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C1402 – January 15, 2014 – Malachi 2:10-16
God's Covenant Faithfulness

We're studying the book of Malachi, the last prophet of the OT period before the 400 years of silence. Through Malachi the pre-incarnate LORD Jesus Christ revealed an oracle containing six burdens designed to convict the priests and the people of their sin so they would confess and be restored to covenant blessing. In the first oracle of 1:2-5, the nation doubted God's love for them. This was the root problem because if they doubted God's love for them they could not love God in return. God proved that He did love them by reminding them that He had a covenant with Jacob and not Esau and that the outworking of that covenant was obvious in the distinctive rebuilding activities of the two nations in the wake of the Babylonian exile. Jacob had been able to rebuild successfully while Esau had been frustrated in all attempts to rebuild. God indeed did love Jacob and was working to fulfill his covenanted destiny in the land. In the second oracle of 1:6-2:9, the priests did not honor God as a son should honor a father. The proof that they did not honor Him was that the set food on the sacrificial table that they would never set before the Persian governor. And then they had the gall to request the LORD's favor. They were bored of worshipping the LORD and didn't appreciate their portion from the sacrificial table either. They even committed highway robbery to present lame and diseased animals before the LORD. The people vowed an excellent animal and then in a bait and switch tactic offered a lame animal instead. All this and the LORD is a great King. Because of this the LORD was already cursing them and it was a viable threat that the covenant made with Levi would be totally abolished through the barrenness and uncleanness of the priests. The threat was given to ensure the continuation of the covenant with Levi which was originally given to a priest who stood in radical contrast to these priests. Phinehas was so jealous for the LORD that when the tabernacle was being defiled by an act of Temple prostitution he entered the Holy Place with a spear and executed

justice, running the spear through both the man and the woman. Further he was a true instructor of the word of Torah and a true practitioner of Torah. Consequently many people turned away from sin and to righteousness. But these priests had turned aside from the way of Phinehas, they corrupted the Torah by twisting it and thereby obstructing people from knowing what God required of them. As a consequence the LORD despised them before all the people.

Tonight we come to the third oracle in 2:10-16. This dispute is more difficult for several reasons. First, because it breaks from the common pattern we have seen in the prior two oracles of making a statement of truth, questioning the truth and proving the truth. The only resemblance is it follows the question/answer format but in this oracle Malachi is the speaker whereas in the prior and later oracles God is the speaker. Second, this oracle is difficult because of translation difficulties in verses 10, 11, 12, 15 and 16. Almost every verse has some difficulty and this creates several different tributaries that you can follow out. The only fortunate thing is that there are clear statements that have no translation issues and so the overall teaching is clear. Third, the difficulty is compounded by figurative expressions and cultural customs whose meanings have been lost over the course of time. Even the Jews whose verses these are do not know for certain the meanings of some of these expressions. When you put all this together you have universal agreement among scholars that the third oracle is by far the most difficult in the book and so I will do my best to unravel it. I had to decide on a particular course to chart through the passage using reason, grammar and logic.

In verse 10 the oracle begins but this time Malachi is asking the question as a representative of the nation. **Do we not all have one father?** The difficulty here is the identity of the **one father**. Popular interpretations are that the **one father** is God or Abraham since the Hebrew language makes no proper-noun distinctions. However, he may equally be Jacob since he was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. However, the next phrase is probably synonymous parallelism and therefore helps us identify the **one father**. **Has not one God created us?** The **one God** is parallel to the **one father**. Therefore the **one father** is God. This should not be taken to mean that God is the Father of all people because contextually in v 11 and 12 Judah and Jacob are in view. Support for the interpretation that the one father is God of

Israel is two-fold. First, the OT explicitly teaches that God is the Father of Israel (Isa 63:16; 64:8; Jer 31:9). For example, Isa 63:16, “For You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us And Israel does not recognize us. You, O LORD, are our Father, Our Redeemer from old is Your name.” Second, God is the Father of Israel because of what He has done for them. First, He created them. The truth is stated here by the question in verse 10, **Has not one God created us?** He created them by begetting them out of the womb of Egypt. Isa 44:2, “The LORD made you and formed you from the womb” and Hos 11:1, “Out of Egypt I called My son.” Egypt was the womb and the LORD was the midwife who helped Israel His son to be born out of Egypt. Second, He guided them in the wilderness with fire by night and cloud by day. He was like a father who leads His son along the way. Third, He gave them principles to live by at Mt Sinai. A good father gives His son good principles to live by. Fourth, He reared them. Isa 1:2, “Sons I have reared and brought up.” When they got out of line He disciplined them as a good father. So it is clear that Israel had one Father and that one Father was God who created them.

Now it's what this meant that makes this important. If God is the Father of all Israel then every Israelite was His son or daughter. And if that's true then every son or daughter is brother and sister. In other words, they were one family. **Why** then, Malachi asks, **do we deal treacherously each against his brother so as to profane the covenant of our fathers?** That is not how brothers and sisters should treat one another. The Hebrew word **treacherously** means to act “deceitfully, unfaithfully, offensively,” and technically refers to “one who does not honor an agreement.” The Israelites were not honoring their agreements with each other. The family was dysfunctional. And surely the Father was not pleased that His sons and daughters were treating one another this way. Malachi says their actions **profaned the covenant of our fathers.** The **covenant of our fathers** here refers to the Mosaic covenant. The Hebrew **profaned** means that it was contrary to “God's planned order” for their lives as revealed in that covenant. The details of how they were to deal with one another are spelled out in the covenant. By dealing **treacherously** with one another they were living contrary to “God's planned order” for their lives. Since God was the Father of this family it greatly displeased Him that they were not honoring their agreements among one another since He always honored His agreements with them.

Now we're not told yet just what agreements they were not honoring but if you notice verse 14 "the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant." The Jewish husbands were obviously not honoring their agreement to their Jewish wives as spelled out in the marriage covenant. Verse 16 points out the explicit dishonor, "For I hate divorce." The Jewish men were divorcing their Jewish wives. This was treacherous; it did not honor the agreement in the marriage covenant to remain faithful to the wife for the rest of one's life. Divorce profaned the covenant because it was contrary to God's planned order for their lives as outlined in the Mosaic covenant. But someone will say, "The Mosaic Law permitted divorce" (Deut 24:1-4). Yes, it did, but only because of their hardness of heart (Matt 19:8), a condition they were not to allow their hearts to become. What is abundantly clear in this passage is that they did permit their hearts to become hard and these sinful actions were stemming from a hard heart. In addition God says in verse 11 that on the other side of the treachery "an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD which He loves and has married the daughter of a foreign god." So after they divorced their Jewish wives they married pagan wives. This was the reason they divorced their Jewish wives to begin with. In short, their Jewish wives had grown older and so they turned them in for newer models. There's nothing new under the sun. Now marrying a pagan girl was also contrary to the Mosaic covenant again (Deut 7:3ff). We saw that in Ezra and it was an abomination, a particularly horrible sin. God warned in the covenant that if they married pagan wives they would turn their sons away from following Him to serve and worship other gods. In turn God's wrath would be kindled against them. So in the passage there are two sides to the rebellion. On one side there is the treachery of Jewish husbands divorcing their Jewish wives and on the other side there is the abomination of remarrying pagan wives.

Verse 11 recounts both, **Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD which He loves and has married the daughter of a foreign god.** Here clearly we see the two sides of the rebellion, **Judah has dealt treacherously**, the treachery was the divorcing of Jewish wives, and Judah has committed **an abomination in**

Israel and in Jerusalem, the **abomination** was the marrying of pagan wives who introduced idolatry. The particular abomination committed here is explained by the words **for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD and has married the daughter of a foreign god**. The **sanctuary** probably refers to the Temple in **Jerusalem**. The **daughter of a foreign god** refers to a pagan woman who worshipped false gods. God warned that if they married pagan women the men would not only import the pagan women but the pagan worship practices of the women. As such what seems to be in view here is that they married these pagan women and their influence on their husband's lives led them to introduce pagan practices in the Temple worship. The Hebrew **profane** again means contrary to "God's planned order." The pagan wives led the husbands to worship God in a way contrary to "God's planned order" as outlined in the Mosaic covenant. So like Solomon, who married many pagan wives, who turned his heart away into idolatry, these men were following in Solomon's same disastrous footsteps. The results were abominable; a thing of horror was taking place **in Israel and in Jerusalem** in the very Temple of God which the LORD loved since it was where He met with His sons and daughters. Now it had become a place that He could no longer meet with them since their practices were so abhorrent to Him.

In verse 12 Malachi levels the curse against the offenders. **As for the man who does this, may the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob everyone who awakes and answers, or who presents an offering to the LORD of hosts**. The penalty **for the man who does this was cutting off from the tents of Jacob**. The **tents of Jacob** refer to the Jewish community. The action of **cutting off** could be excommunication, execution or the end of the family line. Since it was the **LORD** who Malachi invoked to carry out the **cutting off** it seems more likely that the **cutting off** is execution or the end of the family line. Introducing pagan practices in the Temple was certainly an abominable offense worthy of execution but probably what is meant is that these family lines would be cut off by barrenness or 'accidental' death.

The expression **everyone who awakes and answers** is the most difficult expression in the entire book. Even modern Jewish commentaries say it "is apparently an alliterative colloquial phrase...the exact meaning of" which "is uncertain." The Bible Knowledge Commentary says "perhaps this was a

proverbial expression, whose meaning is not clear today.” Translations and interpretations differ radically. The KJV translates it “the master and the scholar,” the NASB by the enigmatic “everyone who awakes and answers.” The NIV is probably best when it translates, “whoever he may be” signifying “totality.” In other words, anyone and everyone who has done this may the LORD cut off so that he is no longer a part of the Jewish community.

The final phrase of verse 12, **or who presents an offering to the LORD of hosts** should be translated “even those who present an offering to the LORD of hosts.” That is to say, even the priests who present the offerings should be cut off if they have done this abominable horror. In other words, no one was to be excluded from the curse Malachi invoked, no matter what their station in life. The damning thing is that the priests were doing this and they were the leadership. If the leadership were doing it what do you think the people were doing? The people follow the leader. This is why the standards among the Levitical priests were higher than the people. They could only marry a virgin who was of the tribe of Levi. And that’s why in the NT Church the leaders are held to higher standards. And we’ve got pastors divorcing and remarrying. Give me a break. Really? What are the people going to do if the pastors are doing this?

In verse 13 a second charge is leveled against the priests. **This is another thing you do; you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. 14 Yet you say, ‘For what reason?’** Clearly these are the priests being condemned because the people didn’t have access to **the altar**. The **altar of the LORD** was the purview of the priests. It was the priests who were doing this. And here they are continuing to offer sacrifices even after committing the treachery against their Levitical wives by divorcing them and then committing the abomination of marrying pagan wives. It’s no surprise to us that the LORD was not accepting their offerings but the priests were so spiritually insensitive and ignorant of the word of God that they didn’t understand why the LORD wasn’t accepting them. They even went into a big emotional fit of tears and weeping and groaning and yet the LORD did not accept their prayers or worship. This just shows how stupid the priests had become spiritually, how ignorant of the word of God and what He required to worship Him properly.

In verse 14 the prophet Malachi spells out the reason since the priests were too ignorant spiritually to figure it out for themselves. **Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.** It should have been obvious why He wasn't answering their prayers. They had broken their covenant with their wives. It's been commented that this is the only verse in the Bible that defines what it is to be married in the eyes of the LORD. The word **covenant** at the end of the verse seems to indicate the essence of it is the covenant. The verse begins by pointing out that **the LORD** had **been a witness** of each marriage covenant **between** a priestly husband and his Levitical **wife**. The phrase **between you and the wife of your youth** seems to imply that these Jewish men married their wives when they were young and in the full blossom of their beauty but when they had grown older their husbands were divorcing them and marrying younger pagan girls.

The divorce Malachi says was dealing **treacherously...against** their Jewish wives. It was something that ought not to be done because it was not honoring the original terms of the marriage covenant and was contrary to God's planned order for their lives. Divorce proceedings could only be carried out by the males in Jewish society, though as I mentioned earlier, to carry them out was a permission God gave only because of the hardness of their hearts. It was not that way from the beginning and if they had a soft heart toward the things of God they would never engage in divorce proceedings. Marriage was designed to be between one man and one woman for life. So their acts of divorcing their Jewish wives were **treacherous** acts against the Levitical ladies.

Yet they did this the text says, even **though she is companion and wife by your covenant**. The Hebrew for **companion** is *haberet* and comes from the root meaning "to be joined." Some point out that it is reminiscent of the expression in Genesis that the man shall "be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Gen 2:24). Others point out that as a feminine noun it is a synonym for "wife." The Hebrew for **wife** is *issa* and is the most common word for a woman and wife in the OT. She is the one who is the creation of God derivative of the man. In a way then the two words are synonyms for each other, "she is wife and wife by your covenant." The redundancy is a figure of speech probably known as hendiadys. In hendiadys two very near or

interchangeable terms are used to describe one concept. Probably what is being said is that “she is your joint partner, even your wife, by covenant.” The reason for the distinction is that one could become a joint partner or one flesh by physical intercourse alone. Paul referred to this in 1 Cor 6:16 where some of the Corinthians were joining themselves to prostitutes and becoming one flesh. Paul quotes Gen 2:24, “the two shall become one flesh.” So two people can become one flesh without becoming husband and wife. Solomon was one flesh with lots of women but he was not married to all of them. Only those he had a **covenant** with was he actually married to and had obligations to. So to clarify here the closeness of the relationship and the vileness of the priests behavior he says “she is one flesh with you, even your wife by covenant.” Marriage is being defined here in the eyes of God as by **covenant** alone. That is, a man and a woman who have made a **covenant** with one another as witnessed by God are married whether or not they have become one flesh by consummating. The emphasis is not on consummation at all but on the **covenant**. I used to think that marriage was by covenant and by consummation and that if the two never consummated then the two were never married. In that case two people could just get an annulment. But I’m not thinking that anymore from this text. That’s an idea that is largely developed by the Roman Catholic Church. They do require consummation in order for there to be a legal marriage. But in Malachi every indication is that it’s the covenant alone that establishes a marriage in God’s eyes. When that covenant is made it’s a legally binding marriage. These priests are disparaging God’s plan for marriage. Marriage, of course, is only between two parties, one man and one woman. That is an absolute, immutable design of marriage for all people in all places in all times. Even though we’ll be called bigoted for that God said that, not me. These people want to play God and redefine everything the way they want. That’s what the priests were doing. Now every marriage **covenant** carries with it legal terms or obligations that are spelled out in the vows. Each party in the vows is promising formally to do certain things for the other. God is **witnessing** these vows and He takes what is said there very seriously. So anytime you vow to do X it is very serious that you do in fact do X. That’s why what these priests were doing was treachery. These were their wives by **covenant**. They had obligations to them; they were the leaders and by divorcing them they were not doing what they said they would do. They were breaking the **covenant**. In strong contrast God is a covenant keeping God. What this means is that breaking a covenant is not godly. The priests were not acting like their Father. So the

major focal point is the **covenant** and I would argue that the only thing in God's eyes that constitutes a marriage is **covenant**. Consummation is not necessary for there to be a marriage in God's eyes though it may be necessary for the two to become one flesh.

Now in verse 15 we come to the most difficult verse in the entire book of Malachi to translate because there are numerous difficulties. Fortunately the last expression has no difficulties and it is the thrust of the exhortation. The exhortation is **Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth**. So the exhortation is clear, don't divorce your Jewish wives, keep covenant. And since this exhortation is based on the prior statements or questions then we ought to be able to reason backward to unravel how the difficulties should be translated. In other words, if the concluding exhortation is don't divorce but keep covenant then what statements or questions would necessarily precede in order to serve as a base for the exhortation. I would argue that what must necessarily precede is a statement of God's covenant with the one nation that He would never divorce! So we'll read it from the NASB but then I'll have to re-translate it to give the intended sense that makes logical sense. **But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring?** Now frankly, that really makes no contextual sense. We can explain what it means but it doesn't make any sense in the context and it certainly doesn't lead logically to the following exhortation. There are two problems here so I'll re-translate each in turn. It's so confused that you'll have to completely re-write this in your margin. This is one of those passages that as you read the Bible for yourself you just read it and say "Huh, what in the world does that mean?" And you have no clue so you just keep reading. So I'm going to try to clarify but to do so you're going to have to write down this re-translation. First, the expression **But not one has done** should be translated, "Did not He [the LORD] make one?" That is, did not the LORD make one nation His covenant people? Yes, we know that. He only made one nation His covenant people. God only made a covenant with Israel. So just like a marriage covenant is between one man and one woman so God's covenant is between one God and one people, Israel. God is not polygamous. Second, the phrase **who has a remnant of the Spirit** should be translated, "And made them His spiritual remnant?" By "them" he's referring to the priests, they were a spiritual remnant within the nation. They were to lead the nation in spirituality. Third, the expression **And what**

did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Is probably close enough to being correct that we won't modify it. The idea is what was the one covenanted nation doing while God was looking for a godly priesthood? They were out breaking covenant with one another following the example of the priests! This is not godly. God does not break covenant; He keeps covenant. They were doing what He does not do; divorce. The closing imperative; **Take heed then to your spirit** means have the same attitude about covenants as God has about covenants. This is a huge warning to the priests in particular. Don't divorce your wives. Or as Malachi puts it, **let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth.** Remain married to your Jewish wives. Do not dishonor the agreement you made with her. It's not consistent with God's agreement with the one nation Israel. God would never break covenant; nor should they, to break covenant by divorce is ungodly.

Verse 16 God says quite clearly **"For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel.** The Hebrew word for **hate** here is different than the word in 1:3, "I have hated Esau." That word doesn't have any emotion attached to it. It simply means God had not covenanted with Esau and so Esau had no covenant land destiny. This word does have emotional attitude attached to it. It expresses an emotional attitude, not toward persons who **divorce**, but toward **divorce** itself. God hates **divorce**. That's because it's a broken agreement. Therefore logically should the men of Israel divorce? Of course not. It's not consistent with God's covenant faithfulness to His one nation Israel. If He keeps His covenant promises with Israel should Israel break its covenant promises with one another? Of course not. What they were doing was treachery.

Further verse 16 says, **"and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts.** This is a play on a cultural custom we are not familiar with. When a man wanted to marry a woman he would cover her with **his garment**. For example, on the night Boaz was drunk and passed out in the barn Ruth went in and uncovered his feet and when he woke up he said, "Who are you? And she said, "Ruth, your maid. Now spread your covering over your maid, for you are a close relative." What was she saying there? Spread your covering over your maid? She was saying, "Marry me, it's your legal obligation." So to cover a woman with your garment was to marry her but this says **he covers his garment with wrong** or literally "with

violence.” It therefore means that when a Jewish man divorced his Jewish wife he had covered himself with violence. It was as if he was standing before the LORD in soiled garments, it was a disgrace.

The closing imperative in v 16 is identical to the closing imperative in verse 15. **So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.** Their attitude toward their covenant with their wives was to be identical to God’s attitude toward His covenant with Israel. They were therefore not to divorce their Jewish wives.

I want to summarize our passage, then give some time for question and answer and finally make several comments in order to clarify some passages. In summary, in Malachi 2:10 Malachi asks, “Do we not all have one father?” Indeed they did. One God had created them. Why then did they deal treacherously with one another by divorcing their Jewish wives and so profaning the Mosaic Covenant. In verse 11, Judah had not only dealt treacherously but they had committed an abomination by marrying pagan girls who brought their worship practices into the Temple that God loves. In verse 12 Malachi invokes a curse against any and every man who had done this, even the priests who presented offerings to the LORD in the Temple. They were the chief problem. If they disregarded God’s plan for marriage then what would the people do? In verse 13 another thing the priests did was cry and have a big hissy fit on the altar when the LORD didn’t accept their offerings with favor. In verse 14 the priests were so out of it spiritually that they didn’t know why the LORD would not accept their offerings. They were so spiritually ignorant that Malachi has to spell it out for them. They had dealt treacherously with their Levitical wives by sending them away, even though they were their wives by covenant that God had witnessed. Legally they were bound to these ladies in the sight of God. In verse 15, the LORD had one covenanted nation and within that a spiritual remnant of priests who were supposed to be serving Him. And what were they doing while the LORD was seeking a spiritual priesthood? They were acting treacherously by divorcing their wives. Yet in all this the LORD did not divorce them because the LORD is not a covenant breaker. So then they should have the same attitude about covenants as the LORD and they should not deal treacherously with the wives of their youth by divorcing them when they got older. In verse 16 we see the clearest statement on God’s attitude toward divorce in the entire Bible. I hate divorce and I also hate the one who turns

marriage into divorce by violence. So then take heed to your attitude toward covenants, that you do not break them, for to do so is treacherous. The priests were a bunch of horrible leaders, men who were leading the whole nation astray from God. Such it is in the Church when the leaders do not live according to a standard that is above and beyond the people.

Questions? I want to make several comments. First, since Malachi clearly commanded them not to divorce their wives how does this square with Ezra's command to divorce their wives (Ezra 10:3ff). The difference is that Malachi is addressing Jewish husbands who were married to Jewish wives whereas Ezra is addressing Jewish husbands who had married pagan wives. Jewish men were to marry Jewish wives except in the rare case that they might take a war bride.¹ If a woman was taken captive in war and she was beautiful and a Jewish man wanted to take her as a wife then he had to take the woman and shave her head and trim her nails and remove her pagan clothes. To do so would symbolize her conversion to the God of Israel. So the essence of the law is that if she became a believer then you could marry her. The men in Ezra's day had not married believing Gentile girls but pagan girls. This was against the law and required them to divorce. Does this in any way imply that a Christian man or woman should divorce an unbelieving spouse? Absolutely not. Paul teaches that if you are married to an unbeliever that you should remain married to them. If they seek to divorce you then you should let them go, but a Christian should not initiate divorce against an unbelieving spouse.

Second, since in Malachi the LORD says He hates divorce how does this square with the permission to divorce in the Mosaic Law (Deut 24:1)? Jesus clarified that Moses permitted divorce because of the hardness of their hearts but from the beginning it was not so. Marriage was originally designed to be a lifelong relationship between one man and one woman. The famous exception clause in Matt 19, "except for immorality," is found only in Matthew and not in the parallel in Mark. Matthew's purpose is a Jewish one that has no parallel in Gentile marriage customs. In Jewish culture a man Jewish man and woman would be betrothed for a period of one year before the formal ceremony. The betrothal was so legally binding that the man and woman were considered man and wife during this time even before the formal ceremony. If some fornication was found in her during this period of time the man could divorce her. This is exactly the situation Joseph thought

he found himself in with Mary. They had been betrothed and she was found to be with child. He assumed that she had been with some other man. He decided to divorce her secretly. It was at that time that the angel came and revealed that the Holy Spirit had conceived the child in Mary and that he should marry her. Thus he relented from implementing divorce procedures. Does this imply that if a Christian spouse finds fornication in his spouse that he or she should begin divorce proceedings? By no means. Paul says that if a wife leaves her husband she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And that a man should not divorce his wife. If one's spouse dies he is free to marry another believer.

Third, in 1 Cor 7 a believing spouse is told to remain with an unbelieving spouse but in 2 Cor 6 a believer is told not to be bound to unbelievers. How do these two statements reconcile. The difference is that in 1 Cor 7 the two spouses had married while unbelievers and then one of the spouses believed while the other did not. In 2 Cor 6 those addressed are already believers. The statements address different situations.

Fourth, it is clear that God's intention for marriage is that a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh until death. Marriage is fundamentally a covenant with God as the witness. Since God is not a covenant breaker we should not break covenant with each other either. What God has put together let no man separate.

Fifth, what if you are already divorced and remarried? Paul would say "remain as you are." There is nothing you can do to change the past. Move on and deal with the consequences in grace. There are always consequences, sometimes greater if children are involved, sometimes less if not. In any case, there's no reason to sit around and fret. There is nothing you can do but move on and learn to live each day by grace.

ⁱ An exception to this was the Levites who were required to marry a virgin of the tribe of Levi.

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