Lord understands the situation, and if Will Wales will seek him with all his heart, he will be found of him. If he will do his best, God will pardon and receive him.



O, how precious it is to know that we have One who does know and understand, and will help the ones who are most helpless. But the rebuke of God is upon the father and the brother who would drive to destruction and perdition one who stands in the sight of God under no worse condemnation than themselves; and yet they will so use their gifts of speech as to dishearten, discourage, and drive Will Wales to despair.

Will Wales may hope in God and do the best he can to serve God in all humility of mind, casting his helpless soul upon the great Sin-bearer. I have not written a word to either father or son. I would gladly do something to help poor Will Wales to make things right, but this can not be done as matters are now situated, without some ~~ones being wronged~~ being wronged.]<<

I understand perfectly the situation between Will Wales and his first wife, Emma Miller, and I knew how the case would terminate, for Will Wales can not endure to be a slave, his identity lost in a wife who made herself his judge in conscience, in his duty, and in his work generally.<

(Copied from original by J. E. White.)

## ADVENT REVIEW, AND HERALD SABBATH, MARCH 12, 1857 -

### "UNLAWFUL MARRIAGES." - JOSEPH BATES.

#### Unlawful Marriages.

THE following testimony respecting this matter should be carefully examined and weighed by all who may cherish any wish or desire to marry again, while they have a wife or husband living, lest they fall into a snare which may eventually prove their destruction.

"And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery." Mark x, 11, 12.

"Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery." Luke xvi, 18.

The apostle Paul illustrates the above as follows:

"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. 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. vii, 2, 3.

Again he shows what the Lord commands:

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband; and let not the husband put away his wife. 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." 1 Cor. vii, 10, 11, 39.

The Saviour's testimony on this subject, recorded

by Mark and Luke, varies a little from the same recorded by Matthew; viz.:

"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. v, 32.

Again, "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another committeth adultery; and whose marrieth her that is put away doth commit adultery." Chap. xix, 9.

But the apostle Paul's illustration of the whole subject to the Romans, and what he says the Lord commands in his letter to the Corinthians, shows very plainly that he viewed the text in Matt. the same as he did those in Mark and Luke.

All who have *ignorantly* entered into such unlawful covenants of marriage, and have thereby violated the commandments of God, according to the foregoing scripture testimony, will find relief by observing the following rules, viz.:

"And if any of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty; or if his sin which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall he bring his offering, . . . and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin which he hath committed, and it shall be *forgiven him*." Lev. iv, 27, 28, and last clause of verse 35.

Under the gospel the offering is godly sorrow for sin. Says Paul, "Who was before a blasphemer, (violating the third commandment,) and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it *ignorantly* in unbelief." 1 Tim. i, 13.

JOSEPH BATES.

*Battle Creek, March 1st, 1857.*



In the context of the above article, it is interesting to note that in the preceding issue of the Advent Review, and Sabbath Herald, March 5, 1857, under the article entitled "Meetings in Allegan Co., Mich.," Elder Joseph Bates wrote: -

"The church in Otsego have recently been laboring under some discouragements with respect to receiving members who were unwilling to comply with all the requirements of the gospel. See Mark x, 11, 12; Luke xvi, 18; 1 Cor. vii, 10, 11. As this difficulty is now removed we trust they will rise with the message and live in all the light of the gospel, and heed the counsel of the true Witness."