

# Deuteronomy 24:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

## Analysis

**Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.** The prohibition against the first husband remarrying her prevents treating marriage as temporary arrangement. Marriage should be permanent commitment, not revolving door relationship.

The word defiled is controversial - not that the woman sinned by remarrying (which was permitted) but that returning to the first husband after marrying another creates improper sexual combination. The intervening marriage makes reunion with the first husband inappropriate.

Calling this abomination before the LORD uses strong language indicating serious covenant violation. Though individual divorce may be permitted, manipulating marriages through divorce-remarriage cycles defiles the land and violates God's design for marriage permanence.

The phrase cause the land to sin emphasizes corporate consequences. Individual

sexual sins defile not just persons but the land itself, affecting the whole community. Sexual ethics have public, communal dimensions.

## Historical Context

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This law prevented manipulation where men divorced wives temporarily, allowing them to marry others, then remarried them. Such treatment of marriage as fluid arrangement contradicted God's design for permanent covenants.

The language of land defilement recalls laws about sexual immorality (Leviticus 18:25-28) - sexual sin pollutes the land and brings judgment on the nation.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. What does prohibition against remarrying the first husband teach about marriage permanence?
2. How does this law prevent manipulation and protect women from being treated as commodities?
3. Why does remarrying the first husband after intervening marriage constitute defilement?
4. What does the language of land defilement teach about corporate consequences of sexual sin?
5. How should the strong language ('abomination') shape our view of the seriousness of sexual ethics?

## Interlinear Text

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לֹא	אֲשֶׁר	פָּרָאשׁ	וְ	בַּעַל	הַ	יָוֹכַל	לְ	לֹא	לְשׁ	וּבְ	לְשׁ	וּבְ	
H3808	may	husband	Her former	H834	which sent her away	H7971	she	H7725	again				
	H3201	H1167	H7223										
לֹא	שׁ	לְמַחַת	לְ	לֹא	אֲשֶׁר	רַ	אֲשֶׁר	הַטְמֵא	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	הַטְמֵא		
not take	H1961	H0	to be his wife	H802	after	H310	H834	that she is defiled	H2930				
	H3947												
כִּי	לְפָנֵי	הָ	וְאַ	יְהִי	הַ	וְאַ	וְלֹא	מַטְמֵא	וְאַ	מַטְמֵא	וְאַ		
H3588	for that is abomination	H1931	before	H6440	the LORD	H3068	H3808	to sin	H2398				
	H8441												
בְּאַרְצָךְ	אֲשֶׁר	יְהִי	הָ	אֲלֹהָךְ	יְבָ	נִתְתָּ	לְבָ						
and thou shalt not cause the land	H834	the LORD	H3068	thy God	H430	giveth	H5414						
H776													
תְּכַלְתָּה:													
thee for an inheritance													
	H5159												

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 3:1** (References Lord): They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD.