

# Questions Regarding Divorce

*Matthew 19:3-6*

# Region of Judah Beyond Jordan

- Jesus left Galilee and went to the “region of Judea beyond the Jordan.” ***Matt 19:1-2***
  - Josephus calls this territory “Perea over the Jordan” (Wars 2.3.1) {See map}

...s to pass through  
...ounters opposition  
...rse (Luke 9:52-56).

Salim?  
Aenon?

Sebaste (Samaria)

Gerasa

SAMARIA

Jordan River

PEREA

Jesus crosses over to the  
region across the Jordan  
River, and large crowds  
come to him (Matthew  
19:1-2; Mark 10:1).

...passes through Jericho, heals  
...ind men, and meets Zaccheus  
...ew 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52;  
...8:35-19:10).

JUDEA

ANTIPAS

Bethphage Jericho

Bethany beyond the Jordan?

Jerusalem  
Bethany  
Bethlehem

Qumran

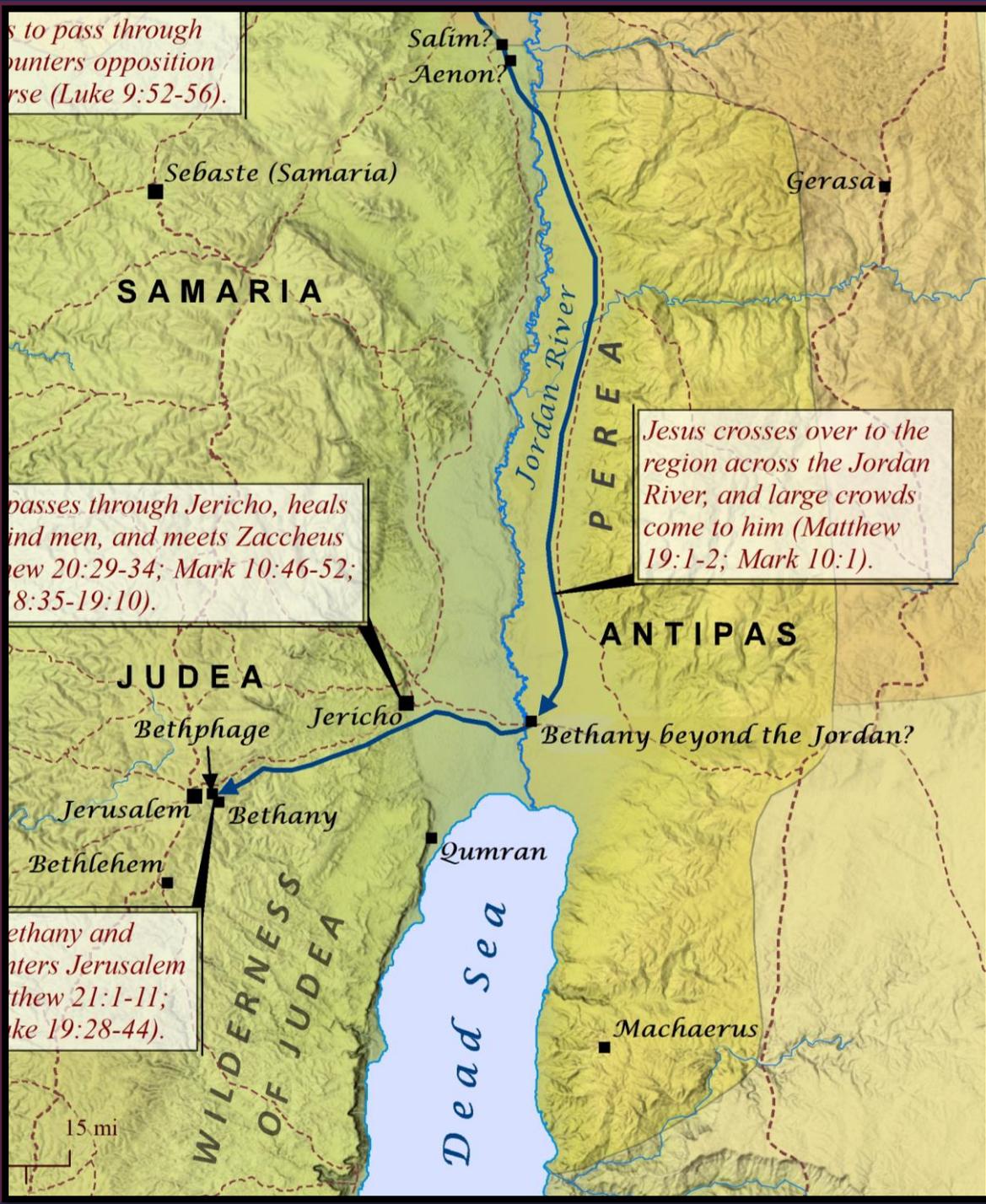
...ethany and  
...nters Jerusalem  
...thew 21:1-11;  
...ke 19:28-44).

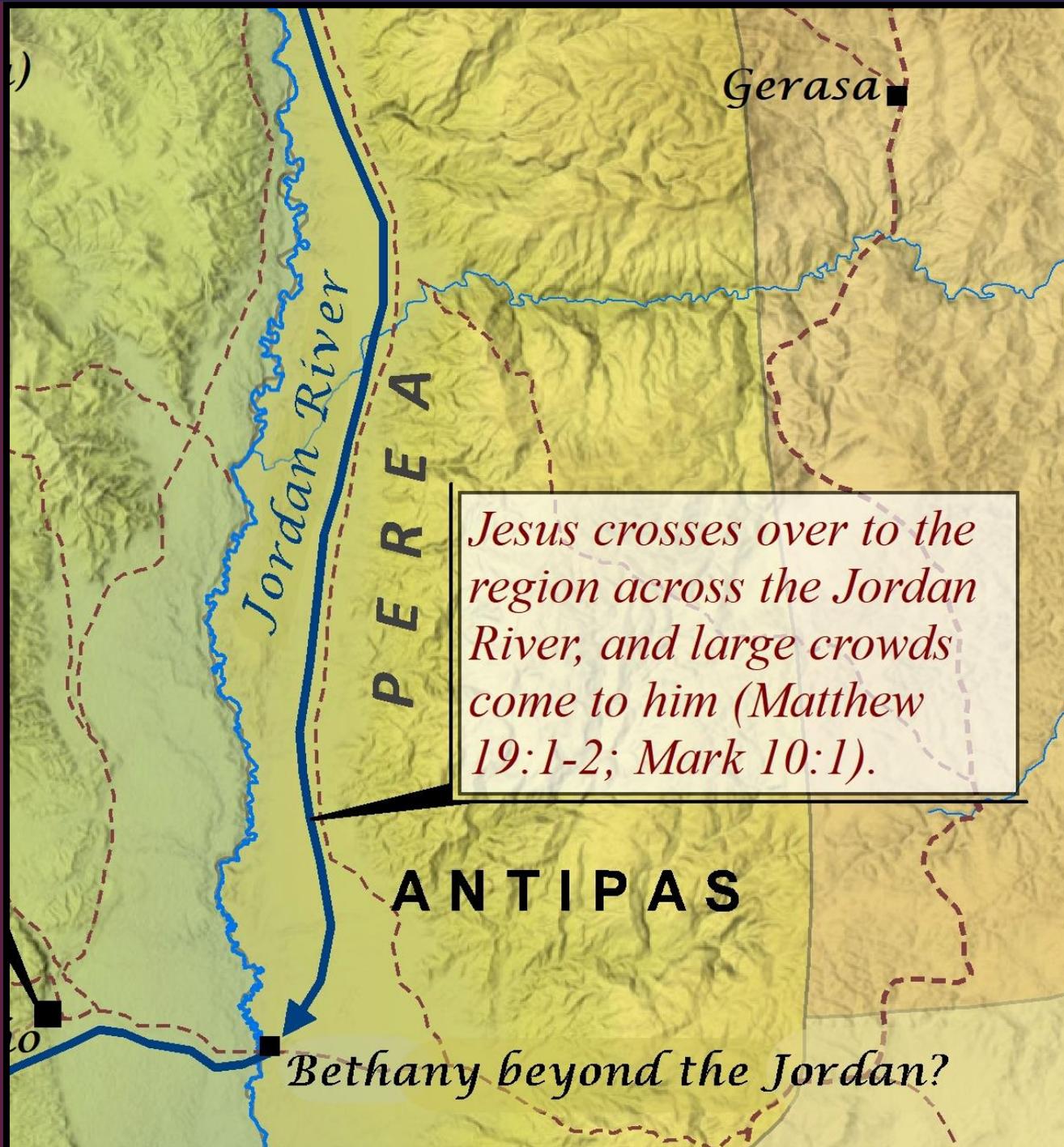
WILDERNESS  
OF JUDEA

Machaerus

Dead Sea

15 mi





Gerasa

Jordan River

PEREA

*Jesus crosses over to the region across the Jordan River, and large crowds come to him (Matthew 19:1-2; Mark 10:1).*

ANTIPAS

*Bethany beyond the Jordan?*

# Region of Judah Beyond Jordan

- Jesus left Galilee and went to the “region of Judea beyond the Jordan.” ***Matt 19:1-2***
  - Josephus calls this territory “Perea over the Jordan” (Wars 2.3.1) {See map}
  - This territory was ruled over by Herod Antipas. (Antiquities 17.8.1)
    - *Herod Antipas had beheaded John the baptizer because John told Herod it was unlawful for Herod to be married to His brother’s Philip’s wife, Herodias. Cf. Mark 6:16-18*

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- The Pharisees tested Jesus. “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?” **Matt 19:3**
  - Common view: Put away for every cause.
    - *“He that desires to be divorced from his wife for any cause whatsoever (and many such causes happen among men), let him in writing give assurance that he will never use her as his wife any more; for by this means she may be at liberty to marry another husband, although before this bill of divorce be given, she is not to be permitted so to do...”* (Antiquities 4.8.23, Josephus)

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- The Pharisees tested Jesus. “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?” **Matt 19:3**
  - Common view: Put away for every cause.
    - *Josephus records that he divorced his “wife also, as not pleased with her behavior, though not till she had been the mother of three children.” (Live 76, Josephus)*

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- The Pharisees tested Jesus. “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?” **Matt 19:3**
  - Common view: Put away for every cause.
    - *The Pharisees did not seem concerned with God’s desires for marriage. If so, they would have been outspoken about Herod’s marriage to Herodias just like John the baptizer.*
    - *The Pharisees had loosed where God had bound.*
      - *They also created burdens not set by God.*  
**Cf. Matt 23:4; 15:9**

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- Jesus answered their question. **Matt 19:4-6**
  - “Have you not read...”
    - *“...He who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’...” vs 4; Gen 1:27; 5:1-2*
      - *Jesus looks back to the book of Genesis.*
      - *“At the beginning,” God “made them male and female.”*
      - *God made one man (male) and one woman (female).*

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- Jesus answered their question. **Matt 19:4-6**
  - “Have you not read...”
    - *“... For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother...” vs 5; Gen 2:24*
      - *Leave – to leave behind*
      - *The man is to begin his own life with his own wife.*
      - *The man will soon embrace the responsibilities of being both a husband and a father.*

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- Jesus answered their question. ***Matt 19:4-6***
  - “Have you not read...”
    - “...and be joined to his wife,...” ***vs 5***
      - *Join - proskollaō - to glue to*
      - *This is more than a partnership or a friendship.*
      - *Joining together is to attach to one another in a lifelong covenant.*

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- Jesus answered their question. **Matt 19:4-6**
  - “Have you not read...”
    - *“and the two shall become one flesh”? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh...” vs 5b-6*
      - *“shall become one flesh” can refer to the intimate union between the man and woman.*
      - *However, the statement has a greater reference to the union and the oneness as two people joined together by God.*

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- Jesus answered their question. **Matt 19:4-6**
  - “Have you not read...”
    - “...Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” **vs 6; Rom 7:1-3**
      - “has joined together” - *su(n)zeugnumi* – “to yoke together”
      - *What God has yoked together in this lifelong union, man is not to separate.*



# The Question Regarding Divorce

- What about Moses' command? ***Matt 19:7-9***
  - They questioned Jesus about Moses "command."
    - *"Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" vs 7*
      - *This was not a command of Moses.*
      - *The instructions given in Deut 24:1-4 was for the protection of the woman put away by her husband. It was not a command to put away.*

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- What about Moses' command? ***Matt 19:7-9***
  - They questioned Jesus about Moses "command."
    - *"Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" vs 7*
    - *Jesus replied, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." vs 8*
    - *As shown earlier, divorce for any reason was common. This was the will of man, not the will of God. God hates divorce. **Mal 2:13-16***

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- What about Moses' command? **Matt 19:7-9**
  - Jesus' command:
    - *"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." vs 9*
      - *If a man divorces his wife and marries another, then he commits adultery.*
      - *Whoever marries the divorced wife commits adultery.*
      - *If the divorced wife remarries, she commits adultery.*

Husband or wife  
**Mark 10:11-12**

**Matt 5:32**

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- What about Moses' command? ***Matt 19:7-9***
  - Jesus' command:
    - *“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.” vs 9*
      - *The exception: If the man puts away his wife for sexual immorality (fornication {porneia}), then he can remarry without committing adultery.*
      - *If the guilty wife remarried, the man would not bear guilt for her committing adultery if she remarried.*  
***Cf. Matt 5:32***

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- The disciples' response. ***Matt 19:10-12***
  - “If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry.” ***vs 10***
    - *Were they so use to the “freedom” to divorce their wife for any reasons that they found Jesus’ teachings unbearable or impossible to honor?*
    - *Did they have such a weakness of the flesh that they were unable to remain faithful to the wife of their youth?*

# The Question Regarding Divorce

- The disciples' response. **Matt 19:10-12**
  - Some choose to live single for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. **vs 11-12**
    - *Not everyone was able to accept Jesus' teachings.*
      - *Sometimes a spouse may choose to leave, leaving the other unable to remarry.*
      - *Other times a person may be put away due to fornication and be, therefore, unable to remarry.*
      - *Those being unable to remarry may be those to whom Jesus was referring as "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." vs 12*

# Conclusion

- Two takeaways:
  - Our heavenly Father desires “these little ones...who believe” to be protected.
    - *We are not to despise them.*
    - *We are not to tempt them to sin.*
    - *We are not to cause them to stumble.*

# Conclusion

- The hardness of a person's heart threatens his faithfulness to God.
  - It causes a person to reject God's commands, replacing them with their own desires.
  - It caused the Jews to deal treacherously with the wives of their youth even in the days of Jesus.
  - The same lack of respect for the marriage union persists greatly in our world today.