



Malachi 2:10-17
Destroying the Family

10 Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another By profaning the covenant of the fathers?

11 Judah has dealt treacherously, And an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, For Judah has profaned The LORD's holy institution which He loves: He has married the daughter of a foreign god.

12 May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob The man who does this, being awake and aware, Yet who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!

13 And this is the second thing you do: You cover the altar of the LORD with tears, With weeping and crying; So He does not regard the offering anymore, Nor receive it with goodwill from your hands.

14 Yet you say, "For what reason?" Because the LORD has been witness Between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have dealt treacherously; Yet she is your companion And your wife by covenant.

15 But did He not make them one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

16 "For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the LORD of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously."

We have read the people's lack of love to the Lord had caused them to profane his worship and the preaching of his word, and now in these verses we see the further influence of their failure of heart religion in the way it corrupted not only their worship but destroyed their families.

This is always the way of it, the people of the Lord believe that they may forsake the worship of God and ignore his commands in this respect, profaning the Sabbath day, become no more than Formalist and Hypocrite in their worship and become guilty of the Lord's rebuke: ***Therefore the LORD said: "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men, (Is. 29:13)*** and then moving from that they take away from the word of the Lord corrupting his teaching, acting as editors rather than messengers, taking away from it until there is well-nigh nothing of his message left. But they always seem to feel that these changes in their religious obedience and belief will have no effect on their families. They fail to see that religion and family are inextricably connected, and that the family will never stand unless it stands upon the Solid Rock of the Word of God.

We are taught this in ***Psalm 127: 1-2 "Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain.***

2 It is vain for you to rise up early, To sit up late, To eat the bread of sorrows; For so He gives His beloved sleep."

And this is of course the point of Christ's teaching in Luke 6 that if we build a house on any other foundation except love to him and obedience to his commands, then we have built on shifting sand and when storm comes it will fall and be destroyed.

I have seen this happen again and again, people tell you they are planning on getting married and you listen to their plans and quickly figure out: "This household you are building isn't going to stand in the storm of modern life. There is no way you are going to resist the maelstrom of temptations and self-centeredness."

Now in these verses what is particularly rebuked are two sins by which the family is torn apart:

1) Intermarriage

NKJ Deuteronomy 7:1 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you,

2 "and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them.

3 "Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.

4 "For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.

5 "But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire.

6 " For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

7 "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples;

8 "but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

9 "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

10 "and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face.

They were intended to be one holy covenant people, they had one father God and were his and his only by Covenant. They were married to him, and to go after other Gods was to be guilty of spiritual adultery, there is an inexorable connection between marriage and the believers union to God

Exodus 19:5-6

5 'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.

6 *'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'* These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

This sin had been the undoing of Israel again and again: it was ultimately the cause of the rending of the kingdom

How had the Covenant in the Father, well that from them would come the seed, but also the great oath taken by the people at Shechem

Joshua 23:11 "Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God.

12 "Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations -- these that remain among you -- and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you,

13 "know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

Joshua 24:14 " Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD!

15 "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

16 So the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods;

17 "for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed.

18 "And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, including the Amorites who dwelt in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God."

19 But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

20 "If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done you good."

21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD!"

22 So Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD for yourselves, to serve Him." And they said, "We are witnesses!"

23 "Now therefore," he said, "put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to the LORD God of Israel."

24 And the people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey!"

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

26 Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.

NKJ 1 Kings 11:1 But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites --

2 from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love.

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.

4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David.

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

6 Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as did his father David.

7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.

8 And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

Now what is the application of this to us? As often as you warn believers of the spiritual destruction that comes from going after unbelievers the seldom seem to listen

2 Cor. 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."

18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty." {Spurgeon Quote}

2) Divorce

The Covenant bonds with God, had to be a heart bond, it had to be based on Love and faithfulness. Marriage was the paradigm used to show Christ's relationship to the Church in Eph. 5. They also were destroying the covenant bonds by divorcing the wife of their youth, they come to worship the Lord, but the altar is covered in tears The tears of the wives of their youth. {TV Moore quote}

We should pay attention when the Lord says he *hates* something, and it is clear that he hates There are very few things that the Lord actively hates... They have dealt treacherously with them

Second, the severity of God's judgment is due to his intense hatred of divorce. The people had argued from the mistaken theological position that, since God is the Father of all Israel, they are safe from his judgment. ***Malachi replies that God's true children have the Spirit of God, which is manifested in faithfulness.*** [Two Tables of the Law] The fruit of the Spirit of God is love and fidelity. The central verse (v. 15), which is also one of the most difficult verses in the entire book, gives the theological ground for marital fidelity:

- (1) God has made "man" as one, namely male and female ([Gen. 2:24](#));
- (2) man is "one," being both flesh and spirit;
- (3) God's purpose is to raise up godly children through holy matrimony,

which is characterized by a union of flesh with flesh and spirit with spirit. Therefore, not all may claim that God is their Father. The prophet has thus introduced the importance of the “spirituality” of God and of those who worship him. Since God has made man to have a spirit, man can only relate to God in the spirit. Only those who have the Spirit are his children, and must respond by guarding their spirit. Covenant fidelity has a spiritual dimension that is expressed by marital fidelity.

What do we learn from this Covenant and Family are indispensable and without heart religion we cannot serve the Lord. God intends us to raise up a holy seed, the next generation of worshipers, but sin and faithlessness as expressed in intermarriage and divorce make this impossible and become a cause of cursings, not blessings. And if the church covers herself in this, it will be like that picture from the last chapter of sprinkling dung over our faces.

Christ has remained faithful to us in the bonds of the Covenant: 2 Titus 2:13 If we are **faithless**, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.