

Book of Hebrews Part 58: 13:4: Marriage and Divorce; The Importance of Women (5/7/2022)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/b77rddf/book-of-hebrews-part-58>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserving the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English words. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Shabbat Shalom everyone,

We are in the final chapter of this epistle to the Hebrews, and last week we ended on verse three. Today we're going to continue in verse four. And ironically enough, we're not going to get through verse four. And technically speaking, we're only going to look at half of verse four because if we looked at the whole thing it would be too much, so we're not going to bite off more than we can chew today.

With that said, let's get started in verse four or at least part of it: **Hebrews 13:4 - Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; ...**

Now the term, as you break it into Greek, adds a little bit of weight. The Greek word for marriage is 'gamas', but the root of that term is gam, and it refers to binding. I love that. When you think of binding something together, as we're going to read about in a moment, where you have a husband and a wife, they were at one point two, but now they're going to be bound together as 'echad'; they're going to be one. This is what we would call covenantal marriage, or this term as used here, 'gamas'. So, the writer opens verse four with 'gamas' or marriage, and then he describes what it is. And he says it's honorable.

Now in Greek – (Τίμιος) – 'Timias' refers to something of extraordinary value or as we have it translated here, "honorable." Or you could use the term, "precious." This is what marriage is. And if you really want to add some weight to this, all you need to do is go to first Peter and look at how Peter uses this term. As you go to chapter one, and I think it begins somewhere about verse 18, Peter says, "We haven't been redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold, and not even from the aimless conduct or traditions of the fathers. No. what we've been redeemed with is the precious -- (Τίμιος – 'Timias') the precious blood of Christ." If you think about this, the very same term is being used to describe what is marriage, 'Timias'. It is precious. It's the very same term that Peter uses to describe the blood of Yeshua.

If that doesn't say something to you, I don't know what will. So right off the bat, the writer has my attention and could not have articulated what marriage is better. It is a weighty matter, it is pure, it is holy, and it is what we would call, "God's design."

To really kick things off today, I want to take you back to Genesis chapter one because this marriage thing, this design by God, began at creation. Again, this is something about marriage that we need to step back, ponder, and think about. Marriage was there at creation.

Genesis 1:27 - So God created man in His own image; in the image of God, He created him; male and female He created them.

And so, you look at this, that 'He' is the one. It doesn't say He created just Adam; it says that He created them. In other words, marriage began at creation.

Continuing in verse 28: **Genesis 1:28** – Then God blessed them, ... Not him, singular, blessed them. And again, I tell you this is explicitly in the context of marriage. We know this because all we've got to do is keep reading. ...and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; ...

Now we know, just because of the rest of the Torah, that this is only speaking about the confines of marriage, between a husband and wife because only they can properly be fruitful and multiply. Certainly, the Lord is not suggesting that through fornication we should go out and multiply. No, this is only in this context of this holy matrimony, this holy union of marriage.

Jumping ahead here for a moment: **Proverbs 18:22** - He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.

Now I juxta positioned this proverb with Genesis 1:27-28 because you need to recognize, at every level, marriage is a God thing. It is a creation of God. It is an institution of God that sanctifies it. It makes it holy. It is pure; it is 'Timias'; it is precious. It is something of incredible value.

Proverbs 19:14 - Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

From men? No, it's from the Lord. Okay. So, it's a God thing. This is a product of God. And if it's a product of God, it is perfect. Think about that for a second. Marriage is perfect. The way God designed it, it is perfect. It doesn't mean that a man and a woman can't corrupt it, but it means that when we abide in it accordingly. According to His perfect plan, we are walking, we are embracing, we are experiencing that perfection. And for me, that is an awesome thought.

Going back to Genesis now. I want to go back to chapter 2:21. We're going to get the story behind what we read in Genesis 1:27-28, and the back story is this: **Genesis 2:21-22** - And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept, and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

This is one of the coolest things, at least for me, that I read in Genesis two. One of the coolest things is that God creates Eve. Adam doesn't make his journey to go and get her and take her in marriage. No, no, no, God creates her, and He brings her to Adam. This is a fascinating aspect to consider as we attempt to understand God's perfect plan of marriage. And of course, this is going to carry over into a completely spiritual dimension where we see Yeshua being the bridegroom. And what does he say? **John 6:44** - "No one can come unto me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..." The Father draws the bride and brings the bride to his son.

Well, this is exactly this picture that we have of Eve: she is being brought to Adam. This is God doing this. Just a very, very cool thing. Continuing in **Genesis 2:23: And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of man."** Or in Hebrew, "She shall be called 'Isha' (Woman), because she was taken out of 'ish' (man)."

Moving to verse 24: **Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.** - *vasar echad* - *בשר אחד*

And so, there is something absolutely supernatural that takes place when God brings Eve to Adam. This is where you get into 'The 'gamas,' or 'The binding.' This is where they are bound together, and they are no longer two, but they are one. Something deeply spiritual happens here. This is an incredible moment, and we get this picture of what marriage really looks like.

Now there's one thing that is said here that I really want to home in on. It's a statement about a man leaving his father and mother, and this is part of understanding marriage. To really help you appreciate what is being conveyed here in the Torah, I want to take you to the Apocrypha. I want to take you to the book of First Esdras. We're going to look at chapter four where it covers this very passage. And in doing so, it's going to give us a little bit of a revelation here and definitely a much better appreciation for what's being communicated. The way this passage talks about marriage is phenomenal.

So let's go to first Esdras 4:14 where he's going to give a litany of rhetorical questions. And this is what we read:

1 Esdras 4:14 - Gentlemen, is not the king great, and are not men many, and is not wine strong? Who is it, then, that rules them, or has the mastery over them? Is it not women? Women gave birth to the king and to every people that rules over sea and land. Moving on to verse 16—From women they came; and women brought up the very men who plant the vineyards from which comes wine. Women make men's clothes; they bring men glory; men cannot exist without women.

And I know there are many women listening right now that are saying, "Preach it, Daniel!" And amen to that. We can't exist without women. Now if there are any men worth their weight in salt out there who are married, you know that we do not function well without our wives. This is no mystery; this is no secret; I have no issue coming out with that. We desperately need our wives. We are a train wreck mess without them, and I can certainly speak for myself on that. Amen.

So, I know my wife is pretty excited with this message, but the key thing that the writer is laying out is something that's very important. And what that is, is that in traditional biblical Judaism, women were looked upon in a very exalted manner. Okay? And that is important when you start to hear rhetoric or commentary against that from Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who would actually come forth and say that she knew of no other such books that were so degrading to women as the Pentateuch and the Torah. And so, as she would read through the Pentateuch, she was aghast by, and keep in mind she's one of the pioneers for the women's liberation movement, but she was mortified by what she would read because she remarked that all this did was degrade women. That is not true at all. If you're reading the Torah and this is what you're walking away with, or you see scripture as a whole as a giant degradation of women, you have not read it properly.

I say this because this is a perfect example of how biblical Judaism operated in the intertestamental period, which is the timeframe of 1 Esdras and the Apocrypha and prior to Yeshua being revealed. And

the Jews of this period were operating within the confines of the spirit of Torah, and they looked very favorably, and with honor, upon women understanding the reality that this is why God created Eve. He designed her so that Adam and Eve could be joined together in this union and in covenantal marriage to complete the man. Such a beautiful statement here.

Moving on to verse 18: **1 Esdras 4:18** - If men gather gold and silver or any other beautiful thing, and then see a woman lovely in appearance and beauty, they let all those things go, and gape at her, and with open mouths stare at her, and all prefer her to gold or silver or any other beautiful thing.

No kidding. Men, all you need to do is go back to the time when you were courting your wives, and you weren't married yet, honestly, the only thing that mattered was her. For those of you who have been married, and honestly, for my marriage, that hasn't gone away. And that is an awesome thing because you think of the book of Proverbs and Proverbs 31 and how our wives, the Proverbs 31 women, are worth more than rubies, are worth more than anything. Of all the things that the world covets and values, nothing compares to the love that a godly husband has for his wife either pre-marriage or even post-marriage. And so, there's a lot of truth to what this guy says in 1 Esdras 4:18.

Moving on to verse 20: **1 Esdras 4:20** - A man leaves his own father, who brought him up, and his own country, and clings to his wife. Now here we get to the goods if you will. The writer is quoting Genesis 2:24, which says: **Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife.** So here we see he brings it to the table. But then he says this: **1 Esdras 4:21** - With his wife, he ends his days, with no thought of his father or his mother or his country.

Now that's an interesting statement. 1 Esdras 4:21 is unpacking this whole notion of what it means for a man to leave his father and his mother and cling to, or to be joined, to his wife. What does that really mean? Well, it means that a man goes to his wife, and he is with his wife to the end of their days. He's not necessarily with his parents or living at home with them. Now, all the man's affection, his focus, his concern, his responsibility, and his commitment are to his wife. This in no way means that a man stops honoring his mother and father. That never stops. Not for a godly man. But now, his attention and responsibilities are towards his wife. This is important. If we're going to read Genesis 2:24, we need to understand that marriage is 'timias', that it is precious, and that it is holy. We look at how God created it in the backstory to appreciate that this is something that needs to come to the table and that it is something you need to have.

Now moving to verse 22, there's more: **1 Esdras 4:22** - Therefore you must realize that women rule over you!... I need to add this because he's not contradicting the authoritative structure that is established in Genesis 3:16. He's really making a notion of what the Apostle Paul himself made in 1 Corinthians. Whether we're talking 1 Corinthians chapter 11, or whether we're talking about 1 Corinthians chapter 7. In chapter 11, Paul talks about man not being independent of woman, nor woman of man. And so, this is what the writer is trying to convey. He's trying to convey what Paul conveyed in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 where Paul says that a man doesn't have authority over his own body, but the woman does. And vice versa, in that a woman doesn't have authority over her own body, but the man does. This is the mindset that he's pointing out.

Continuing with 1 Esdras 4:22: **...Therefore you must realize that women rule over you! "Do you not labor in toil, and bring everything and give it to women?"** Ok? And it's true. That's why a man goes out and labors, to make sure that the woman is provided for. And the woman is to rest upon him and trust in him for this provision.

We're going to drop down to verse 25: **1 Esdras 4:25 - A man loves his wife more than his father or his mother.** And so that's an aspect that's fascinating. A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife. This is a reality. The man moves in with desperate love. Nothing takes precedence over this bride. And again, the spiritual connotation is absolutely beautiful as well. We are the apple of Yeshua's eye as a wife is to be the apple of her husband's eye.

So, as we look at this again in Genesis 2:24: **Genesis 2:24 – Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife.** The Apocrypha helps us out a little bit in understanding what is really going on.

Now, with that being said, I want to share some statistics. We can talk about this beautiful union of marriage, how precious it is, and how its cost is worth far more than the value of anything on the earth, whether silver, gold, rubies or whatever the case may be. When you have something that has been ordained by God that is this precious, rest assured, the enemy is coming. And he is coming hard to destroy it in every way he can.

This is something I think we forget. As believers, we can forget this, even when there's dangerous friction in the home and we are not thinking spiritually but are thinking in the physical aspect at the time. We might be angry, one side might be upset, whatever the case is, we need to circle back, we need to step away, and we need to recognize, wow, the enemy is coming in hard here. He's trying to take out our marriage.

I want to share some statistics with you about how successful the devil has become in this country. I got these statistics from a law firm where they say: **Every 13 seconds, there is one divorce in America.**

- [Family Law Attorneys -Wilkinson and FinkBeiner](#)

Think about that. If I do a 45-minute message, that's like 200 or so divorces. Every 13 seconds, a divorce happens. When you tally that up at the end of the year, you're at almost two and a half million divorces.

[Every 13 seconds there is one divorce in America. 2,419,196 divorces per year-Family Law Attorneys - Wilkinson and FinkBeiner](#)

That's in America alone, think about that. This happens every year. How can we, as a society, sustain these kinds of numbers? Keep in mind, marriage is God's holy design. It is precious in His sight. How can we sustain such diabolical destruction? My answer is you won't. Let's pretend for a moment that we knew of no real other sins that existed, but that this was it, this was the sin. I'm going to tell you this would be enough to take a country down. With these kinds of numbers regarding divorce, this is absolutely terrifying.

Moving to the next statistic. If your parents married others after divorcing, you're 91% more likely to get divorced. That's crazy, 91% more likely to get divorced if your own parents married someone else after divorcing. You can't help but think about Yeshua's statement in the Gospel of Mark chapter 10 where He says, **"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery."** And then He flip-flops it and says, **"And whatever wife divorces her husband and marries another commits adultery."** And so, what we're reading here is if the parents literally go out and get remarried after divorcing, your numbers as children go off the charts regarding your potential of getting a divorce.

Now, I ask you when you see these kinds of numbers, these kinds of statistics, does it matter that a couple gets divorced? Does that have an impact past the immediate circle which would be the husband and wife themselves? It's always horrible. Have you ever heard of a divorce that was just so wonderful and delightful? Not by both parties. Two parties never come to the table with joy and excitement. This is pain and suffering that we were never meant to experience in this life. This is what it is. But it doesn't stop there, it continues to affect others. It continues to affect the children. I don't want to go down this road, but this is where you get into generational curses. If marriage is a blessing, and it is, what is divorce? Divorce is a curse. And curses have implications. They have implications upon the children. Look at the statistics mentioned above. It's frightening. Look at this one mentioned below, and you know you have a problem in America when people are writing books about divorce cycles. Right? This is insane.

[According to Nicolas Wolfinger in "Understanding the Divorce Cycle", the risk of divorce is 50% higher when one spouse comes from a divorced home and 200 percent higher when both partners do.](#)

- [Family Law Attorneys -Wilkinson and FinkBeiner](#)

These numbers are frightening. Fifty percent higher if just one set of the parents from one of the sides who's getting married are divorced. They are fifty percent more likely to divorce. But 200 percent more likely to divorce if a husband and wife come from a divorced family. Two hundred percent more likely to get a divorce! I thought about that, and now I understand why every 13 seconds we have a divorce happening and another marriage is being terminated.

Look at this statistic, this one blows my mind as well.

[Over a 40-year period, 67 percent of first marriages terminate.](#)

- [Family Law Attorneys -Wilkinson and FinkBeiner](#)

Almost 70 percent! In other words, we see an absolute trend right now where people are not finishing the race. We are seeing a trend that tells us people are throwing in the towel, they're giving up, and they're not persevering. And I'm going to tell you, after seeing these statistics, that this is a reflection not just on the condition of this country, but of the condition of the church in this country. And in the church, in this nation, as a whole, whether we're talking Catholicism or Protestantism, the condition of the church has a direct impact on societal measures. One of which is divorce. The church will have an impact on marriages. If the church in this country is strong and is going strong, it will have an impact on the government. It will have an impact on marriages. It will have an impact on the educational system. None of which the church, as a whole, is really having an impact on. Incredible!

Look at this: [Fifteen percent of adult women in the United States are divorced or separated today, compared with less than one percent in 1920.](#)

- [Family Law Attorneys -Wilkinson and FinkBeiner](#)

We're in 15 times worse shape than we were in 1920. Things are not going well in this country; they're getting worse, and worse, and worse.

Look at this next one: [Pornography addiction was cited as a factor in 56 percent of the divorces, according to a recent study. Family Law Attorneys -Wilkinson and FinkBeiner](#)

Over half! Isn't that interesting? You can't tell me pornography is harmless. You have no idea of the spiritual dimension you are entering or the demonic warfare or alteration that happens. You are opening your temple up for demons; you are bringing curses on your marriage. This statistic doesn't lie; pornography will absolutely affect your marriage. And anyone who is honest about it or knows anything about it knows that it will rip your marriage to shreds. That is because when you view pornography, you're giving the authority of your marriage over to demons to come in and to do what they will and to wreak havoc. It's absolutely from the pit of hell. You're engaging in demonic activity. And so, while pornography is absolutely destructive on every level, married or unmarried, know this: in regard to marriages, if even one of the spouses is involved in this, you're in trouble.

And so, pornography is something that is beyond prevalent when you have outrageous numbers according to the polls where a majority of pastors, a good chunk of the pastors in America, view porn on a regular basis. Pastors! What does that mean for the rest of the congregants? How many are actively looking? Maybe they looked at it once, felt a little bit guilty, and then maybe one more time, and then they go to church that week. How many people are doing that? You have access to porn with one click of a mouse.

We are in trouble in this nation, these things will not go unanswered. These things will have dramatic implications on how we function and whether we're blessed or whether we're cursed. I'm not surprised to see this statistic. I'm actually surprised that this statistic isn't higher. I will tell you right now, if you're engaging in porn, you are absolutely 100% failing. You are not in the faith. You are deceived if you are engaging in pornography, and you 100% will not be blessed. It's an epic fail, and it's something that unfortunately is wreaking havoc on men and women, and it leads to all sorts of other sins.

Going on to this next statistic we find this: [If your parents are happily married, your risk of divorce decreases by 14 percent. Family Law Attorneys -Wilkinson and FinkBeiner](#)

So here we find it goes the other way. If you look at these statistics, you cannot argue; there's no argument here. The holy institution of marriage is sacred; it has to be protected, and you have to defend it. Men have to go into their homes and defend the sacred union. And the best way to do that is to get your house in order by praying over your family. By leading them in righteousness. By leading them in devotions. By spending time with them to express the importance of biblical morality. Think about how when a husband is loving his wife at home and the children are watching. If you're a husband and wife bickering and fighting all the time, saying horrible things to one another, tearing each other down, and your kids see that, you're setting your kids up for failure. And God has mercy on that. We know that has no place in the faith or in the home of believers that call upon the name of Yeshua. We are supposed to walk in the joy, the blessing, and the beauty of the Lord. It is gut-wrenching to see everything getting ripped apart. We need revival; we really do!

Now, with that being said, I want to take you to the 19th chapter of Matthew. Here Yeshua is being questioned about divorce. Let's look at this. In chapter 19, verse 3, we read **Matthew 19:3 - The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"**

One thing that you need to understand here is that this was a real question. This was a real debate that existed in the 1st century between the House of Shammai and the House of Hillel. They're asking, "Which side do you fall on Yeshua?" In essence, "Do you agree with Hillel? Or do you agree with Shammai?" So let me take you to the Mishnah where we read this:

Mishna, Gittin 9:10 - The house of Shammai says, "A man should divorce his wife only because he has found grounds for it in unchastity since it is said because he has found in her indecency in anything. (Dt 24:1) And the House of Hillel say "Even if she spoiled his dish since it is said because he is found in her indecency in anything (De 24:1)."

Here we find both the House of Shammai and the House of Hillel both quoting Deuteronomy 24, but they're looking at it from two completely different angles. Shammai says no, you can't divorce your wife except for an actual sexually immoral situation. And in the Hebrew word that's used in Deuteronomy 24 is 'erva' or 'ervat', and it would support Shammai's position. Whereas Hillel talked about a liberal interpretation, which is interesting. On a total side note, Hillel, usually being very conservative, would normally fall in line with a lot of Yeshua's teachings, but not in this matter. In this regard, he has taken the most outrageous liberal approach saying, "Yeah, even if she burns my toast, I have grounds because that's indecent." That's 'erva'. That's taking the term completely out of context, but this is what he's proposing. And so, as we look at this debate in Matthew 19 on whether or not it is lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason, Hillel essentially is saying yes, for any reason you can divorce your wife. If she trips and falls and you don't like it, or if she wears something you don't like, divorce her. So, Yeshua answers: **Matthew 19:4** - **And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' ..."**

What does Yeshua do? He goes back to Genesis. He goes back to creation, at the very beginning, what he designed, and what we see expressed through Adam and Eve. Right? And here Yeshua is going to quote Genesis 2:24: **Matthew 19:5** - **.... and said, 'For this reason, a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?' **Matthew 19:6** - So then, they are no longer two but **one flesh**.** (Basar Echad; emphasis added).

Yeshua is stating: have you not read this? Have you not read this perfect plan that God's designed? Really? It's a perfect love story. Do you not understand God's love story and how He has written it, and how we're literally supposed to experience what He has written; what He has designed? Again, something spiritual happens with covenantal marriage where you are identified as two before God, but then when you come together in that covenant you become 'echad' (one). That's a spiritual mystery as Paul describes it in Ephesians 5. However, listen to what Yeshua says next. He says this: **Matthew 19:6** - **Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.**

So, this union of covenantal marriage is explicitly a thing of God. It is sanctified and holy, and you do not want to meddle with what God has designed. You don't want to go there. This is God's; God has joined them together. That's why I love that passage in that the Lord brought Eve to Adam. He gave Eve to Adam. And every marriage that goes on from there enters into God's holy design, and they acknowledge, accept, and walk out of covenantal marriage. They enter into a covenant with their spouse. That is God.

God is involved in that, and the enemy comes in and blinds you to the reality that God has done this. If you go against it, whether you're one of the spouses complaining, or you're just a friend saying, "Leave the bum, or leave her. Get rid of her," in that context, you are coming against God. In that context, you're making yourself an adversary of God. You're destroying his work. Believe me, don't think for one moment that you can come up against what God has created and attempt to go destroy this creation and walk away unharmed. It's not going to happen. That is not going to happen. You are messing with things you ought not to be messing with.

So, this is a concept that husbands and wives need to take to heart. We need to know that this is the holy ordination of the Lord. I need to tremble in fear before Him. God brought us together. Every married couple out there right now needs to acknowledge that what happened is not simply a product of the flesh. Your covenantal marriage is a product of God. And that puts marriage in a completely different context.

Let's jump to Malachi so I can show you just how important this really is and what God thinks of divorce. Malachi chapter 2, verse 13, we read this: **Malachi 2:13** - *And this is the second thing you do: ...*

I didn't put it up here, but the first thing that Israel did was they committed adultery against God. They were committing adultery against God by going after idols. God has two primary things He's really upset about as recorded in this passage. Number one, they're committing adultery against Him. But then the second thing is: *...You cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and crying; ...*

Now it's not with their tears, these are the tears of the Most High God. He is crushed. He is weeping and crying: *...so He does not regard the offering any more, nor receive it with goodwill from your hands.*

Now the first thing you need to recognize here is when the altar is shedding tears, these are the tears of God. The altar is symbolic; the altar is the very symbol of a relationship. It's the conduit of what keeps man in relationship with God. Those offerings being offered, those animals being slain, those sin offerings being offered, and the blood poured out, this is what keeps us in a relationship. So, it's the very symbol; it's the conduit of a relationship. And when you see that it's being covered by the Lord with tears, you have a problem, a significant problem.

Moving on to verse 14: **Malachi 2:14** - *Yet you say, "For what reason?" ...* In other words, why is the altar shedding tears? *...Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, of whom you have dealt treacherously; yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Malachi 2:15 - But did he not make them one, ...*

Isn't it interesting when the Pharisee comes to Yeshua and asks, "Can I divorce my wife for any reason?" Yeshua takes him back to Genesis and the garden, 'Have you not heard that the two shall become 'Echad,' that they should become one?'" And here, the Lord again is responding to Israel with the exact same phrase that Yeshua used in response to the Pharisee.

Malachi 2:15 - *But did he not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring.*

Isn't that fascinating? Here the Lord is saying the exact same thing that all these statistics tell us today: if you're coming from a divorced home, things are going to be bad. Curses are going to trickle down. There's a trickle-down effect, and the Lord is saying, "I want holy matrimony. I want this sacred holy union to be just that, to be regarded as Holy, and not to be destroyed. Because when you destroy that, something can happen to the offspring." It's being said right here. This is frightening. The curses will go down.

Moving on: **Malachi 2:15** - ... therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth. Be mindful, the Lord is saying, "because there'll be hell to pay." Verse 16: **Malachi 2:16** - For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce...

You can read this in Hebrew, it's just as strong. The word is 'Senay', He 'hates'; God loathes it. If you have a couple engaging in divorce, or if you're somebody encouraging someone to get a divorce when there are not legitimate grounds to do so, such as because of sexual immorality, you again are attempting to destroy that which God has built. You, again, are engaging in an activity that God hates.

You don't see this term thrown around a lot. It's not used loosely in the context of God looking down upon his children. But you do find it elsewhere, like in Psalm 5. God hates the wicked. You can also find it later on in Psalms 7:11, which is another great example. You do not want to end up on this side of the road with something that the Lord despises so greatly knowing that you have chosen to be his villain; you've chosen to be his adversary.

Malachi 2:16 - ...He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence,"

Isn't that interesting? Going to Hebrew, the term there for violence is "Hamas". Where's the first time we see that? In Genesis six where we find it is the very term used in this statement, "that the earth was filled with Hamas." So, as God looks down on the earth, He's in agony because it's filled with violence. This was the reason God came down and destroyed the entire world. It was over this term "Hamas". And when people engage in divorce, we are told here that they cover their garments with that very term. With violence. With 'Hamas', ... "it covers one's garment with violence," says the LORD of Hosts. Therefore, take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.

Now I want to jump back to Ecclesiastes because it talks about garments, and this is interesting: **Ecclesiastes 9:8** - Let your garments always be white. And let your head lack no oil. When you look at this, "Let your garments always be white," this statement is absolutely being made in the context of marriage. You're going to see this as we continue. It doesn't say, "Let your garments be covered in 'Hamas'." It's the opposite. So, look at this in verse nine: **Ecclesiastes 9:9** - Live joyfully with the wife whom you love... We need to let our garments not be covered in 'Hamas', they need to be white.

Starting again: **Ecclesiastes 9:9** - Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all the days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.

I want to draw your attention to the statement, "...the wife whom you love." The expectation that is placed upon righteous men of God is nothing else but for them to love their wives. There is nothing else. There's no option B here. We are called to love our wives.

Look at this statement by Paul; it is so powerful: **Ephesians 5:25** - Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ... Could we possibly have any greater template? Could the bar be set any higher for husbands than that of Yeshua? Absolutely not. He is the perfect template. Look at how he has loved us. Look at how he has loved the church. That's where we as men need to step up and love our wives. With that same compassion, with that understanding, being long-suffering, being merciful, and being caring.

We could go on and on. This is what we are called to do if, in fact, we are godly men. There's no option for the mindset of, "We're married, so I'll put up with her." If that's where you're at in your marriage, you need help. You need to get some counseling from a qualified, God-fearing counselor. You need to start setting up parameters in your home to foster a healthy marriage. The ultimate thing is for both spouses to be pressing into the Lord and get serious about their faith because absent from that you can't build a marriage on any other foundation than Yeshua Himself. It can't be done.

In your relationship, you may go through the motions. You may even be able to control your emotions for a time, but your flesh will get the better of you if you're not built on the rock, and your restraint will be short-lived. Then you'll go right back to your nasty little cycle which ultimately will lead to divorce. So, you need to step back. You need to get yourself right with the Lord. You need to encourage your spouse to do the same and press in on that level because by building upon Yeshua you can achieve exactly what Paul is asking us to do where husbands can step up and love their wives as Christ loved the church. He didn't say this because we couldn't do it. He says it because we can.

The question is, will you? Do you even want to do this? You must desire it, and when you do desire the things of the Lord, it comes easy. You'll never convince me that it is hard for Yeshua to love us, it doesn't. This is the most natural thing, the most embedded thing because God is love. He can't deny Himself. It comes easy to Him to love. It comes very hard for Him when He has to chasten us and discipline us. That is what's difficult for the Lord, but to love is easy. And so, we can absolutely step up and do this.

Look at verse 28: **Ephesians 5:28 - So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.** This is important. What does he mean here when he says, "He who loves his wife loves himself"? In other words, what it's saying is that you're going to reap what you sow. If you truly care about your own well-being, you will act as Yeshua acts toward the church. You will love your spouse, that is what you will do.

Let me put into further context what the Apostle Paul is conveying here. Peter says: **1 Peter 3:7 - Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life...**

Think about that concept. Peter recognizes that a husband and wife are heirs together. There's something deeply spiritual about marriage where you are heirs together in the grace of life. Why is it that Sarah is buried with Abraham? Why is it that Leah is buried with Jacob? Why is it that Rebecca is buried with Isaac? Because these things are deeply spiritual. They are heirs together in the grace of life.

But then it says: **...that your prayers may not be hindered.** Now, talk about putting this into perspective. Paul just said, "Husband's ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself." In other words, if I love my wife, I will be bringing good upon myself. Peter confirms that if I don't love my wife, if I don't fulfill that obligation, woe is me because it can hinder my prayers. I will not have access to the throne room of God because of the way I'm treating my wife. There is nothing else that you could tell me that will scare me more than telling me, "Daniel, you have no access to the throne room," or "Jesus/Yeshua is not going to hear you anymore." There's nothing in this world that could possibly terrify me more. That's the most important thing in my life. Anything that comes against my access to the throne room, whatever sin it is, needs to be destroyed. But in this instance, Peter is warning us that we better be mindful of how God looks at marriage.

God is watching us husbands regarding how we are governing our homes. Whether wisely or foolishly. Whether you have love for your wife, or whether you're treating her like the offscouring of filth. Or if you're mistreating her or dishonoring her. And vice versa. God is watching the wives to see whether they truly are honorable. Whether they only have eyes for their husbands. Or whether they're fixed in some fantasy world where they wish they were married to someone else that could provide more of the world's goods for them. That is absolutely demonic! The Lord is watching us to see how we walk out of this most holy and sanctified thing; something that was ordained in the Garden.

Titus 2:3 gets into the responsibilities of the older women: **Titus 2:3-4 –... the older women, likewise, that they be reverent and behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things-- that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children.**

This is what we are called to do. We're called to love. The husband is called to love the wife, and the wife is called to love the husband. Isn't that the way it's supposed to be in the relationship between Yeshua and the church as expressed in Ephesians five? Absolutely. We love Yeshua because he first loved us. The entire thing is built on love. And when I say love, I don't mean an emotion. I mean commitment, dedication, respect, honor, and reference, which is a beautiful thing.

Yes, there will be times that you'll be overwhelmed in your heart and smitten even with your spouse. But one day, maybe husbands are no longer attracted to their wives, or one day, the wives are just simply not attracted to the husbands anymore. Based on that emotion of how I feel, you might be thinking, "I'm just going to go walking off into the sunset and see what else is available." You will face God for embracing fleshly emotions like that. It will not go unanswered. This is the lie that the enemy spreads, telling us, "It's going to be okay, everyone's getting divorced." And they are according to the studies. Every 13 seconds, someone is divorcing. And what that does is it takes our guard down. It makes us think, "Well, everyone's doing it, and I haven't seen fire rain from heaven, so this is okay." I'm telling you right now, you don't want to play that game. You do not want to play that game with God. It's unholy. Why would you want to do that? Why would you want the throne room of God to be closed to you? That's someone who's not thinking clearly. We need to get our faculties about us. Amen?

I want to take you back to the Apocrypha. We're going to look at the book of Sirach. I want to take you to where it's talking about marriage, and it does it in the most beautiful, poetic way. It's almost captivating. I want to share Sirach 25:1 with you: **Sirach 25:1 - I take pleasure in three things, and they are beautiful in the sight of God and of mortals: agreement among brothers and sisters, ...**

The first thing that the writer says is, "This is absolutely beautiful in the sight of God, and this is what I take pleasure in," it's in the unity of the brotherhood. We also have, "How blessed, and how good it is for brothers to dwell together in unity," Which is out of Psalms 133. Right? And then it goes on and talks about how that activity is like the holy anointing oil running down the 'Kohen Gadol', the 'High Priest', the beard of Aaron. That is beyond, as we would say, precious, honorable, and of great value. And then the second thing he says is: **...friendship among neighbors, ...** That's the second thing. Now look at the third thing. The third thing is **...a wife and a husband who live in harmony.** This is precious in his eyes. This is precious in the sight of God. All these things that he's listing, he recognizes as being precious in the sight of the Lord. Right? And it's beautiful when a husband and a wife are in harmony, which means when they are not in harmony, something is very, very wrong. I'm telling you; you don't have to live in a difficult marriage if you both can step up. If a husband and wife can dedicate themselves to the Lord.

It becomes more difficult, I realize, when one spouse is not trekking with the Lord. That is a different conversation. If both spouses are declaring, "I believe in Jesus, I believe in Yeshua," well now you need to come into this arena. And you need to start listening to the word of the Lord, and you need to simply start taking the counsel of the Lord because it's possible to have the most amazing marriage you have ever dreamed of, but if you settle for anything less, the devil wins. My advice is, don't settle for anything less than a radically awesome marriage. Don't settle. Go for it. Work for it. It is possible. In fact, to the Lord, it's his design. It comes easy. And so, when you both are engaged with the Lord like that, it will come easy. It will be amazing!

Now, continuing in verse two, we're going to go to the polar opposite of this: **Sirach 25:2 - I hate three kinds of people and loathe their manner of life: a pauper who boasts, a rich person who lies, and an old fool who commits adultery.**

Look at this. An old man going through his midlife crisis where a man runs off with a woman about the age of his daughter. Whatever the case may be. Whether that's true or not in a lot of the circumstances is irrelevant. This was a problem even prior to the first century when this kind of sin was happening. And it is prevalent. It happens all the time. And of course, everybody begins to gossip behind the backs of the people who engaged in this because it's scandalous. But understand this: the Lord absolutely despises that activity. The man has been completely blinded by sin. And don't think for a moment that that man can drop to his knees and have any prayer answered unless that prayer is, "Oh, God forgive me. Forgive me for my foolishness of what I've done." Because there's nothing but shame and contempt for a man that abandons his wife in that context and goes out to fornicate. It's diabolical. Especially for a man that takes another man's wife. That is demonic on every level.

Jumping ahead to chapter 26, verse 1: **Sirach 26:1 - Happy is the husband of a good wife; ... I want to show you this harmony: ...the number of his days will be doubled. A loyal wife...** Not a disloyal wife who has wandering eyes and goes wanton with the things of the world but: **...a loyal wife brings joy to her husband, and he will complete his years in shalom.** You can have this. But if you settle for anything less than this, it's on you. This is where marriage needs to be, biblically speaking.

Now look at this: **Sirach 26:3 - A good wife is a great blessing; she will be granted among the blessings of the man who fears the Lord. Whether rich or poor, his heart is content, and at all times his face is cheerful.**

This speaks to me because on a biblical level when marriage is operating in the way God designed it, the things of the world are irrelevant. Because the husband and wife are enraptured with one another because they're enraptured with Yeshua. And when He's the foundation, when you build that marriage on that rock, and you pursue Him, and you pursue each other, there is absolute joy and bliss. This is peace and shalom, and there's contentment.

One of the most frightening things that you can see in a marriage is when one of the spouses is showing discontent. When they are not content with their marriage or with the blessing of their children; when they're not content in their situation, this is where it gets scary. Satan lures these people; he plays them and moves them like puppets on a string.

It is so frightening to see that moment. Those are the moments where you see marriages that you would never have thought possibly would terminate, terminating overnight. The enemy rushes in and absolutely destroys them and guts them from the inside out because they're not content. They're not

content because they're not in a relationship with the Lord, and that's the problem. They're not operating in the way God commanded them. But when you operate in that spirit of contentment, there is shalom. You don't have a wanton heart wanting to go here or there or needing to possess this and that.

So, hopefully, this is a message that hits home to some people. If some of you are struggling, or if you know other couples that are struggling, we need to encourage these people to have a revival in their marriage. We need to encourage them to have a revival in their relationship with the Lord. Again, I tell you this: show me a marriage that's struggling, and I will show you people who are struggling in their relationship with the Lord. It's an absolute guarantee; there is no exception to that rule. We can't operate in love when we're not drawing from the well of love, from Yeshua.

Let me take you to Proverbs 31: **Proverbs 31:10** - Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. **Proverbs 31:11** - The heart of her husband safely trusts her; ... See, this is this beautiful harmony. ...**So, he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.**

This is what an amazing marriage will look like where it doesn't matter if it's a wife, and it would also apply to the husband, where they are doing nothing but good to each other. They're not doing evil, but they're doing good. This is how you bring shalom and joy into your home.

Going back to Sirach: **Sirach 26:13** - A wife's charm delights her husband, and her skill puts flesh on his bones. It gives him life when a wife has joy in the home and brings joy into the home. Do you know what that does to the husband? Do you have any clue? It gives him life. He will feed on that. and he will get stronger and stronger. And then of course that brings more joy.

Sirach 26:14 - A silent wife is a gift from the Lord, and nothing is so precious as her self-discipline. **15** - A modest wife... Again, a modest wife, not having wanton eyes: ...**adds charm to charm, and no scales can weigh the value of her chastity. Like the sun rising in the heights of the Lord, so is the beauty of a good wife in her well-ordered home.**

Absolutely! This is what our homes should look like. And we can't just say, "Well, I just didn't get dealt that hand." No, that means you're settling, and you've given up. We have to strive for that marital, beautiful perfection of what God designed. We can do it. Absolutely! Without question.

Finally, we look at the writer of Hebrews as he says: **Hebrews 13:4** - **Marriage is honorable among all...**

This information that we covered today, this is what an honorable marriage looks like. And we can also look at the polar opposite of that, which we will get into more next week as we finish out this verse which talks about fornication, which talks about adultery, and which is so prevalent.

With that said, we're going to close here today. Again, I just want to personally thank you for joining. Get to work on your marriages. Enter into prayer with your spouse, do devotions, do study and read the Bible together, and do life together. This is what we were called to do.