

**Rent:  
Rent Asunder**

**Mark 10:1-12**

By [Dr. Derek Thomas](#)

*April 10, 2005*

Please be seated. Before we look at the Scriptures together this evening (and they will be from the tenth chapter of Mark's Gospel), let's look to God in prayer. Let us pray.

*Our gracious God and ever blessed Father, You have bid us come to You in prayer to make our wants and needs known to You...as though a telephone should ring in heaven and You should answer, and we would remind You of things that from one point of view may appear as though You didn't know or had forgotten about; and yet, O Lord, we know full well that You know all there is to know, and You know our needs and You know each one of our situations. As we come tonight to this particular passage, we need Your help. Come, Holy Spirit, and grant that the comfort of the Scriptures, the reassurance of the covenantal promises of our God, the exhortations to persevere—all of these might conform together so as to enable us to give You glory, to give You praise. Open up Your word to us just now, for Jesus' sake. Amen.*

Now turn with me to the Gospel of Mark; and as we've been studying this Gospel now for the best part of a year, we come this evening to chapter ten. And there is, as you can see, somewhat of an awkward and somewhat of a difficult transition as we come to the opening verses of chapter ten, teaching about divorce.

There's a change of scenery. Jesus now will move down from the region of Galilee in the north and from now on in the Gospel of Mark, His ministry will be in the south. It isn't all that clear, the exact course that He takes. The more likely route would be down on the eastern side of the River Jordan to a point almost parallel with Jerusalem where Jericho would be found, then to cross over into Judea. That would be the normal route to take, avoiding the area known as the Samaritan District. The text isn't all that clear as to exactly how He moves down south.

And there's a considerable issue here. The issue is about divorce, about remarriage. And the problem will arise in the text that we have before us this

evening in Mark's Gospel, because there is no exception here. There seems to be an outright prohibition of divorce.

Now, we know from other Gospels...Matthew, for example, the nineteenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel (in fact, the very parallel passage to this one, in the same location, the same context Jesus is speaking), and He's saying that there is an exception in the case of marital unfaithfulness.

What are we to do with this particular passage as we have it this evening? And as we look at it we need to remind ourselves that we have a certain principle that operates, because we believe the whole Bible to be the word of God: the infallible, inerrant word of God; that Scripture can't contradict Scripture; that all of Scripture comes from the mouth of God, and you cannot, therefore, have one Scripture contradicting another Scripture. There has to be some kind of explanation as to why it is that we don't have an exception here, and why it is in the parallel in Matthew that we do.

I have to admit some mixed feelings about coming to this passage this evening. Oh, I wish I had a better text! I wish I had a more gospel text! You notice we tried to sort of bring the gospel into hymns this evening, and some of the great gospel-oriented hymns were sung by us this evening to remind ourselves of the gospel—that the gospel also has hard things for us, and this is going to be a hard thing.

I've been reading and studying this passage all week. I've read...I can't tell you how many commentaries. Some brought me to more confusion than I had in the beginning. I won't be able to resolve all of your questions, and I certainly won't be able to deal with all of your pastoral considerations, and I'm very conscious of the fact that some of you are in a context of great pain and great trial, and great difficulty. This would not be the text that I would perhaps bring to you this evening.

And then again, perhaps it would be. I have to trust this evening in the over-ruling guidance of the Holy Spirit, that He knows what's best for us as a congregation, and when the decision was made now over a year ago to embark a course of study in the Gospel of Mark, well, the Holy Spirit knew that on this particular evening this would be the passage. We must hear Jesus here.

Now, this is not me speaking; it's not Ligon speaking; it's not Billy speaking, or Brad or Jim, or Brister, or Bill Wymond, or Joe Holland or anybody else. This is Jesus speaking here. And we know the heart of Jesus, don't we? We've just been singing of His great love for us in the gospel; and, knowing the heart of Jesus, then, let's give our attention now to the reading of God's word in Mark, chapter ten, and verses one through twelve.

Getting up, He went from there to the region of Judea, and beyond the Jordan. Crowds gathered around Him again, and according to His custom,

He once more began to teach them.

Some Pharisees came up to Jesus, testing him, and began to question Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife. And He answered and said to them, 'What did Moses command you?' They said, 'Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.' But Jesus said to them, 'Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment, but from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.' And in the house the disciples began questioning Him about this again. And He said to them, 'Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; and if she herself divorces her husband and married another man, she is committing adultery.'"

Thus far, God's holy and inerrant word.

I was reminding you this morning of Thomas Cranmer. And Thomas Cranmer is well known to us, of course, as the man who authored the *Liturgy of the Prayer Book*, the Elizabethan prayer book of the Church of England. It was readopted and reinstated in 1662, after the restoration of Charles II. You'll remember these words:

"Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife; to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only to her so long as you both shall live?" And the man shall answer, "I will." Then the priest says to the woman [well, Calvin has some issues with the word 'priest' in the Church of England *Prayer Book*, but we'll pass that by!]: "Wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband; to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou obey him and serve him; love, honor, and keep him in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others keep thee only unto him so long as you both shall live?" And the woman shall answer, "I will."

It's a moment in a marriage ceremony where the women—and not a few men—get a little emotional and tearful. I've seen not a few men wipe surreptitiously a tear from their eyes, especially if it's their daughter who is being married. I will say no more!

It's exquisitely beautiful. Who would not want those particular words in a marriage ceremony? I can't hear them without thinking of a day in July of 1976, in what, as I now recall, was a rather cold summer in Wales, when I repeated those words to Rosemary.

I'm going to do a "Ligon-esque" thing this evening! And I have seven points! Now, I comfort and reassure myself in the knowledge that seven is a perfect number in the Bible.

### **I. The first thing I want to say is a question: "Where is the gospel in this passage?"**

I wonder if you're asking that question. I'm asking that question. I've been asking that question all week. Why couldn't I have a passage with the gospel in it? You know, a passage that warms our hearts as we think of the love of God in Jesus Christ: "O the deep, deep, love of Jesus," we sang. Well, it's an important question. It's a proper question. It's not improper to ask that question. We were thinking this morning about Paul's admonition to Timothy about rightly dividing the word of truth, and the possibility that that expression 'word of truth' could actually refer to the gospel. Where is the gospel in this passage?

Jesus came because of this issue. That's where the gospel is. You see, if there wasn't sin in the world, there wouldn't be divorce in the world. There wouldn't be the rending asunder of marriages if there wasn't sin in the world. If Adam and Eve hadn't fallen in the Garden of Eden and begun the culture of blame, one blaming the other—"the woman that Thou gavest to me," Adam said, casting the blame on his dear wife. If it hadn't been for that, then there wouldn't be divorce in the world, and there wouldn't have been the necessity for Jesus to come into the world. Jesus wouldn't have spoken these very words. The fact that He's here at all, the fact that He's made this journey into the world, into Galilee, down to Judea, across to the other side in the region of the Trans-Jordan speaking to men and women, to the Pharisees, to disciples in a certain house; the fact that He's here at all says He's come because of sin.

The gospel is because of sin: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Yes, I know that this is a dark and difficult passage tonight. There's no exception here. We're going to have to deal with that in a minute. It's one of the reasons why Malachi at the close of the Old Testament has God saying, "I hate divorce": because God hates sin, and divorce is here because of sin. If there hadn't been sin, there wouldn't be divorce. God hates divorce. That's not to say that there isn't a place for divorce in a fallen world, but He still hates it. He hates it with a perfect hatred.

I know that some of you, as I do myself, want to know about this exception: aren't there exceptions to this issue? That's not where Jesus will begin. Jesus is in the world as a sin-bearer because of issues like this.

## **II. Well, a second question, and this question arises here because the Pharisees were trying to put Jesus to the test.**

They were testing Jesus. It's important. It's important for us to understand, I think, the modality in which Jesus speaks here, the kinds of things that He does here. He doesn't go running off to the exceptions. He wants to deal with marriage as it ought to be, as God intended it to be; and we'll see in a minute that the Pharisees had no concern about that. All that they were concerned about was in testing Jesus. He might have responded differently in a different context; if He'd been asked a different question; if it hadn't been the Pharisees who had been asking Him, but the disciples who had been asking Him. The fact is that no matter what Jesus is going to say here, these Pharisees are going to twist His words. They were going to do what we were thinking about this morning—you know, about avoiding these tiresome nitpickers.

Well, the Pharisees were tiresome nitpickers, and that's exactly what they're doing here. They're taking a text in the Old Testament and they're misinterpreting it, and they're misapplying it, and they're not interested in godliness. They're not interested in marriage. They're simply interested in trying to get Jesus to side with one party or another.

You know that section in Proverbs 26? It's one of those things that's often raised, you know, as a problem in the Bible. You have one verse in Proverbs 26 saying, "Answer a fool according to his folly", and then the very next verse says, "Don't answer a fool according to his folly." And they sit there right beside each other, glaring in opposition to each other. You know, there are times when you don't give a fool what he's asking for, and there are times in context, too, when that's precisely what you need to do.

Jesus is, I think, discerning here that these Pharisees were fools. And you don't answer a fool according to his folly. In fact, you answer a fool in a way that he isn't actually asking the question. And Jesus is, in fact, answering a very different question than the question that the Pharisees are asking. Sometimes it's best to answer the question that should have been asked. You know, those looking for loopholes—and I wonder if that's perhaps where we are tonight? I have to confess, that's been where I've been for most of this week: looking for loopholes, looking for a way out of the difficulty of this passage; conscious of some of you...sensitive, hurting, in pain; not wanting to make it more difficult for you, looking for the loophole. And you know, if Jesus had begun with the loopholes, you know what we would have done: we would have driven an eighteen-wheeler through it and made it even bigger.

## **III. A third point: and that is to say that the point of issue here is the interpretation of a certain passage in Deuteronomy.**

The passage is in Deuteronomy 24. If you have your Bibles, I'd urge you to take it out. We're going to look at it for a few minutes: Deuteronomy 24, and the opening four verses. This is the passage that the Pharisees raise:

“When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out from his house, and she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man's wife, if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife, then her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his wife, since she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance.”

Now let's note a few things about this passage. First of all, it's given from a male point of view, and that's because Jewish law did not recognize the right of a woman to initiate a divorce. But Roman law—that is, the law in operation at the time when Mark is writing the Gospel—did so allow, and possibly Mark is actually reflecting that in the way that he tells the story.

Note also that what this piece of legislation was designed to do was not to mandate divorce. It neither requires divorce nor recommends divorce, nor even sanctions divorce. Its primary aim was not about divorce at all, nor about bills of divorce; but to prevent a man from remarrying a woman he had previously divorced. It's thought that the reason this law was given was to protect women from abusive, compulsive husbands.

Note the way in which it is framed. Those of you who have an eye to grammar, it's particularly important here...all the “if” clauses in the beginning of the section, and then followed by the word “then.” All you grammarians will know the apodosis and protasis— protasis, apodosis. (If you don't know what that is, don't worry; but you should have learnt it in grammar when you were in school!) It's the kind of sentence that begins with an “if” and is followed by a “then”: If such and such and such and such happens, then this is what follows. The text isn't actually condoning the “if” things that happen; they happen, that's the reality of it. It's not saying yea or nay about the morals or the ethics behind it, but if that happens, then this is what follows.

The whole design of that passage is simply to forbid the remarriage by a man of a woman that he has formerly divorced, and the Pharisees' use of this text is completely wrong. They're misinterpreting the passage. I think that goes a long way in understanding why Jesus answers the way that He does.

#### **IV. Number four, there are two parties of Pharisees in the background here, and it's very important for us to understand that.**

A division had existed amongst the Pharisees, and it had existed for some time prior to Jesus' coming into the world in Palestine, and it was led by two rabbis. One was called Rabbi Shemei, and the other was called Rabbi Hillel.

Rabbi Shemei represented the strict party, the strict interpretation of the passage. Rabbi Hillel, as you might imagine, represented the liberal. The issue is: What do the words "found some indecency in her" refer to? Shemei, the strict party, said it refers to something sexual (not necessarily adultery, because adultery, at least in theory, was punishable by death, although it was hardly ever enacted). That's what Shemei says: something sexual that violates the marriage bond.

Hillel, the liberal party, suggested no, it means something much less than that. They took into cognizance that in verse 3 we read "...he turns against her or dislikes her," so they said, well, you know, if she puts too much salt in the soup, or she burns the ravioli, or she just gets quarrelsome, or even if he sees somebody that he prefers more than her, then divorce was allowed. That's what the liberal wing of the Pharisees, the Hillel party, said.

And you see what's happening here. These Pharisees are coming to Jesus and they're saying, 'Which side are You on here? Are You on the strict side or the liberal side?' and you might have thought that Jesus would say, 'I'm on the strict side,' because He was. But He doesn't say that, because there were things about this strict side that Jesus definitely was not for, and He didn't want to side with one party or another. You see, they're not interested in the truth. They're not interested in godliness. They're not interested in marriage as such. They're simply interested in trying to trip Jesus up.

Now, here's the problem: Jesus' response makes no mention of divorce at all, and He calls divorce followed by remarriage 'adultery.' Now, let's look at the passage in Deuteronomy again. Let's remind ourselves it's not sanctioning divorce, and it's not sanctioning remarriage either, but simply saying that a man who has divorced his wife cannot thereafter remarry her again.

But it seems to be saying...it seems to be saying he is allowed to remarry, it's just that he cannot remarry the woman that he's previously divorced. Otherwise the text would say quite simply he cannot remarry at all, and the text doesn't actually say that. So Jesus is at least here opening up the way, even though He doesn't say it, but He is at least sanctioning the propriety of remarriage. The text in Deuteronomy 24 suggests that that is the case.

Now it can hardly be stronger, Jesus says. He now goes aside. He goes into a house. We don't know whose house it is, and He speaks to the disciples.

Probably the Pharisees are no longer there, but even the disciples need to hear this hard thing. They perhaps have been influenced by these Pharisees—maybe they're confused themselves—and Jesus says this hard thing.

The problem is that elsewhere in the parallel accounts to this account, in Matthew 19 we read that there is an exception: "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife except for immorality [other translations render that as marital unfaithfulness] and marries another woman, commits adultery."

Well, there's the problem. One says if you divorce and remarry, you commit adultery. The other says if you divorce other than on the ground of marital unfaithfulness and remarry, you commit adultery. One allows for an exception; the other does not. (And we haven't even mentioned the issue of First Corinthians 7, and the words of Paul about willful desertion. We'll leave that entirely out of it for now.)

Well, doesn't that show that the Bible is full of contradictions? You know, people say...who don't know the Bible terribly well, and their first acquaintance with it...and some people who have a lot of prejudice about Christianity and fundamentalist Christianity and Bible-believing Christianity and so on...and they say, 'Well, there's an example of why we don't believe Christianity. You know, that's the reason why we're not evangelical. There's the reason why I can't trust the Bible. It's full of contradictions. It's always contradicting [itself].' And people take that and they exaggerate the case.

Well, there is a problem. I don't deny that there's a problem here. Actually, the problem is much bigger than that, because Matthew is giving us a parallel version to Mark, and it's not whether Jesus said there was an exception. Obviously He did, because Matthew records it. Mark omits it.

The issue is, why did Mark omit the exception? Why did Matthew include the exception? Which came first: Mark or Matthew? Was Mark aware that Matthew had been written? Probably not, but let's ask the question anyway: Was Mark aware that Matthew had been written and contained that exception?

Oh, the problem is much bigger than you think. Perhaps the question then is why did Mark leave the exception out? I don't know. I don't know. I can give you my theory on it. I can tell you where you can read forty or fifty pages in small print of theory, none of it terribly convincing. I don't know. I do know that Mark is writing to a Gentile audience and Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience, and maybe Mark thought this Gentile audience that he's writing to didn't need to know now about the exceptions, not at least in a hurry, because of the use that they might make of those exceptions. Maybe.

## **V. Jesus goes back to Genesis.**



He goes back to Genesis. He begins at the beginning. He goes right back to square one. He goes back to the Garden of Eden. That's where you start. Actually, that's always where you start. You start as things are meant to be; not as they are, but as they're meant to be. Let's start there.

What did God intend for marriage? Yes, there are problems. Yes, there's sin. Yes, there's the Fall. Yes, there is divorce. Yes, there is remarriage. But what were God's intentions from the beginning? Let's start there.

You know, when I fly (and I fly a fair amount), I always choose the exit seat. It's wonderful these days, because you can do it online. You know, you can go to the internet and you can pick what seat you want, and I always go for that exit seat. And every time I sit in the exit seat, this lady (or sometimes it's a man) will come up to me, and you know, they'll say the same thing: 'Are you comfortable sitting in the exit seat? And you know if the plane is going down, pull this door...well, I presume you wait till it lands first!...and you pull this door, pull it in, and make sure now that there's room here in the aisle, and put your things underneath the chair' and so on....I want to say to her, "Listen, if we're going down, you know...this vest and the whistle and the little light, it doesn't mean anything. It's over. It's curtains. It's heaven!"

I don't sit in the exit seat because I'm paranoid about flying and I think that if I sit next to the exit seat maybe I can get out first—hey, if that plane is going down, it's over! I sit in the exit seat because there's more room for these big legs. It's as simple as that. You know, I don't think...I mean, how many of you listen to all that paraphernalia? You know, the oxygen coming down, and there's a whistle here...you're in the sea! You're in the ocean, and all you have is a whistle? Who's going to listen to that?

Jesus goes back to the beginning. You know, if you're always looking for the exceptions, if you're always looking for trouble, then you'll inevitably end up with difficulty. Jesus goes back to Genesis 1:27 and chapter 2:4: The great Creator "made them male and female" and "for that reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they shall be one flesh". And then Jesus adds His own words: "What God has joined together, let no man rend asunder."

Do you see the psychology of what He's doing? Instead of asking 'What will God allow me to get away with in the matter of this divorce and remarriage thing?' we ought to be asking, 'What does God desire of me as one of His creatures?'

You know, if you begin a marriage focusing on the exit strategy, I'm not surprised if it doesn't work. I'm not surprised if it doesn't work. The Pharisees are not asking what did God intend marriage to be, or how can we restore a broken relationship which brings such agony into marriage? When can we allow people

to get a divorce, is their question. And Jesus is saying, 'Look, you're looking at this from the wrong end.'

## **VI. Six: Jesus declares the Mosaic provisions a concession due to sin.**

Yes, there is a concession in the Mosaic legislation. We've seen it in Deuteronomy 24. It's there because of sin. God allows it. It wasn't part of His perfect plan from the beginning, but He allows it. Divorce is never commanded; it's permitted because God can see the sinfulness of our hearts and the sinfulness of those who have done us wrong, and we find ourselves the innocent victim in a broken relationship.

Divorce is always a tragedy. It's always a tragedy. It always is painful. It's almost impossible to rein in those emotions when you pass through something like this.

When we were watching the royal wedding—well, I have to say, I didn't watch it, but some of you Anglophiles I'm sure were watching with some titillation, perhaps, the royal wedding. And I'm sure most of you who saw the royal wedding were thinking of the original wedding, the fairy tale wedding with the Princess in all of her splendor, and how sin had ruined that relationship.

Taking the exception out of it for a minute, Jesus is saying here a very hard thing. This is a very hard statement. It tells us how very seriously Jesus viewed the whole issue of marriage, and you and I need to view it that way. It's a very serious thing. It's a very serious thing. It's all too possible to think that just because, you know, our marriage is still together—mine is 29 years now—it's still together. I could make a great deal of that. But you know because I'm human, as your marriage is, and some of you have 50, 60 years of marriage, but there's sin in every marriage. There's temptation in every marriage. There are difficult spots in every marriage. There are hills of difficulty in every marriage. And Jesus is saying to us 'Remember what God wants from you as a godly husband and a godly wife. This is how marriage was meant to be.'

## **VII. There's a fundamental reason why divorce is wrong in the ideal: because marriage reflects the union we have with God.**

"They shall be one flesh...." That's what Jesus quotes. He goes back to Genesis, and He quotes that passage: "They shall be one flesh."

Now when we think of that expression, we probably think of the physical intimacy that is associated with that idea in marriage, but it's more than that. It's much more than that. John Stott (who, by the way, is single)...John Stott says "...it's a kind of ...not 'union', but it's a kind of 'reunion'. She's taken out of man, bone of my bone, and so on; and now they are together again. It's a blending of

personalities in such a way that together they are more than the sum of the individual parts.” Isn't that beautiful? It's a reunion.

That's what Paul means, I think, in First Corinthians 11, in a passage that's as difficult as this one. In fact, it's more difficult. It's about, you know, the head covering. And he says, “The woman is the glory of man.” Now, don't be offended by that. The woman is the glory of man. He means that the woman makes a man appear better than he otherwise would be. (Boy, isn't that true! Thank God for our wives, or where would we be?) You know, we joke about it, talk about our ‘better halves’...well, actually they are our better halves, because without her, man is lacking in some measure of glory.

Instead of that, what happens? Adam blames Eve. You know, that's what happens in the Garden of Eden. It's the seed. It's the seed of all rottenness in marriages. You know, “the woman that You gave me...it's her fault. Actually, it's Your fault for giving me this woman.” It's the culture of blame that comes on the heels of the fall.

Well, I wonder what you're thinking tonight. Does Jesus allow exceptions? Yes, He does. Matthew 19 tells us that. Our *Westminster Confession* summarizes the two exceptions: marital unfaithfulness and willful desertion, from First Corinthians 7. Yes. That's the whole teaching of the Bible. But here, Jesus wants them to focus on the ideal, on how it ought to be. And speaking of divorce and remarriage as the Pharisees themselves were speaking about it, Jesus is simply saying, ‘It's wrong. You know, your idea of it is entirely wrong.’

I wonder what you're thinking. You know, we have so little time, you and I, in this world, and we must always view marriage from the point of view of the Bible. Marriage is a wonderful thing. It's a great adventure. It presents opportunities for self-fulfillment, of discovering ourselves, and, more importantly, of discovering the Lord and His ways in a way that is without parallel in any other societal relationship that you can think of.

Let's pray for each other. You know that's what we owe each other as the people of God, as the body of Christ: to pray for one another—for those who are hurting (and there are some who are hurting tonight, those whose marriages are in difficulty). Let's pray for our brothers and sisters, that their marriages and our marriages might reflect the glory of God. Let's pray together.

*Our Father, as we have traveled down a difficult path this evening, and a hard word, give us grace to hear it, to keep it within our hearts. And grant us the strength of Your Spirit now so to walk in Your ways and to fear Your name, for Jesus' sake. Amen.*

Please stand; receive the Lord's benediction.

*Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

This transcribed message has been lightly edited and formatted for the web page. No attempt has been made, however, to alter the basic extemporaneous delivery style, or to produce a grammatically accurate, publication-ready manuscript conforming to an established style template. Should there be questions regarding grammar or theological content, the reader should presume any error to be with the transcriber/editor rather than with the original speaker. For full copyright, reproduction and permissions information, please visit the FPC Copyright, Reproduction & Permission statement.

©2013 First Presbyterian Church.

*This transcribed message has been lightly edited and formatted for the Web site. No attempt has been made, however, to alter the basic extemporaneous delivery style, or to produce a grammatically accurate, publication-ready manuscript conforming to an established style template.*

*Should there be questions regarding grammar or theological content, the reader should presume any website error to be with the webmaster/transcriber/editor rather than with the original speaker. For full copyright, reproduction and permission information, please visit the First Presbyterian Church Copyright, Reproduction & Permission statement.*

This article is provided as a ministry of [Third Millennium Ministries](#) (Thirdmill). If you have a question about this article, please [email](#) our *Theological Editor*.

#### **Subscribe to *Biblical Perspectives Magazine***

BPM subscribers receive an email notification each time a new issue is published. Notifications include the title, author, and description of each article in the issue, as well as links directly to the articles. Like BPM itself, *subscriptions are free*. To subscribe to [BPM](#), please select this [link](#).