

# GOD HATES DIVORCE

## Yet He Divorced His Own Wife! WHY?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Today—one divorce for every two marriages! Is marriage on the way out? Why did even God divorce his wife? Here's truth *new* to you!

**T**HE world's number one evil is the fact people can't live happily at peace with other people. This one fact foreshadows THE END of the world's very civilization. But WHY?

In the single year ending October 31, 1980, there were 1,182,000 divorces in the United States compared with 2,414,000 marriages! Half as many divorces as marriages! In 1979 divorces were nearly two-and-a-half times the rate of only 20 years earlier—1959! European divorce statistics are almost as bad.

Why?

But the important fact is the reason—what has CAUSED this super cancer bringing this world to its death?

### A Case History

Usually, in fact, both partners are to blame where marriage ends in divorce. But even where only one partner is at fault, it can put both through this tragic wringer of human anguish. I quote a specific case history in point.

It's a case of an aged personage

who loved a beautiful young woman and proposed marriage. He offered her a considerably increased life-style and many advantages—even to make her the FIRST LADY of all the earth—for this aged personage was GOD. And all the earth was his! I quote from this biblical story because it illustrates human nature and the CAUSE of divorces and broken marriages today. And these biblical experiences “happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come” (I Cor. 10:11, RSV). Much of this romance and its outcome is found in the 16th chapter of Ezekiel, some in Jeremiah 3, some in Malachi 2 and elsewhere. But the proposal of marriage is found in Exodus 19:5. The acceptance is in verse 8. The marriage ceremony in Exodus 24:3-8.

This marriage and the fascinating story concerning it in many ways is typical of many marriage experiences even today. The CAUSES of its historic outcome are precisely the same causes that dissolve many marriages today. In it lies the real reason for so many unhappy marriages, and the agony of divorce. Its ultimate future outcome reveals to us the way to a HAPPY marriage today and the ulti-

mate incredible potential for humanity.

This aged personage's wife to be was in the bondage of slavery in Egypt—just as many young brides today are in the bondage of sin. She was promised enjoyable living in a most desired home—the promised land flowing with milk and honey. This national wife promised to be subject to her husband in everything, and to respect him, in the marriage ceremony. Moses officiated at that ceremony. “And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient” (Ex. 24:7).

This husband, God, took his wife to her very choice new home, the “glory of all lands” (Ezek. 20:15). But his wife was unfaithful and refused to live with him in peace, for two cannot “walk together, except they be agreed” (Amos 3:3). You will read the whole account in story form in the 16th chapter of Ezekiel, where it paints the story of an interesting romance and unsuccessful marriage.

God said, “I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood *in fury* . . .”—the

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last plagues at Christ's Second Coming, showing this is a prophecy for OUR TIME (Ezek. 16:38).

Yet, in spite of all, this husband repeatedly PLEADED with his wife to return to him, saying he would forgive and receive her back, but she refused. "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you . . ." (Jer. 3:14). Also, ". . . thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord" (Jer. 3:1). "And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce . . ." (verse 8).

But Israel shall yet be resurrected in the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-12, Ezek. 37) and salvation and eternal life shall then be offered. So, finally, all Israel shall be saved (Rom. 11:26) because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But all *now* begotten of God are being judged NOW (I Pet. 4:17).

## But Now WHY?

The IMPORTANT THING is to understand *why* Israel sinned, WHY God did divorce, WHY marriages break up today, and what God is going to do about it.

The people of ancient Israel were just like people today, in that they were human, imbued with human nature. But what about the average marriage where usually both husband and wife are at fault?

I cite a case history of some years ago in which my counsel was requested by both parties. The wife complained that the husband would not take time to do even ordinary husband duties around the house—such as cleaning out the basement. He was selfish, in that he spent too much time going to baseball, basketball and hockey games—in which she had no interest. This I knew to be true. "It's all his fault," she accused.

But he likewise accused, "It's all *her* fault!" She was an atheist and communist, and if the national anthem was played on radio, she would snap it off, saying, "I HATE

that thing!" He was a veteran of World War I and very patriotic. She was cold, cross, constantly telling him he was a failure, a no-good. She constantly belittled him, disrespected him. And, beside, he said she was sexually frigid.

Actually, I found that the sexual frigidity was due to sexual ignorance and a lack of sexual knowledge, more than wrong attitude. I asked that they read a book that I felt would correct the ignorance. They did read it, both saw their error, but the knowledge came too late to help, in view of other prob-

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lems in the marriage. To him, I counseled: "She has her mind, and you have yours. You can't change her, but you can change *YOU!* You can solve *HALF* of the problem. I'll try to persuade her to change *HER!*" I explained the same solution to her.

I suggested a six month trial, with each trying to cooperate and work on the SELF instead of accusing the other. They agreed to try. But the "try" didn't last two weeks. It ended in divorce.

My suggested solution was sound enough, but it did not save the marriage.

Why?

There were two carnal minds, neither willing to admit wrong or change attitude. When either one

of a marriage partnership has a wrong attitude in conflict with the mate, the marriage won't be happy. People simply do not understand the TRUTH about the human mind and its attitudes. That is what God is going to CHANGE to produce peace and happiness in the WORLD TOMORROW.

Let's try to UNDERSTAND!

## The Family Structure

The FAMILY is the foundational bulwark of a lasting society and civilization. How did a civilization START?—how was it formed—how built?

God said, "Let us [not me] make MAN in OUR image, after our likeness . . ." (Gen. 1:26). God has power of MIND—so does man. Animals do not. But man is made from the dust of the ground like animals—he has a temporary physiochemical existence like animals—dies the same death (Eccl. 3:19-20). Animal BRAIN is like human brain, though of varying size—yet of similar design, composition, construction, quality. Yet man THINKS, KNOWS, REASONS, MAKES DECISIONS as animals cannot. WHY?

There is a spirit in man (Job 32:8) that is not in animal brain. This spirit in humans imparts the psychic power of intellect, "For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me" (Job 32:18). The dumb animal cannot have the knowledge of a human, and man has it only by this spirit of man—this human spirit—that is in him (I Cor. 2:11). Likewise, no man can comprehend spiritual knowledge save by the Holy Spirit of God (same verse).

Knowledge enters the human mind only through the five senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, feel and touch. But spiritual knowledge (the things of God) is not seen, heard, tasted, smelled or felt (verse 9). God *reveals* spiritual knowledge through HIS SPIRIT (verse 10). So the Holy Spirit of God witnesses "with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16).

BUT GOD'S SPIRIT WILL NOT ENTER AND JOIN WITH THE HUMAN SPIRIT UNTIL THE HUMAN SPIRIT HAS BEEN CONQUERED BY GOD—HAS SURRENDERED UNCONDITIONALLY TO GOD! That's why many

think they are “converted” who never have been—who never have been CONQUERED into SURRENDER and SUBMISSION to God. The natural carnal mind can comprehend, grasp, understand a certain measure of biblical truth and doctrine. Some, in their vain self-righteousness, are SO GOOD that they do accept what truth a natural mind can grasp.

Yet the natural mind is hostile against God (Rom. 8:7, Jer. 17:9). It has not unconditionally surrendered.

How about one person having a relationship with another human person? Neither must be conquered by the other. But Satan has injected into ALL humans (except Christ) his attitude of vanity and covetousness—to a greater or lesser degree.

The human mind is essentially SELF-CENTERED. But the human mind is an “EMPIRE-ICAL” mind. SELF includes whatever one thinks is his or hers—his clothes, his home, his property, his child or even parent, his team, his country. SELF expands to include what belongs to SELF, *as long as* he feels he selfishly GETS FROM whomever or whatever it is.

One human spirit can be compatible with another human spirit—especially when it is to one’s selfish or pleasing advantage. Thus, an unconverted husband can get along with an unconverted wife—so long as there is no attitude of hostility, competition, displeasure, incompatibility, annoyance or dislike. But the carnal SELF, actuated by the human spirit, is essentially SELF-CENTERED and loves primarily itself. It loves another when it gains, receives pleasure or satisfaction from, and/or feels the other is part of his or her “empire-ical” SELF.

That explains WHY some marriages succeed, even when both are unconverted. When one is converted, the other not, it still *may* succeed, as long as it is satisfying and seems advantageous to the unconverted.

But the mind *led by* the Holy Spirit will have an attitude of LOVE toward another *so long as* he is truly being *led by* the Spirit of God. IF one has not the Holy Spirit of God and is not being motivated

and led by God’s Spirit, he or she may still live compatibly with a mate in marriage so long as such person is selfishly pleased with the relationship.

Yet the natural, carnal, unconverted mind is “enmity”—hostile—toward God (and fellowman except for selfish pleasure or advantage) and “is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7).

The people of the ancient nation Israel were of course carnalminded. God had closed and sealed off the “tree of life”—the Holy Spirit—from mankind upon Adam’s disobedience and wrong choice, UNTIL Christ, the second Adam, should come and pay the penalty for human sin. It was thereupon—upon Adam’s sin—decreed that “it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this [by resurrection] the judgment” (Heb. 9:27) and “as in Adam ALL die, even so in Christ shall [the same] ALL be made alive” by resurrection (I Cor. 15:22).

And God gave the prophecy through Joel that “it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh . . .” (Joel 2:28). So even ancient Israelites shall be resurrected (Ezek. 37) mortal. In that judgment they shall come to realize their sins, shall loathe themselves (Ezek. 20:42-44) and so all Israel (as a whole, not every individual) SHALL BE SAVED (Rom. 11:26).

This present world is NOT God’s world. It is a world started by Adam as swayed and led by the evil Satan, after Adam rejected the tree of LIFE—symbolic of God’s Holy Spirit.

It is a world built on the way of “GET”—not God’s way of love—or of “GIVE”! In this world God formed one nation—ancient Israel—made up of carnalminded Hebrews during the time when God’s Holy Spirit was withheld from mankind (except for the prophets for the writing of God’s Word). Ancient Israel, one of this world’s nations, in the Bible is compared to a woman married to Israel’s God, who later was humanly born as Jesus Christ.

With nations symbolized as women, God proposed to make

her his FIRST LADY—but she despised that honor, and he divorced her. But he still loved her, and will yet MARRY HER at his glorified Second Coming in supreme POWER to rule all nations. His wife was UNCONVERTED, selfish, carnal. She shall be converted, unselfish, spiritual.

The God of the Old Testament was born as the human Jesus Christ—God in human flesh. Jesus said, “I will build my Church.” His Church is composed of called out ones (II Cor. 6:17). They have been called out of the world to become the nation or Kingdom of God—to rule the whole world in the wonderful WORLD TOMORROW! Today, “he is a Jew who is one inwardly [having God’s Spirit]” (Rom. 2:29, RSV). Today the CHURCH is the affianced bride, to marry Christ at his soon coming!

The old covenant was a MARRIAGE COVENANT. The NEW COVENANT will be a marriage covenant, a marriage to an Israel who has PROVED OBEDIENCE in God’s Church, having repented—turned FROM sin, having overcome, having grown in grace and spiritual knowledge (II Pet. 3:18), and endured to the end (Matt. 24:13).

This marriage will be one of TRUE LOVE—the “wife” having the love of God shed abroad in her heart by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). And there shall be no divorce or occasion for divorce. This time the wife shall have REPENTED, and turned from her adulteries and sins!

There has been a false teaching that the old covenant was made with Israel, but the new shall be made with gentiles. But the apostle Paul says, “For finding fault with them [not with God or his law], he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (Heb. 8:8). It will be a LOVE marriage, and Christ’s wife will be pleased to dwell with him in love and AGREEMENT and obedience FOR EVER and EVER! □