

DEALING WITH MIXED MARRIAGES



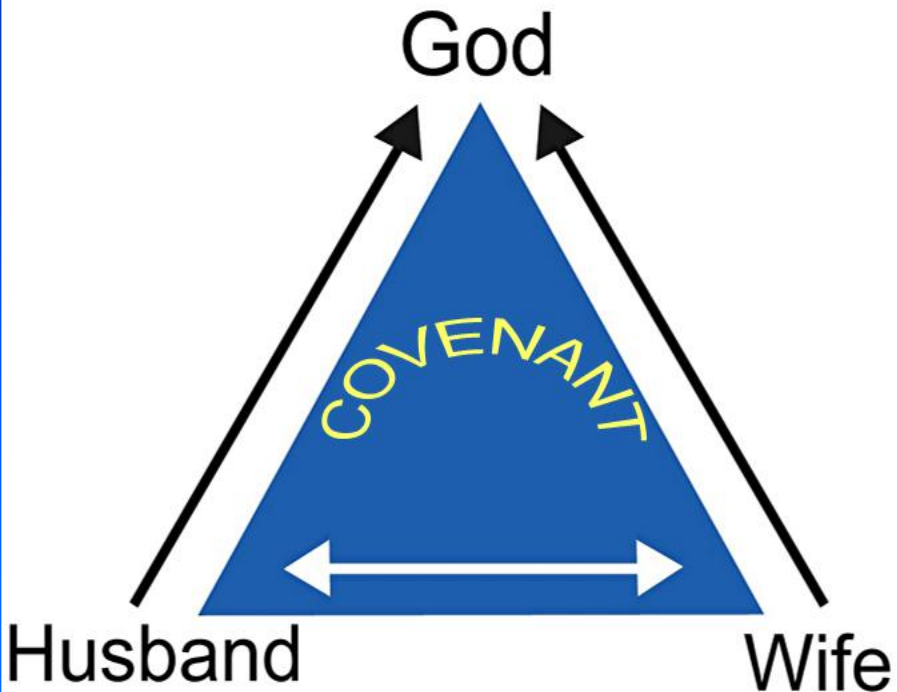
- Malachi shows us that some Jewish men divorced their Jewish wives to marry foreign women
- Malachi 2:11-16
- Works in conjunction with Ezra 10
- *Yashav* = cause to dwell
- *Yatsah* = to send away
- Doesn't seem to be "divorce" in its classic sense

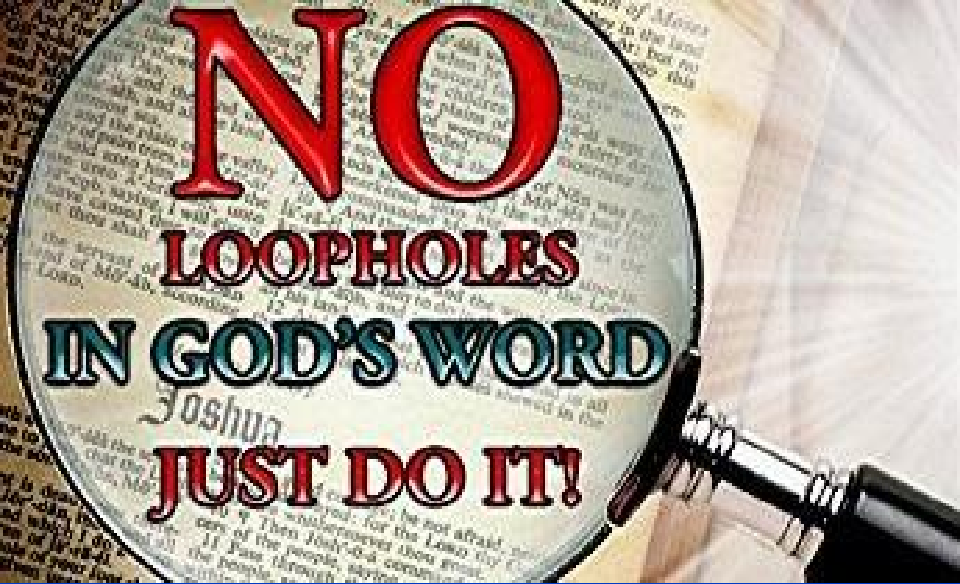




THAT FOREIGN WOMAN !!

- Some Jewish men brought in a foreign woman, and broke faith with his wife but kept both
- Some legally divorced their Jewish wives
- Some single Jewish males married foreign women
- True marriage is a covenant
- God is the guarantor
- No covenant, no marriage
- No legitimate marriage, then there is no divorce





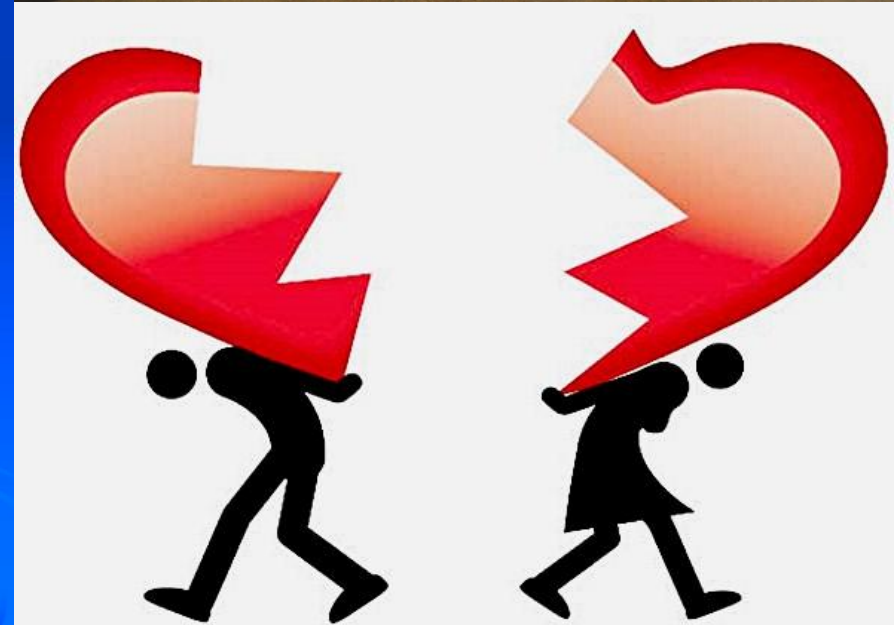
DID PAUL REALLY CHANGE THE RULES ?

- 1 Corinthians 7:10-16
- The real issue is that 2 non-Believers get married and one becomes a Believer
- Jews= both believe in YHWH, but one accepts Christ as Messiah
- Gentiles = one accepts Christ, the other doesn't accept God
- NOT about a Believer marrying a pagan



WHAT PAUL IS GETTING AT

- In modern times, secular government involvement has changed the rules
- But God sees marriage as He always has, a covenant with Him as guarantor
- Paul and Ezra are NOT dealing with the same circumstance
- In modern terms:
- 1) 2 non-Christians get married
- 2) 1 becomes a Believer
- 3) Believer may NOT divorce non-Believer (except for unfaithfulness)
- 4) non-Believer MAY divorce Believer and Believer should not protest



EZRA STEPS FORWARD AND DEMANDS THE PEOPLE VOW !



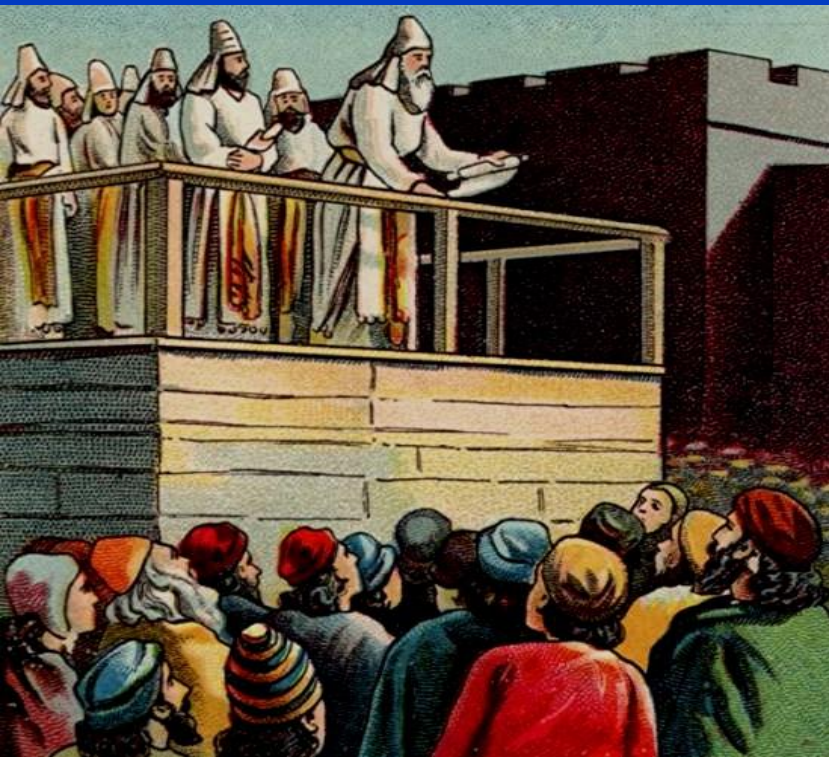
- *Sh'khanyah* proposed to send away the foreign women
- Ezra demanded a vow from the Priests, Levites, and laypeople
- Ezra retired to a side chamber of the Temple to fast and mourn
- Ezra allowed time for a lay leader to conclude that the only possible solution was to dissolve the mixed marriages
- Proclamation issued for Jewish people to show up in 3 days
- If someone didn't show up, they lost their personal property and were excommunicated from their community

HEREM

- The word used for forfeit is *herem*
- *Herem* = ban
- Holy War law requires spoils to be destroyed or burned up as a means of giving it to God
- In Ezra's day it more meant that items would be given to the Temple
- *Kol* = all, every But does not mean 100.00%
- Benjamin and Judah referring to territory not to tribes
- Under Babylon and Persia there was no official territory of Benjamin, only Judah



TREMBLING



- 20th day of the 9th month
- ***Kislev*** = December
- Jerusalem can be bone-chilling at this time
- 2500 ft. elevation
- Cold rain, snow
- Jews trembling because:
 - 1) rain soaked them
 - 2) guilty souls and fear of consequences

A DAY OF DARKNESS



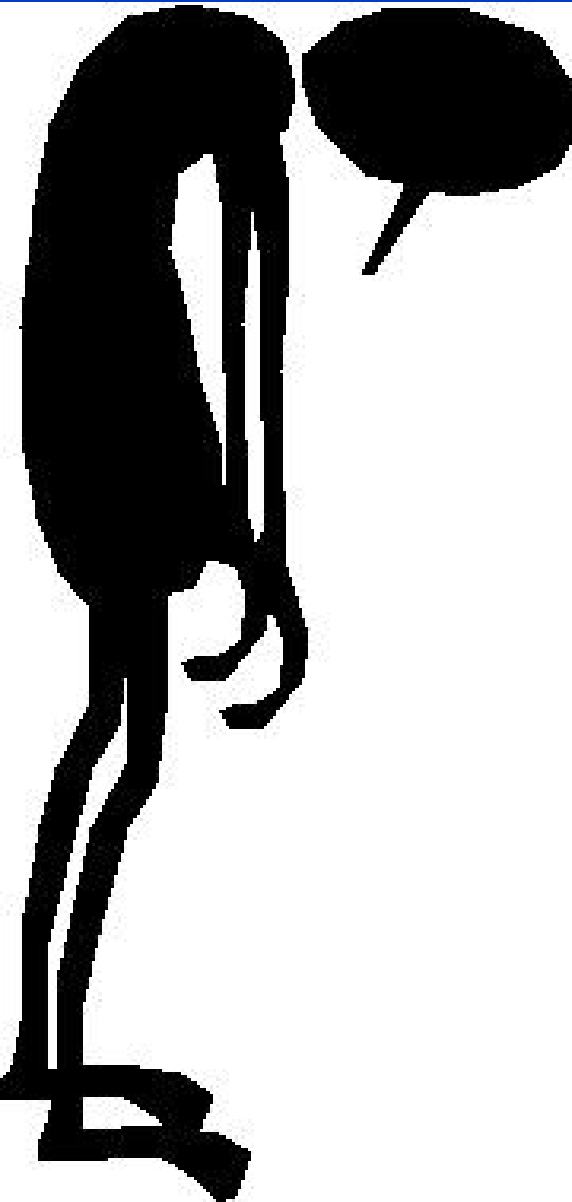
- The people are soaked and cold, not happy to be there
- Ezra is not giving a pep talk, or talking about God's love and grace
- He is heaping shame and guilt upon them for their great sin
- Christians want to hear humor and that God loves us, not about our sins or that God punishes us
- God is not our buddy or kindly grandfather who looks the other way at our sin

ISRAEL WAS ALREADY GUILTY

- Issue was NOT race, it was about worshipping false gods
- This sin was directed at God!
- No direct human crime or harm to another human
- The Jews' spiritual husband was the Lord, and they had committed spiritual adultery
- Ezra's demands:
- 1) stop associating with the foreigners in the land
- 2) send away foreign marriage partners



FEELING BAD ISN'T ENOUGH !



- Real, physical, tangible change is required by God
- Confession is only the beginning
- It must be accompanied with repentance, and ACTION
- God didn't require the Jews to only stop marrying foreign women, they also had to undo the relationships they had made
- Most were happily married to these foreign women for many years
- The sad result of sin is that the innocent can be affected, unintended consequences
- The guilty and innocent get hurt