

God's Garden of Eden No-Divorce & No-Remarriage Law

In Mark 10:3-9 Jesus explains in detail God's *Garden of Eden no-Divorce & no-Remarriage* law of Genesis 2:24. This short review explains why no man may put that law asunder.

God's *no-D & no-R* law had come down to Mr Herbert W. Armstrong through the centuries from the Apostolic church and it was one of the few points on which most of Christendom was agreed. Then in 1974 Mr Armstrong at the behest of his son set a team of scholars the task of finding a way around this law. Of course they found a way and today the Church of Rome is more righteous on this law than the Church of God.

Why can't the ministry and members of the churches of God see that we need to repent of having said Amen to that dreadful sin of 1974, and which was compounded in 1977 when Mr Armstrong married another man's wife.

The scriptures are clear enough for those seeking God's message instead of reading their wishes into God's Word. Leviticus 21:7, 14 forbid priests (ministers) to marry divorced women. Jesus states plainly in Mark 10:10-12 that one may not remarry as long as one's spouse lives and Paul confirms that in 1 Cor 7:39. So what new truth was found by Mr Armstrong's scholars in 1974? We will see that Mr Armstrong's scholars found ancient error rather than new truth.

Let us examine Mark 10:2-12 in detail and remember that Paul's writings may not be interpreted as overriding Jesus' teaching of Mark 10:2-12 as did Mr Armstrong scholars in

1974.

In Mark 10:2 the Pharisees tested Jesus on the issue of divorce with, "*Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?*" In verse 3 Jesus responded with the question, "*What did Moses command you?*" Note that Jesus did not say, "*What did God command you?*" but "*What did Moses command you?*"

In verse 4 the Pharisees answered Jesus with, "*Moses suffered us to write a bill of divorcement and put her away.*" The Pharisees too did not say, "*God suffered us to write...*" but said "*Moses suffered us to write...*".

That all this was Moses' doing and not God's doing is also clear from Jesus' explanation in Mark 10:5: "*For the hardness of your heart he (i.e. Moses) wrote you this precept*".

It seems Moses at the urging of Israel took it upon himself to grant Israel *D & R*. The precept Jesus refers to was given in Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Significantly it was not given in either Exodus or Leviticus or Numbers because these books are devoted to God's direct commands through Moses to Israel. Instead it was given in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy is different. It is Moses' farewell address to Israel. The Jews call Deuteronomy "*Haddebarim*" which means, "*These are the words...*" and with which phrase Deuteronomy opens. Deuteronomy is a mixture of Moses restating God's commands and Moses giving Israel his own instructions.

Compare the difference between Lev 1:1-2 and Deuteronomy 24:1. Lev 1:1-2 plainly is God's instruction through Moses to Israel but Deuteronomy 24:1-4 is Moses' instruction

to Israel.

That is also clear from our Lord's reminding the Pharisees in Mark 10:5 with, "*For the hardness of your heart he wrote you that precept*" – that precept being Moses' *Divorce & Remarriage* licence of Deuteronomy 24:1-4.

After telling the Pharisees in Mark 10:5, that Moses had given Israel *D & R* for the hardness of their heart, Jesus went on to remind them that God had never intended Moses to give Israel *D & R*! Here is how Jesus put it to them in Mark 10:6-9, "*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 no man put asunder*".

There can be no mistaking that Jesus testified to those Pharisees that God had intended from Eden that all marriages are unbreakable covenants for life. No man may put God's marriage covenant asunder. Neither Moses nor Mr Armstrong and his scholars should have done that. Let us remember that God's marriage covenant predates not only the NT Church of God, but the Theocracy of Israel and even Adam and Eve's marriage! Therefore all biblically lawful marriages of all mankind are covenants for life, whether in the Church of God or in a secular registry.

In 1974 the church of God committed a terrible sin by replacing God's *no-Divorce & No-Remarriage law with Moses' D & R* licence. Note how Jesus explained to his

disciples in Mark 10:10-12 that when one puts away one's spouse this leads to adultery against that spouse. It is clear that from God's perspective one remains married to one's spouse whether one puts one's spouse away or not.

What then about the so-called *exception clause* of Mat 19:9, "*Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication...*"? This exception can not undo a lawful and consummated marriage covenant for that is an unbreakable covenant.

The exception clause refers to a momentary option available to a groom after he discovers the bride has falsely represented herself as a virgin. If he decides to consummate the marriage, it then stands as an unbreakable covenant for life but if he refuses to consummate it, no marriage covenant results as explained in Deut 22:13-21.

Note that Moses' Deuteronomy 22:13-21 precept is valid because Jesus endorsed this with the Matthew 19:9 exception clause but that Moses' *D & R licence* of Deut 24:1-4 is invalid because Jesus rejected this in Mark 10:3-9.

If you understand that God's Garden of Eden *no-D & no-R* law remains in force and that the COG needs to repent of our shocking 1974 sin, then visit www.rightly-dividing.net and there read especially papers P3, *The Garden of Eden Marriage Law* and P1, *Laodicea's Lamp!* or request free copies from:- Henk Jens, P.O. Box 121, Belmore, 2192, NSW, Australia