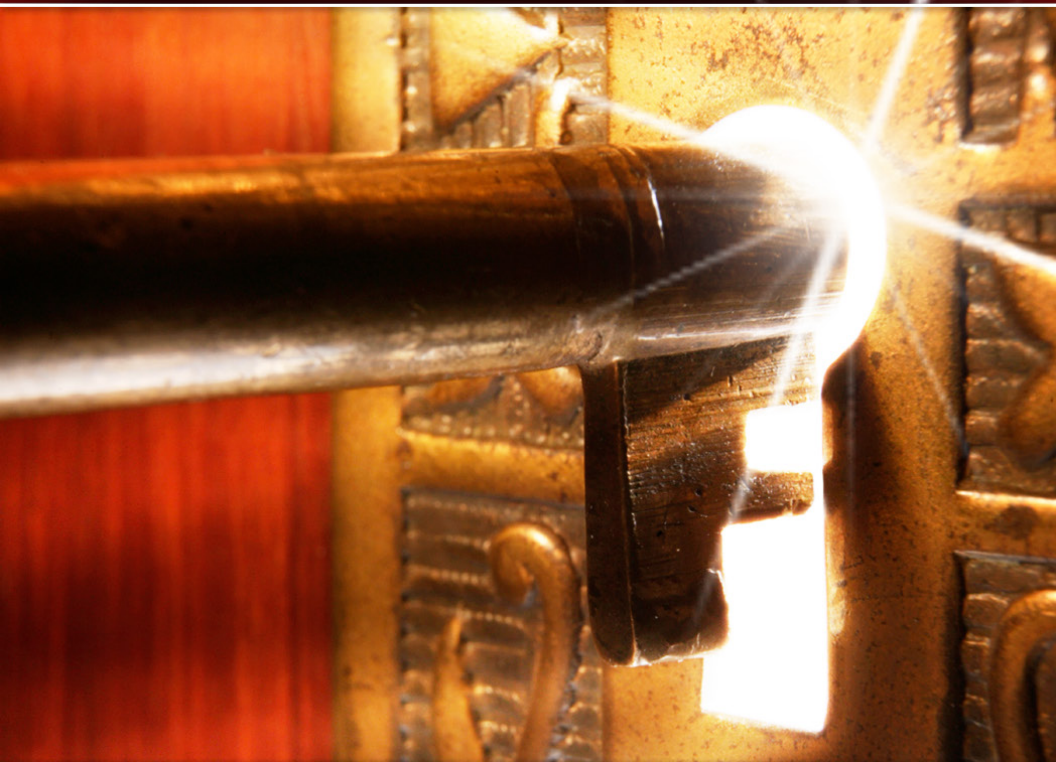

RESTORE THE LOCK IN WEDLOCK



A YRM PUBLICATION



This study will show the permanence of marriage as Yahweh designed it, with the hope of breaking today's cycle of broken homes. Our purpose is not to vilify those who are divorced, but to uphold the sanctity of marriage. Yahweh Himself ordained marriage and family as the fundamental social institution.

While some consider it a secular institution, Scripture teaches that marriage is a sacred union that Yahweh himself ordained at the very creation of man and woman. This fundamental institution has served society well for thousands of years.

But since the 1970s marriage has come under attack like nothing in history. As it functions today, the family institution is weak and no longer provides stability and a sense of well-being to millions of children. The undermining of the moral framework sustaining marriage and family has teamed up with an assault on Biblical faith, leading to even shakier marital unions and assisting in their unprecedented failure.

The root problem is that human wants and priorities have usurped Biblical standards in a majority of homes. True fear and respect of Yahweh are rare. An honest and zealous pursuit of His will is even more rare.

A growing number of disillusioned ministers are refusing to perform weddings out of sheer frustration with the brevity of today's marriage unions. "I marry them one week and the next week they want a divorce," a pastor lamented.

While the phrase "until death do you part" and Yahshua's words, "let no man put asunder" are repeated in wedding after wedding, the reality is that these words are considered mostly ritualistic and have little holding power today when marriage-threatening problems arise between couples. Rather than remembering their solemn vows and working through the difficulty, couples at risk are much more willing to follow the advice of a marriage counselor suggesting they just call it quits.

One major cause of broken unions is that many modern marriages are preceded by cohabitation, which statistics reveal increases the likelihood of a future breakup by 50 percent. Getting married today

is more like going steady: if it isn't working, give it up and try again with someone else.

The stigma surrounding divorce is mostly gone. A century ago only 7 percent of Americans were divorced; today a staggering 60 percent of marriages fail, triple the rate of 1960. Half of all weddings now involve the remarriage of at least one spouse.

According to 2000 census data, since 1950 the rate of married couples in households has declined by nearly 30 percent. Married couples now make up only half of all households. Meanwhile, the number of unmarried partners living together has risen from 523,000 in 1970 to approximately 4.9 million in 2000.

Suffer the Children



The epidemic of fractured families is a strong contributing factor to the failure of our society to produce well-adjusted and balanced children. That consequence, more than any other, will impact future of society itself. The children of broken families suffer the most, thrown into an emotional free-fall when dad and mom call it quits. Consider for a moment the cost paid by these innocents:

Nearly one-third of all children today are born out of wedlock, and more than half of U.S. children will spend all or part of their childhood

in a broken family. The number of children living with mothers who have never married increased to 36 percent in 1996, up from 7 percent in 1970, according to the Center for Law and Social Policy. A child

raised by a single mother is seven times more likely to live in poverty than a child raised by both biological parents. Over 1 million children each year experience their parents' divorce; a total of 15.8 million children are now living with a single parent. The consequences are staggering:

- 25% of those children will be high school drop-outs.
- 40% need psychological help.
- 65% never build a good post-divorce relationship with their fathers.
- 30% never build a good post-divorce relationship with their mothers.

Compared to those who have grown up with both parents in the home, adult children of divorce are 60 percent more likely to have problems in their own marriage. This last fact is the cycle that must be broken if there is going to be any hope for the family and society itself.

They Shall Become One

The “lock” is missing in wedlock and it is time to put it back in. Almighty Yahweh takes vows very seriously, and the vow joining husband and wife in marriage lies at the very core of the family as Yahweh designed it. To violate this contract is called in Scripture a sin against Yahweh the Creator Himself.

Ultimate success in marriage hinges on the proper attitude and understanding that couples share going into it. Few couples are given marriage counseling before they go to the altar. If both spouses fail to grasp the gravity of their commitment



and don't enter it with full resolve to make it work – whatever may come – then the probability is high that their marriage will eventually implode from the inevitable strains that test every marriage (Matt. 12:25).

From the beginning Yahweh created marriage between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:22). This union of male and female is the only institution that Yahweh's Word allows. At the creation of Adam and Eve the concept of one flesh was established. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh..." (Gen. 2:23).

From the beginning Yahweh made one man and one woman who complement each other perfectly in marriage. From the start Yahweh excluded same-sex unions. Activists pushing for homosexual marriage seek to revolutionize our entire culture by breaking the backbone of society itself – the traditional man-woman family. The family should be where moral values are taught and engendered, but if the family can be redefined to include same-sex couples, then its values can be redefined and altered as well. Moral restraints lose their impact when the forbidden is being openly practiced daily.

When two people commit to marriage they are no longer two but one. The greatest unifying force between a husband and wife is in their faith. Since Yahweh commands loyalty to Him above all (Acts 5:29), both people considering marriage are to be believers. If after marriage Yahweh calls only one spouse into His Truth then the believing mate should place Yahweh first while secondarily striving to please his or her spouse, 1Corinthians 7:12-14.

All Unions Need a Leader

An important key for a successful marriage is the understanding of the spousal roles: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Messiah; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of the Messiah is Elohim" (1Cor. 11:3). The same hierarchy that exists between Father and Son also exists between husband and wife. From the beginning Yahweh established this relationship when He told Eve: "...and your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Gen. 3:16). According to the **KJV Old Testament Hebrew Lexicon** the word "rule" found in Genesis 3:16 implies to

“have dominion or to reign over.” The Apostle Paul also confirms this relationship, “Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Master. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Messiah is the head of the assembly” (Eph. 5:22).

The husband’s authority is no license to abuse or exploit his wife. Because marriage between a man and a woman mirrors the unique relationship between Yahshua and the assembly, it should be apparent that Yahweh wants the relationship based on mutual love and honor.

Love Makes a Strong Union

The Apostle Paul compares Yahshua’s love for the assembly to the husband’s love for his wife. “Husbands love your wives, even as Messiah loved the assembly, and gave himself for it” (Eph. 5:25). Yahshua through his death and atonement demonstrated the greatest love known to man for the



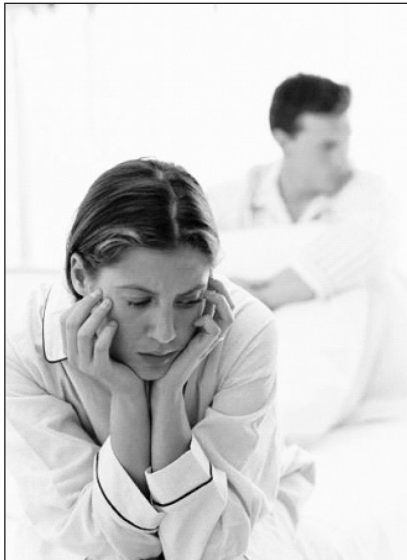
assembly (John 15:13). This is the same love that a husband is to have for his wife. As the Messiah died and gave all for the assembly, the husband should be willing to do the same for his wife. Once again this type of supernal love precludes the sin of spousal abuse. Yahweh’s Word gives no justification for abusing one’s spouse. Yahshua never abused or mistreated the assembly but cherished and valued it. In like manner, the husband should cherish and love his wife.

Paul in Titus 2:4 commands older women to teach the younger women to “love their husbands.” Love in a marriage cannot be a one-way street, but must be shared by both spouses. As Yahshua loved the assembly, the assembly loved Yahshua. A marriage will not be blessed with strength and happiness if sincere love is not at the center for both spouses.

Yahweh's Standards Ignored

Today's high divorce rates are a result in large part to a rejection of Yahweh's Word as the ultimate, moral authority. Yahweh from the beginning established marriage between one man and one woman as a lifelong union. When Yahweh created the first man and first woman he gave no provision for divorce or remarriage.

One common error among professed Bible believers is thinking that Yahweh built divorce into Old Testament regulations. There is no Old Testament statute in which Yahweh provided for divorce between two individuals lawfully united by vow.



Yahweh addresses the divorce issue in Deuteronomy 24:1-4: “When a man has taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he has 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. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and gives it in her hand, and sends her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before Yahweh: and you shall not cause the land to sin, which Yahweh your Elohim gives you for an inheritance.”

In this passage Yahweh is speaking about a specific circumstance. Yahweh is addressing the condition where a spouse marries another after she has been sent out or divorced by her first husband because of uncleanness. Again, it is important to understand that Yahweh is not giving justification for divorce, but is focusing on a specific situation that He tolerated because of the hardness of man's heart.

The statement "...she had been defiled" in verse 4 shows that even in the Old Testament divorce and remarriage was an adulteration, even after the second spouse had died. Notice that it occurred with the second marriage while her first husband was yet alive. This understanding is no different from what Yahshua and Paul taught in the New Testament.

The **Commentary on the Torah** discusses Deuteronomy 24:1: "This law (vv. 1-4) has been taken as the biblical law of divorce, but it is not. It is the law governing a specific instance in which a couple might want to return to each other after they were divorced and she was remarried and then was divorced again or widowed. Divorce law in general has been derived in part from this case because of the curious fact that there is no law in the Torah telling how to get married and no law telling how to get divorced" (Richard Elliott Friedman, p. 639).

If Yahweh did command divorce in the Old Testament, why then did Yahweh command in Deuteronomy 22:19, 29 that if a husband had dishonored his wife in some fashion that he was not to "put her away all his days"? The examples in Deuteronomy 22 and 24 show without question that divorce and remarriage was not Yahweh's will in the Old Testament. Malachi 2:16 reads, "For Yahweh, the Elohim of Israel, says that he hates putting away..." A unique situation is in Ezra 10, where the prophet tells Judah to straighten out their sin of marrying strange wives by separating from them, which they did.

Moses' Toleration of the People's Hard Hearts

Most who advocate Yahweh's allowance for divorce will say that Moses had the authority to grant divorce in the Old Testament. From the New Testament it is evident that while Moses tolerated or allowed divorce, he never gave commandment from Yahweh for or against divorce.

"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 heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:7-8).

According to Yahshua, Moses only "suffered" divorce because

of the hardness of man's heart. This word "suffered" is far from a command in the Greek. It is from the word *epitrepo*, which according to the **KJV New Testament Greek Lexicon** means, "to permit or allow." Scholars speculate that the reason for Moses' toleration or allowance for divorce in the Old Testament was partly to protect the safety of wives. To this point Matthew Henry adds, "[Messiah] rectifies their mistake concerning the law of Moses; they called it a command, [Messiah] called it but permission, a toleration. [Messiah] tells them there was a reason for this toleration, not at all to their credit. If they had not been allowed to put away their wives, when they had conceived a dislike of them, they would have used them cruelly, would have beaten and abused them, and perhaps have murdered them" (**Matthew Henry Study Bible**, study note on Matthew 19:8).

The New Testament 'Exception Clause'

Those who believe that the new Testament allows divorce and remarriage will point to Matthew 5:32: "But I say unto you, that whoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced commits adultery." Here some will point to the word "fornication" and maintain that the grounds for divorce is adultery.

The word fornication is from the Greek word *porneia*, and is defined by the **New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible** as, "harlotry, adultery, incest, idolatry, or fornication." From this definition the word *porneia* has numerous meanings. Since this is the case, this word must be interpreted in accordance with the overall context of the passage.

One point of interest for those who believe that the word *porneia* implies adultery instead of fornication is the fact that Yahshua used a different word in this same verse to denote adultery: "... whosoever shall marry her that is divorced commits adultery." The word "adultery" in this passage is from the Greek word *moichao*, which according to the **New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible** means only "adultery." Question: If Yahshua meant adultery in the place of fornication in Matthew 5:32 (KJV), why did He not use the Greek word *moichao* or its Hebrew equivalent?

Why did Yahshua use two different words to express the same thing? This passage clearly shows that he was expressing two different acts – fornication, which applies to the premarital state of engagement – and adultery, respectively.

The Significance of Engagement



To understand what Yahshua meant by the use of the word *porneia* in Matthew 5:32, a grasp of scriptural engagement is necessary. Scriptural engagement was seen much differently than it is today. In the Bible betrothal was

understood as a binding relationship, the entering into of marriage. **Nave's Topical Bible** under "Marriage" says, "Betrothal, a quasi-marriage, Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:27."

The **KJV Study Bible** verifies this, "There was no sexual relations during a Jewish betrothal period, but it was a much more binding relationship than a modern engagement and could be broken only by divorce (v. 19). In Deut. 22:24 a betrothed woman is called a 'wife,' though the preceding verse speaks of her as being 'betrothed unto a husband'" (study note at Matthew 1:18).

Through the example of Joseph, Yahshua's use of "fornication" in Matthew 5:32 is now clear. Joseph's contemplating divorcing Mary is the only account of a divorce in the New Testament, which occurred while Joseph and Mary were engaged but the marriage was yet to be finalized, Matthew 1:19.

Let Not Man Put Asunder

If any doubt existed in the minds of the Pharisees who approached Yahshua in Matthew 19, Yahshua emphatically put those doubts to rest by his statement: "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore Elohim has joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

Yahshua categorically states in this passage that once two people have made the commitment and consummated a marriage that they are no longer two, but one. He also verifies that once this happens that no man can separate that which Yahweh has joined.

Just as it is today, Yahshua's teaching was hard for many to accept. This is obvious in His statement in verse 11: "...All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given." Yahshua's teachings on divorce and remarriage were not for the lukewarm, but for those sincerely seeking Yahweh and His will in their lives. Yahshua was reaffirming what his Father had established from the beginning: For those who would point to the Old Testament as justification to break wedding vows, Yahshua explained, "Moses...suffered you to put away your wives...but from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:8). At the beginning in Genesis it is clear that Yahweh made marriage between one man and one woman for life.

Till Death Do Us Part

In accordance with what Yahshua said in Matthew 19, the Apostle Paul reiterates the message in Romans 7:2-3: "For the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long that he lives; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, 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 is married to another man." The concept that marriage is a lifelong union might seem strange in a day of runaway divorce rates. Apathetic attitudes of marriage notwithstanding, it is clear from Paul's statement that the permanence of marriage still stands.

Paul, under the inspiration of Yahshua the Messiah, taught that marriage was a lifelong institution that was broken or dissolved only by the physical death of a spouse. Paul said that if a spouse remarried while the other spouse was yet alive that the spouse who remarried would commit adultery. This is the same thing that Yahshua taught during his ministry and the same doctrine that Yahshua was referring to when he said that not all men could receive this saying.

Not Under Bondage

The last passage to consider is 1Corinthians 7:15: “But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases...” Those who maintain that Yahshua and Paul permitted divorce in the New Testament claim that the word “bondage” in the above passage suggests that the believing mate is no longer obligated to his or her first spouse and is therefore free to remarry.

The first contradiction to this interpretation is found in verses 10-11: “And unto the married I command, yet not I, but Yahweh, let not the wife depart from her husband: But if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.” According to Yahweh’s command, not Paul’s, if a husband and wife separated they were either to stay unmarried or be reconciled. Notice that divorce was not an option.

The other point to consider in this passage is the meaning of the word “bondage.” The word bondage is from the Greek word *douloo*, which according to the **KJV New testament Greek Lexicon** means, “to make a slave of or to reduce to bondage.” The “bondage” that this word is referring to means the marital responsibilities that one is subservient to that Paul speaks of in verses 3-6. This word, however, is not speaking of the dissolving of the marital vow or covenant.

Yahweh Judges on the Basis of Understanding

We must follow every word that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh, and Yahweh makes it clear that He hates divorce. Yahshua never taught divorce. Rather, He raised the bar and restored marriage to the position it was originally meant to have before the hardness of man’s heart took over. Yahshua said, “What Yahweh has joined together, let no man put asunder.” How then can man separate what Yahweh has joined?

When we consider Matthew 5:32, addressing those that are engaged rather than married, the pieces of the puzzle fit perfectly. This understanding ties together all the loose ends that other arguments leave hanging. The only example in the New Testament of a man considering divorce was Joseph, who was not married but engaged. Romans 7 says that a marriage covenant can only be terminated upon

death. Man cannot terminate a marriage covenant through divorce.

What does this mean, then, for those who were divorced and remarried before coming into the knowledge of the Truth? Does this place them in a constant state of adultery or sin? While there is no passage in Scripture where Yahweh says specifically that divorce and remarriage in ignorance before baptism is forgiven and washed away, what the Bible does say is that Yahweh winks at our ignorance, but commands that we repent after coming to the knowledge of His truth, Acts 17:30.

It is our understanding that Yahweh will acknowledge repentance that takes place at baptism, and consider the present situation. If this situation could not be forgiven then He would never call the divorced person into His Truth in the first place. His grace and mercy extend to all who repent of past mistakes and who now go on to live for Him.

Yahweh's Restoration Ministry acknowledges Yahweh's standards as they are. We don't accept excuses for an individual's personal situation. Once immersed into Yahshua's Name, couples must not seek divorce or remarriage, having a much better understanding of the marital vow and how inviolate Yahweh considers it.

Marriage is a sacred covenant. Yahweh's marriage laws are designed to form a stable family environment that will produce happy, well-adjusted children reared by both a loving father and mother. Children must be taught the permanence of



marriage and toward that end to choose their future mates wisely from among believers, 1Corinthians 7:39.

The cycle of broken homes must end, and it starts with knowing your future spouse very well before you recite your vows, realizing that marriage is for life.

Contact Information:

Yahweh's Restoration Ministry

PO Box 463

Holts Summit, MO 65043

Phone: 573-896-1000

Online Addresses

Home page: **www.yrm.org**

Television Program:

www.discoverthetruth.tv

Restoration Times Magazine:

www.restorationtimes.org

E-mail: mail@yrm.org

Courtesy of:



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Woe unto them that call evil good, and
and good evil; that put darkness
for light, and light for darkness;
that put bitter for sweet, and
sweet for bitter! *Isaiah 5:20*



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