

Title: **“HE HATETH PUTTING AWAY.”**

Text: Malachi 2:16

Subject: *Divine Faithfulness*

Introduction:

“Why do you believe in eternal security?”

- The Purpose of God (Romans 8:29-30)
- The Immutability of God (Malachi 3:6)
- The Certainty of God’s Work (Ecclesiastes 3:14)
- The Efficacy of Christ’s Blood (Isaiah 42:4)
- The Gift of Eternal Life (John 10:28-30)
- The Spirit’s Seal Ephesians 4:30
- And this word of promise.

(Malachi 2:16) “For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.”

The title of my message tonight is **“HE HATETH PUTTING AWAY.”**

As we read the scathing words of Malachi to Judah and Israel in the 2nd chapter of his prophecy, honesty compels us to take our place in the dust before our God. The reproaches of Israel are our reproaches. The crimes of Judah are our crimes. Their treachery is your treachery and mine. Their profaneness is my profaneness and yours. Will any here stand to his feet and deny that these things are so?

In this chapter the Lord God issues reprimand after reprimand to his chosen, covenant people for profaning his covenant, profaning his holiness, profaning his name, profaning his altar, profaning his worship and profaning their wives and children with idolatry. Feigning devotion to the Lord, the children of Israel took to themselves heathen, idolatrous wives

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and corrupted the worship of Jehovah with the worship of the gods of the heathen. Covering their violence with the religious garments of their priestly office, they corrupted the worship of God. Marrying the sons and daughters of strange gods, they profaned God’s holiness (v. 11). God says, “*Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues*” (Revelation 18:4); but they went in unto the great whore, Babylon, dealing treacherously with the Lord and his people (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

(2 Corinthians 6:14-18) "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (15) And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? (16) And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (17) Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, (18) And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

(2 Corinthians 7:1) "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Yet, even as he denounces the evil, the Lord God by his prophet, points us to our Savior, as if to say, — “Fly to Christ for refuge.” — “*And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land*” (Isaiah 32:2). He gives us relief from the distressing contemplation of our deserved judgment, by directing our hearts and minds to Christ, our covenant of peace, and our all-sufficient righteousness. Hear what God the Spirit says in this chapter about our Lord Jesus. — **Levi is Christ!**

- *First*, He is Jehovah’s Covenant (v. 4).
- *Second*, the Lord God has trusted his Son, our covenant Surety, with all his people and all the blessings (life and peace) of his covenant (v. 5).
- *Third*, the Lord God himself declares that Christ, our covenant Head and Surety, is holy and pure. — “*The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and*

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equity, and did turn many away from iniquity” (v. 6).

- *Fourth*, he has been and shall always be successful in his undertakings. — He “*did turn many away from iniquity*” (v. 6; Zechariah 3). — He did it in eternity. — He did it at Calvary. — He did it before we sinned. — He did it before he called us. — He has done it since he called us. — He does it daily (1 John 1:7, 9).

Think with holy rapture and joy, upon these glorious credentials of our Redeemer and Mediator. Then turn once more to him, and behold him as the prophet here presents him. Our peace is through the blood of his cross. His righteousness is our righteousness; and we are “*the righteousness of God in him*” who was “*made sin for us!*” Truly, Christ is all to our souls!

- He is the Sum and Substance of the covenant.
- He is the Surety of the covenant.
- He is the Messenger of the covenant.
- He is the Message of the covenant.
- He is the Blessing of the covenant.
- He obedience unto death is the singular condition of the covenant.
- He is the Fulfillment of the covenant.
- He is the Administrator of the covenant.
- And he is Keeper of all the grace of the covenant here in this life, and the glory of the covenant in the life to come.

In our text, the Lord distinctly speaks of the evil of men in dealing treacherously with their wives by divorce. Let me speak with unmistakable clarity: — Divorce is one of the greatest evils of modern society. It is contrary to the law of God. There can be no question about that fact. Divorce cannot be excused. It cannot be justified. It cannot be defended.

- But the God of all grace forgives sin, even divorce; and so do his people.
- And that which God has forgiven is not to be charged by us upon our brethren, or charged by you upon yourself. — “*The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin!*”
- But the treachery spoken of by God’s prophet in this place goes beyond the treachery of a man divorces his wife to take another woman or woman who divorces her husband to take another man.

Verses 11-16 deal with one thing: — The treachery of men toward God and toward his people. Malachi is dealing with our treachery in spiritual matters!

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Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love!
Here’s my heart, oh, take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above!”

Throughout the Book of God, marriage is held before us as a picture of the blessed union of Christ and his church (Ephesians 5:25-30).

- Adam and Eve
- Solomon and the Shulamite
- Hosea and Gomer

(Ephesians 5:25-30) "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (26) That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, (27) That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (28) So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. (29) For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: (30) For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

It is written, — *“Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. Thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called”* (Isaiah 54:4-5). The Lord God declares, *“I am married unto you”* (Jeremiah 3:14). And, blessed be his name forever, *“He hateth putting away!”*

ESPOUSED

With gladness of heart, our beloved Solomon espoused his elect to himself in eternal election before ever the worlds were made (Song of Solomon 3:11; Proverbs 8:22-31).

(Song of Songs 3:11) *“Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.”*

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The term “espoused” was well known among the Hebrews. Their espousals by promise were considered as sacred and permanent as marriage itself, though the marriage was not consummated sometimes for a long time.

- Joseph and Mary

This espousal is used in the Word of God as a figure, to represent the spiritual union and marriage of Christ with his people (Isaiah 54:5; Hosea 2:19-20; Jeremiah 2:2; 3:14; Revelation 19:7-9).

The Lord Jesus wed himself to our souls in the espousals of grace before the world began. — *“Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married”* (Isaiah 62:4). — And he promised that he would wed us to him in time (Hosea 2:19-20).

(Hosea 2:19-20) “And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. (20) I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness (**MY FAITHFULNESS, NOT YOURS!**) : and thou shalt know the LORD.”

The Lord Jesus espoused us to himself in eternity, and — *“The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!”*

CAME FOR HIS BRIDE

In the fulness of time, the Lord Jesus Christ, our great Hosea came into this land of whoredoms and took us as a bride for himself (Hosea 1:2-3).

(Hosea 1:1-3) “The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beerī, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. (2) The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, *departing* from the LORD. (3) So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son.”

Hosea knew exactly what he was getting. — The Lord God told Hosea to go love a woman, not just any woman, but a fallen woman, a harlot, not just

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any harlot, but a particular harlot. — “*So he went and took Gomer.*” **Hosea knew exactly what he was getting.** — Why did he do that? What was the purpose of this? It was to show us a picture of God’s grace toward us. Hosea loved Gomer, — “*According to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel*” (3:1).

The Son of God married our nature when he took our nature into union with himself and became what we are, flesh and blood. Behold the God-man and see Divinity and humanity forever wed, forever married, forever one. — “*He hateth putting away!*”

(Hebrews 2:14-16) “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; (15) And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (16) For verily he took not on *him* the nature of angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.”

The Son of God bought us with his own precious blood. He loved his church and gave himself for it. Yes, God in human flesh purchased his church with his own blood (Acts 20:28). — “*The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!*”

PLAYED THE HARLOT

He chose us, espoused us as his bride, married himself to us, and redeemed us with his precious blood; but we were and have ever been an adulterous bride. Though espoused to God’s own dear Son, though espoused to the King of Glory, we played the harlot and loved the life of an adulterous, whoring wife! Still, our great God and Savior proved that “*He hateth putting away!*”

(Hosea 2) “Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah. (2) Plead with your mother, plead: for she *is* not my wife, neither *am* I her husband: let her therefore **put away her whoredoms** out of her sight, and **her adulteries** from between her breasts; (3) Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst. (4) And I will not have mercy upon her children; for they *be* the children of whoredoms. (5) For **their**

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mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath **done shamefully**: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give *me* my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. (6) **Therefore**, behold, **I will hedge up thy way** with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. (7) And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find *them*: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then *was it* better with me than now. (8) For **she did not know** that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, *which* they prepared for Baal. (9) **Therefore** will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax *given* to cover her nakedness. (10) And now will I **discover her lewdness** in the sight of her lovers, and **none shall deliver her out of mine hand**. (11) I will also **cause all her mirth to cease**, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. — (**I’LL DESTROY HER JOY, HER RELIGION, HER HOPE, HER REFUGE OF LIES!**) — (12) And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, whereof she hath said, These *are* my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. (13) And **I will visit upon her the days of Baalim**, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD. (14) **Therefore**, behold, I will **allure her**, and **bring her** into the wilderness, and **speak comfortably** unto her. (15) And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and **the valley of Achor** for a door of hope (**HOPE IN THE PLACE OF JUDGMENT!**): and **she shall sing** there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. (16) And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, *that* thou shalt call me Ishi (**MY HUSBAND**); and shalt call me no more Baali (**MY MASTER**). (17) For I will **take away the names of Baalim** out of her mouth, and they shall **no more be remembered** by their name. (18) And in that day will I **make a covenant for them** with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and *with* the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely (**ROMANS 8:28 IS THE COMMENTARY ON THIS**). (19) And **I will betroth thee unto me for ever**; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in

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(**MY**) **righteousness**, and in (**MY**) **judgment**, and in (**MY**) **lovingkindness**, and in (**MY**) **mercies**. (20) I will even betroth thee unto me in (**MY**) **faithfulness**: and thou shalt know the LORD. (21) And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; (22) And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. (23) And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and **I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy**; and I will say to *them which were* not my people, Thou *art* my people; and they shall say, *Thou art* my God.”

He would not put us away and will not let us leave him, because — “*The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!*” There will be no divorce (Isaiah 50:1), no matter what! — “*The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!*”

MARRIED

At last, in the fulness of time, the Son of God came in omnipotent mercy and married his chosen, espoused, redeemed bride. He sweetly forces his chosen into his own arms of love and causes the one he loved with an everlasting love to love him (1 John 4:19).

(1 John 4:19) “We love him, because he first loved us.”

The Son of God forms a union with each of his chosen, betrothing each to himself in saving mercy. Like the Jewish husbands of old, the Lord Jesus gives the pledge and token of his love, when he gives us his Holy Spirit, when he weds us to himself (Hosea 3:1-3; Jeremiah 32:38-40).

(Hosea 3:1-3) “Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of *her* friend, yet an adulteress, **according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel**, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. (2) **So I bought her** to me for fifteen *pieces* of silver, and *for* an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley: (3) And **I said unto her**, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for *another* man: **so will I also be for thee.**”

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(Jeremiah 32:38-40) “And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: (39) And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: (40) And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.”

Though we fall, and fall often, into shame and reproach, — “*The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!*” **Though we deal treacherously** with him, “*he abideth faithful!*” — “*The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!*”

(Ezekiel 16:53-63) “When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then *will I bring again* the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them: (54) That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them. (55) When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate. (56) For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride, (57) Before thy wickedness was discovered, as at the time of *thy* reproach of the daughters of Syria, and all *that are* round about her, the daughters of the Philistines, which despise thee round about.

(58) Thou hast borne thy lewdness and thine abominations, saith the LORD. (59) For thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which hast despised the oath in breaking the covenant. (60) Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. (61) Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. (62) And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: (63) That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.”

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This marriage union is sure, because — “*The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!*” The marriage will never be dissolved because — “*The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!*” Soon, the Lord Jesus will fetch his bride to his home in heaven, where we shall forever celebrate the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:1-9), because — “*The LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away!*”

(Revelation 19:1-9) “And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: (2) For true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. (3) And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. (4) And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. (5) And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. (6) And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. (7) Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. (8) And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

The word “righteousness” here is plural, “righteousnesses,” because the righteousness of the saints involves two things: Imputed Righteousness and Imparted Righteousness.

(9) “And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”

Let me show you just one more of these true sayings of God, in Revelation 14:4. — “*These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.*”

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“Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you deal not treacherously.”

(1 Corinthians 6:19-20) “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (20) For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

Amen.