

# Wedding Day Witness

Malachi 2:10-16

The Wedding Covenant Part 1

Forrest McPhail

## *Introduction:*

All who read the Old Testament see that God's chosen people Israel failed to keep their covenant with God throughout all of their history. In the book of Malachi God calls His people Israel to repent through the prophet Malachi. All of the people of the earth that have not yet repented of their sins and come to Jesus Christ for salvation are just like Israel—unfaithful to God and unable to keep His law.

### **Read Malachi 2:10**

In the book of Malachi, the prophet is used of God to rebuke the people of Israel for their sins which have caused God's judgment to come upon them—hypocritical worship, failure of the priests to teach God's law to the people, idolatry, oppression of the poor and weak, and failure to give offerings to God. One evil that God rebukes them for is their failure to keep their marriage covenant.

### **Read Malachi 2:11-16**

There are many clear teachings about God's will concerning marriage communicated in this passage. There is no other passage in the Bible that explains so much about marriage except for Genesis 2-3. We will study what Malachi is teaching about marriage in these verses.

## **1. Do not marry unbelievers.**

### **Read Malachi 2:11-12**

- Just as those Israelites who believed in God were not allowed to marry those who did not believe in the Creator God, so also Christians now must not marry unbelievers. Those who are yet unmarried must take this instruction from God very seriously and stay away from any relationships with an unbeliever which may lead to marriage.

### **Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-16a**

- Marriage to an unbeliever is a powerful tool of the Devil to weaken and destroy and believer's faith. This passage teaches us that close relationships between believers and unbelievers are not right because the two are incompatible. This is illustrated by two different kinds of farm animals trying to pull a cart together. Everyone knows that a cow and a water buffalo cannot be yoked together to accomplish anything profitable. The history of Israel's disobedience about this shows how unbelieving spouses often pull believers away from God.

- This does NOT mean that those who repent and believe on Christ when already married should seek a divorce from their spouse that does not yet believe. A Christian must not seek to divorce an unbeliever but instead must seek to live a life of Christian light before them and pray for them to be saved.

**Read 1 Peter 3:1-7**

- Though this passage is specifically speaking to the wife of an unbelieving husband, the principle of seeking to be godly and lead your unsaved spouse to the Lord instead of seeking a divorce is the same. Wives show their Christian faith by loving and submitting to their husbands and husbands are to show their Christian faith by loving and understanding their wives and leading them by example.

**2. The LORD is a witness to the marriage covenant.**

**Read Malachi 2:13-14**

- We are responsible to God for how we keep our marriage covenant. When we get married, God is witness to the covenant that we are making to one another. Whether we believe in God or not, He is witness to our marriage covenant and will hold us accountable at the Judgment Day. He will judge those who are unfaithful to their spouses because to be unfaithful to our marriage covenant is to be unfaithful to God.
- God does not accept worship from those who despise the marriage covenant. One of the greatest signs that a person is a true believer in Jesus Christ is that he/she takes seriously God's commands regarding marriage. A believer in Jesus who is sinning against his/her spouse cannot have a close relationship with God and will be chastened.

**Read 1 Peter 3:7**

- This verse is addressing Christian husbands who are not loving their wives. This verse gives a warning: if you are sinning against your spouse God will not hear your prayers. This is a very serious warning. We cannot fool ourselves into thinking that we are good Christians if we are sinning against our spouse. It does not matter whether our husband/wife is a Christian or not. We MUST love and honor our spouse. If not, we cannot fool ourselves into thinking we have a close relationship with God. If we desire our prayers to be answered, we must guard our marriage covenant and love our spouse. This principle is true of both husbands and wives.