

PLURAL MARRIAGE ACCORDING TO ALL OF SCRIPTURE

E Boyd and Kendra Daniels

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	- 4 -
1 John 3 – Sin is Defined by Torah	- 8 -
Scriptures Supporting Polygyny as Righteous and Our Comments	- 8 -
Genesis 1 – Be Fruitful and Multiply	- 8 -
Genesis 2 – Creation of a Help Meet.....	- 9 -
Genesis 2 – One Flesh	- 11 -
Genesis 20 – King Avimelech Blameless for Taking Another Wife.....	- 11 -
Genesis 29 – יהוה Helps The Second Wife.....	- 12 -
Genesis 30 – Elohim Blesses Lě’ah for Giving Ya'aqob a Wife.....	- 13 -
Exodus 21 – Marriage Rights Shall Not Be Diminished.....	- 13 -
Leviticus 18 – Do Not Uncover the Nakedness Of.....	- 14 -
Leviticus 20 – Do Not Marry a Woman and Her Mother.....	- 15 -
Numbers 5 – Test for Unfaithfulness.....	- 15 -
Numbers 31 – Division of Spoils.....	- 17 -
Deuteronomy 17 – Multiply Wives	- 19 -
Deuteronomy 21 – A Man has Two Wives	- 20 -
Deuteronomy 22 – Seizing a Virgin	- 20 -
Judges 8 – Gideon’s Seventy Sons	- 21 -
Ruth 4 – Blessing of Raḥĕl and Lě’ah at Ruth’s Wedding.....	- 21 -
1 Samuel 1 – Wives of Elqanah.....	- 21 -
2 Samuel 12 – Dawid’s Wives.....	- 22 -
1 Kings 11 – Shelomoh Love of Foreign Wives	- 22 -
1 Kings 15 – Dawid was Righteous in All That He Did.....	- 23 -
1 Chronicles 2 – Kalēḅ’s Concubine	- 23 -
2 Chronicles 24 – King Yo’ash’s Wives	- 24 -
Nehemiah 13 – Shelomoh’s Foreign Wives	- 24 -
Esther 1 & 2 – Sovereign Aḥashwērosh’s Second Wife Esther	- 24 -
Song of Shelomoh 6 – Shelomoh’s 141st Wife.....	- 25 -
Jeremiah 3 – Yisra’ĕl and Yehuḏah, Wives Of יהוה.....	- 25 -
Jeremiah 31 – יהוה New Marriage Covenant with Yisra’ĕl and Yehuḏah.....	- 26 -
Ezekiel 23 – Oholah and Oholib, Wives Of יהוה.....	- 26 -
Malachi 2 – Wife of Your Youth.....	- 27 -
Matthew 19 – Two Become One Flesh	- 27 -
Matthew 25 – Parable of the 10 Virgins	- 28 -
1 Corinthians 5 – Father’s Wife.....	- 29 -
1 Corinthians 6 – Adulterers Will Not Inherit Heaven.....	- 29 -
1 Corinthians 7 – Own Wife and Own Husband	- 29 -
1 Corinthians 7 – Wife is Bound	- 30 -
1 Corinthians 9 – First use of the term Sister-Wife	- 31 -
1 Timothy 3 – Husband of One Wife	- 31 -
1 Timothy 4 – Forbidding to Marry.....	- 31 -
Hebrews 13 – Marriage Bed Undeclared.....	- 32 -
James 2 – Abraham’s Righteousness.....	- 32 -
Conclusion	- 33 -
~~Benefits for Wives in Polygyny~~	- 34 -
~~Benefits for a Husband in Polygyny~~	- 36 -
Reference Links for Further Study	- 36 -

Introduction

What you are reading is Kendra's and my study of the Scriptural precepts of plural marriage. I have tried to record every Scripture I've ever seen or known to be used for or against the concept of plural marriage, also known as polygyny (or more commonly, but inaccurately called 'polygamy'). I'm intentionally giving you the advantage here – you may study each argument, the supporting scriptures and our interpretations, then determine where my error may or may not be and formulate a rebuttal without any interference from me. The following is our understanding and belief of plural marriage as it is stated in Scripture. It will shock and anger most, challenge some, but our hope is that it may actually convince a few to look beyond their current understandings and beliefs of what our culture has commonly taught. This study will require you to put aside your biases, your current assumptions, and trust wholly on what the Scriptures actually say, opening yourself to the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) and יהוה wisdom.

I no longer consider myself a Christian. Too many pagan practices have crept into Christianity for me to be comfortable with that religion or label. Instead I seek and attempt to walk as His Son walked, observing and keeping as many of His commandments and instructions as I find possible. I do not keep them to earn or attain salvation. Nor do I keep them because I am saved. I keep them because I love Him and wish to be obedient to Him and His Word. Even if He had never saved me, I would still keep His instructions because He is who He is. Even an unsaved sinner is blessed by keeping His commandments.

I have been studying what the Scriptures have to say about plural marriage for over 14 years. When I first started studying what He says about marriage in the Scriptures, I was looking for a Biblical way to control, quell and/or satisfy my sexual desires under Elohim's teachings. At first I denied the truth of polygyny, never even considering it to be Biblical, but instead trusted in what I had been taught as a young man. At the time, I didn't understand the powerful influences pagan cultures has had on our Christian beliefs, primarily the Hellenization of יהוה Scriptures over the last 2000 years and the enemy's constant, unrelenting attack on marriage and the family throughout the ages. In the Winter of 1998, I stumbled upon a web site promoting Scriptural based polygyny. At first I was surprised, shocked, skeptical and quite a bit suspicious! How could this be? I started collecting, reading and studying every argument on polygamy and polygyny I could find, questioning their Scriptural interpretations. I looked for holes and weaknesses in their arguments, challenging every assertion. I knew that if their reasonings were weak and their arguments flawed, then the assertions on polygyny would be false. But it all proved true and made sense, harmonizing with the whole of Scriptures. I finally had to come to the conclusion that Scriptures does support the practice of polygyny as righteous, despite what I had been taught and also despite what the church had been teaching for centuries. I saw this as yet another step in my journey to submit to יהוה will as revealed in His Scriptures and my continuing effort to divorce myself from worldly understandings and practices. Elohim allows men to be celibate; He allows most of us to be joyously married to one woman; and He allows those able, to be harmoniously married to two or more women. My goal is to seek and know the truth, to live by the principles of our Hebraic Roots, Biblical Patriarch, to be a mediator and servant of יהוה, to guide my family according to His will, as He reveals it to me. If Scripture says only monogamy is righteous, I want to know that. If Scripture says polygyny is also righteous, then I want to know that. If you disagree with this, then you must prove it Sola Scriptoria,

יהוה breathed Scriptures, the only authority on Earth I fully trust.

My wife, Kendra, has come to the same conclusions as mine regarding polygyny only recently, but has been very diligent in her studies as well. I have been so very blessed to be married to such a wonderful, strong, courageous and bold woman of Yah. She has enriched my life with her faithfulness to Him, her diligence in searching out the Scriptures and her submissive spirit that quickens my desire to protect, lead and cover her.

The following is Kendra's testimony: Boyd and I met almost 2 years ago (9-11-13) and he was right up front and honest about his belief in polygyny. When he first told me, I think he fully expected me to run away screaming with my hair on fire! Honestly, I was not as shocked as he thought I would be though. I had been studying the Torah for 7 years by then and I had seen the polygyny of all the patriarchs and was familiar with the idea and that it was done quite frequently by the Hebrew nation. The question I asked was, *Is it for today?* Boyd said yes, and I pretty much asked him if he was willing to lay that belief aside, and remain faithful to just me. He did agree to that, and to reassure me of his sincerity, he included that promise in our written marriage contract (ketuvah). But, he did say verbally that *if I ever changed my mind* about polygyny, that I was allowed to present him with any possible candidates as a sister-wife that I would like, with him having full veto rights. I wanted to believe that he honestly had set that belief aside, but just knowing that intellectually the belief had not been changed, it caused me to be quite insecure and jealous. Boyd and I never fought about anything in our early marriage except about other women, and me being hyper-vigilant. I watched his every move, with a full expectation that he would eventually be unfaithful to me. Yet, he never was. He's a man of integrity and he keeps his promises, obviously. Months went by, and I was quietly and secretly pondering this belief of his. I would ask a random question here and there, and he would easily answer me, and then drop the subject. He never initiated a conversation about polygyny, and he certainly never pushed the belief on me either. It was some time in the Spring when Boyd went on a business trip for about a week that I decided I needed to do my own Bible study, and since he was going to be gone all that time, I would have plenty of time to really dig into it. And I did. When he returned from his trip, he was quite surprised that I had changed *my mind* about polygyny, and decided that yes, it could be done righteously *even today*, and with His blessing. I continued to study the Bible, looking for evidence of His view of plural marriage, and even got bold enough to begin asking others on Facebook what they thought about it, all the way into the Fall of that same year. When I changed what I thought about it in my head, my heart began to change as well. My husband calls that his own modern day miracle, because I was dead set against polygyny in the beginning, and it could only have been Him changing my mind. With the changing of my mind, my emotions followed and I quit being jealous, insecure and possessive! I agree that it was quite the miracle! So, now we're both on the same page with this belief in polygyny, but that does not mean necessarily that we will ever have a sister-wife. We decided early on that we were going to wait on Him, and His choice, *if that is even something He wants for us*. It may not be. Polygyny is not for *every* married couple. We are not seeking a sister-wife, praying for a sister-wife, or needing a sister-wife. Boyd has reassured me consistently that he is completely and utterly happy with just me as his wife, and that I am not lacking in any area. (I tend to disagree with that though!) She would be a bonus to us, not filling a void or a lack in our lives. We are very happily married and fully content! We certainly don't want to mess that up by going out and trying to find a sister-wife by ourselves and outside of His will for us! We pray that our future is bright and full of His glory, with or without anyone else. May His will be done!

What follows is my examination of both the Scriptures that people use to prove 'monogamy

only' and those used to prove the righteousness of polygyny. I believe many who argue for the 'monogamy only' side make the mistake of assuming the Scriptures that support marriage are supporting only monogamy, thereby excluding polygyny. This is not true – Elohim supports both in His Word. He is pro-monogamy, but that does not mean He is anti-polygyny. יהוה is pro-marriage! I further warn you that the 'monogamy only' camp has the tougher argument. In order to maintain the harmony of Scripture, they must disprove every polygynist argument and explain a correct interpretation for all the Scriptures used to prove polygyny is righteous. If they fail to do this, then the polygynist can say that "Yes, we acknowledge that monogamy is righteous, but these other passages say that polygyny is also righteous", for the polygynist admits that monogamy is Scriptural. So if this is you, I wish you to have every advantage to prove your case. If I'm wrong, I pray that יהוה will reveal that to me through you, and that He will never harden my heart or shut my ears to sound reasoning. I pray that you will make a similar pledge.

You will notice that I will use names that may not be familiar to you. This is because I have attempted to return to the actual names used for and by anyone found in Scripture. We use יהוה for the Father's personal Name, which we pronounce as "Y'hovah". We use "Yeshua" as the Name of the Messiah. We also use "Elohim" and "Yah" (Yah being a shortened form of His personal Name) in place of God. A brief study of Scripture quickly shows us the importance that יהוה puts on an individual's name and on His own name. The Hellenization of those names in Scripture, I believe, is an attempt and largely successful attempt to separate Christianity from its Hebrew roots by second century church fathers, the Greek language influences of the Alexandria Empire, then by Constantine and finally the Roman Catholic Church. Since I believe names are important to יהוה, I strive to make them important to me. When I introduce myself to someone I give them my name, as I pronounce it, with the expectation that they will use it that way. When I travel to a country where English is not the native language, I still introduce myself using my English name with the anticipation that it is what I'll be called. I wouldn't appreciate it if someone were to give me a new name in their language or even use the equivalence of my name in their language. When I meet someone from a foreign country, I try to pronounce their name as anyone from their own home town would. I believe that we should strive to use their name as was given to them in their own language. Today it is common for some people to adopt English names along with their native ones, but this is their choice. It's not imposed upon them by a foreign people. Why is it that Biblical characters are the only historical individuals that translators feel it appropriate to rename?

It's important to understand the different terms when discussing this topic – monogamy (a man having only one wife) and polygyny (one man having multiple wives) are the only two righteous forms of marriage in Scripture. Any other relationship is not a 'marriage'. The term polygamy is a wide umbrella term that includes four forms of sexual unions – polyandry (a wife with multiple husbands), polyfidelity (multiple wives with multiple husbands, being faithful as a unit), polyamory (multiple sexual partners that are not faithful, i.e. swingers), and polygyny (one husband with multiple wives) which is a 'marriage'. For the purpose of this paper, we are discussing specifically monogamy and polygyny. In righteous polygyny, the wives are not married to each other – they are only married to the husband. It is not some kind of strange union called 'Group Marriage'.

A lot of people think that if a husband has multiple wives, that he is committing adultery. The reason people think that is because *culture* teaches us that adultery is defined as either a husband or a wife being sexually unfaithful. But looking at the word adultery in its context all throughout His Word, it's only when a *married woman* is unfaithful. When a married man has sexual relations with a

single woman, it is sin, but it is defined as fornication, not adultery. While there are no solid Scriptural passages that clearly states that sex outside marriage is fornication, we believe it to be such. Adultery is always defined by the marital status of the *woman*, but never by the man. A careful read of the passages of Ez.16:32, Lev.20:10, Deut.22:22 and also 23–24, then compare those to Deut. 22:28–29. In Romans 7:1–3, only the woman is bound by the Torah to her husband – thus Matthew 5:27–28 means that whenever any man looks upon a *married woman* to lust after her, then he has committed adultery in his heart. Since the people in Yeshua's day understood the definition of adultery always included a married woman when Yeshua made that statement, they knew He meant lusting after a married woman was committing adultery. The Greek work γυναικᾶ (G1135 gynaika) in this verse has been translated as women, but every other instance in Matthew it's translated as wife. Are the translators injecting their own biases here? Single people looking at and desiring other single people cannot possibly be committing adultery in their hearts. A single or married man looking at an unmarried or unbetrothed woman cannot possibly be committing adultery in his heart, but he could be committing fornication. Keep in mind that Paul said that if a man lusts, he should marry. If it's ok to lust and seek one wife, why does it become sin if a man wants to add an additional wife because of lust and attraction?

The Hebrew word for adultery is –

nâ'aph (H5003) נאפ

BDB Definition:

1) to commit adultery

1a) (Qal)

1a1) to commit adultery

1a1a) usually of man

1a1a1) always with wife of another

1a1b) adultery (of women) (participle)

1a2) idolatrous worship (figuratively)

1b) (Piel)

1b1) to commit adultery

1b1a) of man

1b1b) adultery (of women) (participle)

1b2) idolatrous worship (figuratively)

Part of Speech: verb

A Related Word by BDB/Strong's Number: a primitive root

Same Word by TWOT Number: 1273

Obviously a married man having relations with a married woman is adultery, because she is married, but NOT because he is married.

Many people see examples of men in Scripture who had multiple wives. They see the issues and problems they had and conclude that Yah is teaching that monogamy is His only plan for marriage. Yet if we apply that same reasoning to monogamous marriages seen in Scriptures, we'd conclude they're a failure as well. We cannot use patterns found in Scripture to create *Commandments*, yet patterns are what we use to establish our *Doctrines*. If Yah is showing us the

issues and problems found in plural marriage, it's so we can learn to avoid those mistakes in our own marriage, just as we would learn from the examples of those in monogamous marriages.

There are 40 plus men in Scriptures that are known, either directly or indirectly, to have had more than one wife. Below is a list of those men, some are discussed more fully in this paper, while others are not.

Abdon* – Judges 12:13	Ezrah – 1 Chronicles 4:17–18	Shaḥarayim – 1Chronicles 8:8
Abiyah – 2Chronicles 13:21	Gid'on – Judges 8:30	Shelomoh – 1Kings 11:3
Ab̄ram – Genesis 16:1, 16:3 & 25:1	Hēman* – 1Chronicles 25:4	Shim'i* – 1Chronicles 4:27
Aḥab – 1Kings 20:3	Hoshēa* – Hosea 1:3 & 3:1	Shim'on – Genesis 46:10
Aḥashwērosh – Esther 1:9	Iḇtsan* – Judges 12:9	Terah* – Genesis 11:26 & 20:12
Ashḥur – 1Chronicles 4:5	Kalēb – 1Chronicles 2:18–19, 2:46–48	Tsiḇa* – 2Samuel 9:10
Bēlshatstsar – Daniel 5:2	Lemek – Genesis 4:19	Tsiḍqiyahu – Jeremiah 38:23
Ben-Haḡad – 1Kings 20:3	Maḡir – 1Chronicles 7:15	Ya'ir* – Judges 10:4
Dawid – 1Samuel 18:27, 19:11–18; 25:43–44; 25:39; 2Samuel 3:3–5; 3:13–14; 6:20–23; 12:7–8; 12:24; 16:21–23; 1Chronicles 14:3	Menashsheh – 1Chronicles 7:14	Ya'aqob (Yisra'ēl) – Genesis 29:23; 29:28; 30:4; 30:9
	Mered – 1Chronicles 4:17–19	
	Mosheh – Exodus 2:21; 18:1–6; Numbers 12:1	Yehoram – 2Chronicles 21:14
Eliphaz – Genesis 36:11	Naḥor – Genesis 22:20	Yehoyada – 2Chronicles 24:3
Elqanah – 1Samuel 1:2	Reḥab'am – 2Chronicles 11:18–23	Yehoyakin – 2Kings 24:15
Ēsaw – Genesis 26:34 & 28:9	Sha'ul – 1Samuel 14:50 & 2Samuel 3:7	Yerahme'el – 1Chronicles 2:26
		Yissaskar (Tribe) – 1Chr 7:4, Num 1:29

* Polygyny by implication

1 John 3 – Sin is Defined by Torah

1 John 3:4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

There is no commandment that prohibits a man from having multiple wives. It cannot possibly be called a 'sin'. If you can find any place in Scripture that say 'Thou shalt not have more than one wife.' or 'Thou shall only have one wife.' then you can say that polygyny is sin. Yet neither form of this instruction can be found anywhere in Scripture.

All listed verses are from The Scriptures 1998 version, available free online for e-Sword or MySword, from the Institute for Scriptures Research (ISR).

Please realize that some of my reasoning's below are unfinished and incomplete. This is a working document that I add to whenever I find or discover a new insight in Scripture. Please do not critique my arguments based on my failure to properly or completely express them – look at the Scriptures that I'm basing my interpretations on and test them for yourself.

Scriptures Supporting Polygyny as Righteous and Our Comments

Genesis 1 – Be Fruitful and Multiply

Gen 1:28 And Elohim blessed them, and Elohim said to them, “Bear fruit and increase, and fill the

earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over all creatures moving on the earth.”

This command, "Be fruitful and multiply" can be better carried out much more quickly by the polygynous family. A man with two or more wives can have many more children than one woman can. And most of the powerful patriarchs did have more than one wife, which led to many sons and daughters. But please don't misunderstand me; I'm not saying that יהוה is telling everyone to be a polygynist by this command. There are certainly many monogamous families bearing witness to this who have had many children. As evidenced by all those who are now turning their hearts back to the <patriarchal> fathers, this Hebraic movement is but a small remnant, yet growing stronger and more mature as time passes. It is logical and reasonable that the faster and more quickly we multiply righteous seed, the faster this Gospel will travel the globe and bring others to the truth of Yeshua and Torah. Is that His only avenue for spreading the Gospel? No, but it is a very valid one. But this does not mean that polygyny is for all men or families– most families should remain monogamous. If, or when, a man proves himself to be *a real leader* of his home (especially spiritually), capable, dedicated, financially able and truly led by Yah, then *he might consider* adding additional wives. Few men do an excellent job of leading *one* wife and her children, much less anymore!

Genesis 2 – Creation of a Help Meet

Gen 2:18 And יהוה Elohim said, “It is not good for the man to be alone, I am going to make a helper for him, as his counterpart.”

יהוה created Chava (Eve) out of Adam for a help-meet. From here many believe that this is the ideal pattern Yah established for all men and the only form of marriage He wished in His creation. But if one wife is to be the model for our life established by Elohim in the Garden, then why are we not also advocating nudity as our standard for dress? The fall of man changed our standards for nudity/modesty. I can imagine what the world would have been like if Chava had not disobeyed Adam or if Adam had not willingly eaten the fruit given to him, knowing he was disobeying יהוה command. It may have been that monogamy would have been the only type of marriage and we would also be without shame in our nakedness. יהוה has established three marital states; *celibacy* when we are married to no one (see Sha'ul's writings on this), *monogamy*, a marriage to one, and *polygyny*, a marriage to two or more, as illustrated in the Torah and all throughout the Tanakh (Old Testament) and the Brit Chadashah (New Testament).

Eliezer means, "my El is help." Abraham sent his servant, Eli "ezer" to get a bride for his son Isaac. Eliezer is a type and shadow of the Holy Spirit, with Abraham being type and shadow of the Father of the Groom. Ezer means help. We see this same word when it says that Y'hovah will make Adam a helper in Gen 2:18. Eliezer found a bride for the groom, and the Holy Spirit's duty is to draw us, His Bride, to our Groom as well. A wife opposes her husband when he is off course and draws him back to the heart of the family. The Holy Spirit also opposes us and draws us back to the Father when we get off course – conviction.

The Hebrew word for helper is –

'êzer (H5828) עֵזֶר

BDB Definition:

- 1) help, succour
- 1a) help, succour
- 1b) one who helps

The Hebrew word for oppose is –

neged (H5048) נגד

BDB Definition:

- 1) what is conspicuous, what is in front of (substantive)
- 2) in front of, straight forward, before, in sight of (adverb)
- 3) in front of oneself, straightforward (adverb)
- 4) before your face, in your view or purpose (adverb)
- 5) what is in front of, corresponding to (with preposition)
- 6) in front of, before (with preposition)
- 7) in the sight or presence of (with preposition)
- 8) parallel to (with preposition)
- 9) over, for (with preposition)
- 10) in front, opposite (with preposition)
- 11) at a distance (with preposition)
- 12) from the front of, away from (preposition)
- 13) from before the eyes of, opposite to, at a distance from (preposition)
- 14) from before, in front of (preposition)
- 15) as far as the front of (preposition)

This explains why there is fighting and disagreement in a marriage. We are opposed to each other – opposite each other. One without the other is lacking and incomplete. Adam was whole in the very beginning and then He drew Chava from his side, making him incomplete. We do not have the same strengths or the same viewpoints, or even the same agenda most times. But, if we will respect each other's differences, we can be at peace with each other.

If the wives will operate just as gently, subtly, lovingly, patiently with their husbands, as the Holy Spirit is with all of us, instead of being as the carnal nature dictates, there will be much more success in our homes. We are a people saved by faith, and who are required to walk in faith. If husbands and wives are both walking in the Spirit, waiting on him for direction for the choice of a sister-wife, there should be peace and unity. But, if the husband steps out of line, and the wife sees that her husband is seeking after a woman who is not appropriate (for solid Biblical reasons), she is to step out in front of him, to oppose him, in faith, in respect, and with self control and speak to her husband the reasons she has for not approving of his choice. Once she has done so righteously, she prays and allows the Spirit to help lead her husband in the direction the family will go. She steps back to his side, walking in harmony with her husband again, supporting him in where he chooses to lead. *This requires faith! In the husband, in his integrity, also in the Spirit's power and His will.*

If a man's heart is focused on Yah, he will not want to introduce strife into his home, or create a war zone in which he will spend much of his time mediating disputes between his wives. His primary goal will be on protecting the peace of his original family. A smart and discerning man will only add another wife when it will be a benefit to his first wife/wives. She should be able to dwell peacefully with all who are in his home. If boys are raised right, and grow up as real men, they have a

natural inclination to want to protect and shield women and children. It's a righteous endeavor to want to help and aid poor, struggling single women, but that protective nature should at all times be primarily focused on the family he already has at home, and protect and shield them first from any dangers or threats.

Genesis 2 – One Flesh

Gen 2:24 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

This is how every man starts his married life – with just one wife. This is a testimony of the beginning of the journey we call family, independence and the establishment of a new household under the leadership of a new husband and eventually a father. If we are to take this as the template for every marriage, then the next verse must be the template for our dress code – Gen 2:25 "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, yet they were not ashamed." To assert that because יהוה made only Chava for Adam, and therefore established monogamy forever is very weak reasoning. It's using *patterns* that establish a solid, Biblical doctrine. There are other reasons He made only Chava for Adam, which I covered earlier. He made Adam to be a steward of the Garden – does that mean we are all to be gardeners? Later He made Adam to be farmer and herder – are we now to be only farmers and herders? If what יהוה establishes in the Garden is the ideal for all and for all times, then we must strive to embrace nudity, as He made them that way and they knew no shame.

A man does not establish a new household while still living under the authority of his earthly father. He must leave his parents, not necessarily physically, but in his priorities and devotion and allegiance, in order to create a new family, with him as head and priest of its members. He becomes one flesh with his new wife, establishing a covenant that forms a marriage. This is the *start* and the *beginning*, but maybe not be the end. The act of cleaving means to join together, to stay close to, and to remain steadfast. Adding to the foundation of the family does not diminish the commitment of the original covenant or even break it. Nor should it lessen the love held between the husband and his wife.

All families start as monogamous. After that, the man is allowed to add wives or not, as he feels led. Yah gave the Yisra'elites a *complete set* of teachings and instructions. Did He somehow forget to include a prohibition against plural marriage? Where can be found a commandment that says, "Thou shalt not have more than one wife" or, "Thou shall only have one wife"?

Genesis 20 – King Avimelech Blameless for Taking Another Wife

Gen 20:1 And Abraham set out from there to the land of the South, and dwelt between Qadēsh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar.

2 And Abraham said concerning Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Avimelech sovereign of Gerar sent and took Sarah.

3 But Elohim came to Avimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "See, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife."

4 However, Avimelech had not come near her, and he said, "יהוה, would You slay a righteous nation also?"

5 "Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and in the innocence of my hands I have done this."

6 And Elohim said to him in a dream, "Yea, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart, and

so I kept you from sinning against Me. For this reason I did not let you touch her.

7 “And now, return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and let him pray for you and you live. But if you do not return her, know that you shall certainly die, you and all that are yours.”

8 So Avimeleḵ rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and spoke all these words in their hearing. And the men were greatly frightened.

9 And Avimeleḵ called Aḇraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? In what have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and on my reign a great sin? You have done matters to me that should not be done.”

10 And Avimeleḵ said to Aḇraham, “What did you have in view, that you have done this matter?”

11 And Aḇraham said, “Only because I said to myself, the fear of Elohim is not in this place, and they shall kill me for the sake of my wife.

12 “And yet, she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.”

13 “And it came to be, when Elohim caused me to wander from my father’s house, that I said to her, ‘This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, say of me, “He is my brother.’”

14 Then Avimeleḵ took sheep, and cattle, and male and female servants, and gave them to Aḇraham. And he returned Sarah his wife to him.

15 And Avimeleḵ said, “See, my land is before you, dwell wherever it is good in your eyes.”

16 And to Sarah he said, “See, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. See, it is to you a covering of eyes before all who are with you and before all others, and you are cleared before everyone.”

17 And Aḇraham prayed to Elohim, and Elohim healed Avimeleḵ, and his wife, and his female servants, so they bore children,

18 for יהוה had closed up all the wombs of the house of Avimeleḵ because of Sarah, Aḇraham’s wife.

Notice in verse 17 that King Avimelek already had a wife, and yet you hear no censor from יהוה about him adding another wife. Elohim even agrees with Avimelek in verse 6 when he said he was adding another wife in the integrity of his heart and innocence of his hands. יהוה kept him from sinning, not because taking Sarah as a wife was wrong, but because taking her while she was married to Abraham would have been adultery. He was sternly rebuked for trying to add a *married* woman to his household and would have cursed his nation if יהוה had not stopped him.

Genesis 29 – יהוה Helps The Second Wife

Gen 29:30 And he also went in to Raḥēl, and he also loved Raḥēl more than Lě’ah. And he served with Laḇan still another seven years.

31 And יהוה saw that Lě’ah was hated, and He opened her womb, but Raḥēl was barren.

32 And Lě’ah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Re’uḇēn, for she said, “For יהוה has looked on my affliction, because now my husband is going to love me.”

33 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Because יהוה has heard that I am unloved, He gave me this son too.” And she called his name Shim’on.

34 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Now this time my husband is joined to me, because I have borne him three sons.” So his name was called Lěwi.

35 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Now I praise יהוה.” So she called his name Yehuḏah. And she ceased bearing.

If יהוה finds polygyny a sin, as many people claim, why is He helping the hated/unloved wife? If He finds it a sin, would He not help Le’ah get out of the marriage to Ya’aqob altogether? Instead He

helps her find value in Ya'aqob's eyes by opening her womb, which in the society of that day and today brings much favor to a woman. And while He blessed Lě'ah with a fruitful womb, He favored Raḥēl and her dependents when she bore the favored son, Yosef (Joseph).

This also helps to illustrate Ya'aqob's primary character flaw, like his father Isaac before him, his grandfather and even his son Joseph – each suffered from showing favoritism to particular wives or sons. This was the primary cause of strife in their families, not polygyny.

Genesis 30 – Elohim Blesses Lě'ah for Giving Ya'aqob a Wife

Gen 30:17 And Elohim listened to Lě'ah, and she conceived and bore Ya'aqob a fifth son.

18 And Lě'ah said, "Elohim has given me my hire, because I have given my female servant to my husband." So she called his name Yissasḡar.

Here Le'ah is again being blessed by יהוה, but this time for giving her servant to her husband to be his wife. How can יהוה bless a woman for causing her husband to sin? יהוה does not bless sinners for their sinning or for causing others to sin. Instead, He blessed her with a child because she gave her husband another wife.

Exodus 21 – Marriage Rights Shall Not Be Diminished

Exo 21:7 "And when a man sells his daughter to be a female servant, she does not go out as the male servants do."

8 "If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master who has engaged her to himself, then he shall let her be ransomed. He shall have no authority to sell her to a foreign people, because of him deceiving her."

9 "And if he has engaged her to his son, he is to do to her as is the right of daughters."

10 "If he takes another wife, her food, her covering, and her marriage rights are not to be diminished."

11 "And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out for naught, without silver."

Here the word engaged means to 'betroth to', so marriage was intended at the time of bond-servant purchase. He would decide if he was going to take her as a wife during her servitude. There would be no sex prior to their marriage, because once they had sex the marriage would be consummated. If he decides not to marry her, he has several options – ransom her back to her father, her family or to a fellow countryman, or marry her to his son. These options may have to have been set at the time of purchase from her father. Nowhere in this passage does it state that he's married, nor does it state he's single. An understanding of Hebrew practices and traditions will help though. It was the norm for a man's first wife to be chosen for him by his parents, as seen in the story of Yitzchak (Isaac) and Rivkah (Rebecca), or even in verse 9 of this passage. So the norm for acquiring a concubine/bond-servant bride would be for the master to already be married when he purchases a female slave with the intent to marry. And such a bond-servant bride would normally come from a poorer family, as opposed to the case of brides from affluent families. Verse 10 is very interesting – it explicitly states that if or when he marries another wife, he cannot diminish his first wife's rights when he adds a concubine/bond-servant bride. His marriage to his first wife remains and he must continue to provide for her food, shelter and conjugal rights. As an aside, nowhere in Scriptures or in historical accounts has it been found that the Hebrews practiced the taking of slaves for sexual use without marriage. It's also interesting that this regulation of bond-servant brides immediately follows Chapter 20 which contains the Ten Commandments. Would Mosheh record a regulation governing multiple

wives, if having multiple wives was adultery or sin?

Leviticus 18 – Do Not Uncover the Nakedness Of...

Lev 18:1 And יהוה spoke to Mosheh, saying,

2 “Speak to the children of Yisra’el, and say to them, ‘I am יהוה your Elohim.

3 ‘Do not do as they do in the land of Mitsrayim, where you dwelt. And do not do as they do in the land of Kena’an, where I am bringing you, and do not walk in their laws.

4 ‘Do My right-rulings and guard My laws, to walk in them. I am יהוה your Elohim.

5 ‘And you shall guard My laws and My right-rulings, which a man does and lives by them. I am יהוה.

6 ‘No one is to approach anyone of his own flesh to uncover his nakedness. I am יהוה.

7 ‘The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you do not uncover. She is your mother, you do not uncover her nakedness.

8 ‘The nakedness of your father’s wife you do not uncover, it is your father’s nakedness.

9 ‘The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, whether born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you do not uncover.

10 ‘The nakedness of your son’s daughter or your daughter’s daughter, their nakedness you do not uncover, for theirs is your own nakedness.

11 ‘The nakedness of your father’s wife’s daughter, brought forth by your father, she is your sister, you do not uncover her nakedness.

12 ‘The nakedness of your father’s sister you do not uncover, she is your father’s flesh.

13 ‘The nakedness of your mother’s sister you do not uncover, for she is your mother’s flesh.

14 ‘The nakedness of your father’s brother you do not uncover, you do not approach his wife, she is your aunt.

15 ‘The nakedness of your daughter-in-law you do not uncover, she is your son’s wife, you do not uncover her nakedness.

16 ‘The nakedness of your brother’s wife you do not uncover, it is your brother’s nakedness.

17 ‘The nakedness of a woman and her daughter you do not uncover, nor do you take her son’s daughter or her daughter’s daughter, to uncover her nakedness. They are her relatives – it is wickedness.

18 ‘And do not take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive.

19 ‘And do not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness in her monthly separation of uncleanness.

20 ‘And do not have intercourse with the wife of your neighbour, to defile yourself with her.

21 ‘And do not give any of your offspring to pass through to Molek. And do not profane the Name of your Elohim. I am יהוה.

22 ‘And do not lie with a male as with a woman, it is an abomination.

23 ‘And do not have intercourse with any beast, to defile yourself with it. And a woman does not stand before a beast to mate with it, it is a perversion.

24 ‘Do not defile yourselves with all these, for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am driving out before you.

25 ‘Thus the land became defiled, therefore I punished it for its crookedness, and the land vomited out its inhabitants.

26 ‘But you, you shall guard My laws and My right-rulings, and not do any of these abominations, the native nor stranger who sojourns among you,

27 because the men of the land who were before you have done all these abominations, and thus the land became defiled,

28 ‘So let not the land vomit you out for defiling it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you.

29 ‘For whoever does any of these abominations, those beings who do them shall be cut off from

among their people.

30 'And you shall guard My Charge, so as not to do any of these abominable practices which were done before you, so as not to defile yourselves by them. I am יהוה your Elohim.' ”

Let me start by saying that I believe the meaning of 'uncover his/her nakedness' can mean much more than just seeing them unclothed. While this is still sinful, these passages also include a prohibition against marriage or any sexual relations. Sexual relations or marriage would be very difficult, if not impossible, without seeing their nakedness. And we can't separate sex from marriage. While there is no explicit commandment in Torah that I can find forbidding sex with an unmarried woman, the pattern seen in Scriptures suggests it. Both 1Cor 7:2 and Rev 2:14 demonstrate that fornication is sex outside marriage, whoring, whether paid or unpaid.

Many of the instructions listed here don't make sense unless you assume polygyny is allowed (ver. 8, 9, 11, 17 or 18) or it's possible a man's wife has died and he is seeking to remarry. Both are correct assumptions. Remember the Hebrew people were polygynous – it wasn't until they were conquered by the Greeks, then the Romans, that monogamy was forced on them that they stopped, from which our modern day understanding and culture of marriage grew. They did not stop because it was sinful or because יהוה told them to stop, but rather because of cultural pressure. Those of us with a Hebrew Roots understanding should be quite familiar with these cultural pressures that have caused much change and untruth to creep into the congregations. Polygyny is just another change that took place. A lot of the credit for this can be laid at the door of the RCC. No surprise there!

Verse 7 is addressing the uncovering of a son's mother, but verse 8 addresses a son seeing the nakedness of his father's wife, which is also a sin. There is a clear distinction between "the nakedness of your mother" and "the nakedness of your father's wife". See also Lev 20:11 'If there is a man who lies with his father's wife, he has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death, their blood guiltiness is upon them.'

Look closely at verse 18 – this verse would not be necessary if the Hebrew people were only monogamous. Why is there a law prohibiting the taking of two sisters as wives, while both were alive, if it was already prohibited? This is a clear regulation of polygyny and shows that a man may have multiple wives, as long as his motivation is not to vex the sisters or a mother and daughter as stated Lev 20:14.

Leviticus 20 – Do Not Marry a Woman and Her Mother

Lev 20:14 'And a man who marries a woman and her mother: it is wickedness, they are burned with fire, both he and they, that there be no wickedness in your midst.

Here is a clear example of יהוה setting another standard for polygyny. It explicitly prohibits a man from marrying a woman and then her mother, or marrying a woman and then her daughter. And we know that it must mean at the same time because all three are to be burned together when they are found out. There is no language at all that infers that he married one, then divorced and married the other. If all polygyny is sin, why is there a need to mention this special case? Why isn't there language simply prohibiting polygyny?

Numbers 5 – Test for Unfaithfulness

Num 5:11 And יהוה spoke to Mosheh, saying,

12 "Speak to the children of Yisra'ël, and say to them, 'When any man's wife turns aside and has

committed a trespass against him,

13 and a man has intercourse with her, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and it is concealed that she has defiled herself, and there was no witness against her, nor was she caught,

14 and a spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife who has defiled herself, or a spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife although she has not defiled herself,

15 then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. And he shall bring the offering for her, one-tenth of an ephah of barley flour. He is not to pour oil on it or put frankincense on it, because it is a grain offering of jealousy, an offering for remembering, for bringing crookedness to remembrance.

16 'And the priest shall bring her near, and shall make her stand before יהוה.

17 'And the priest shall take set-apart water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the Dwelling Place and put it into the water.

18 'And the priest shall make the woman stand before יהוה, and shall uncover the woman's head, and put the offering for remembering in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy, while the priest holds in his hand the bitter water that brings a curse.

19 'And the priest shall make her swear, and say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you, and if you have not turned aside to uncleanness under your husband's authority, be free from this bitter water that brings a curse.

20 "But if you have turned aside under your husband's authority, and if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has lain with you" -

21 then the priest shall make the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman - "יהוה make you a curse and an oath among your people, when יהוה makes your thigh waste away and your belly swell,

22 and this water that causes the curse shall go into your inward parts, and make your belly swell and your thigh waste away." And the woman shall say, "Aměn, aměn."

23 'And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and shall wipe them off into the bitter water,

24 and shall make the woman drink the bitter water that brings the curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her to become bitter.

25 'And the priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before יהוה, and bring it to the altar.

26 'And the priest shall take a hand filled with the offering, as its remembrance offering, and burn it on the altar, and afterward make the woman drink the water.

27 'And when he has made her drink the water, then it shall be, if she has defiled herself and has committed a trespass against her husband, that the water that brings the curse shall enter her and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall waste away, and the woman shall become a curse among her people.

28 'But if the woman has not defiled herself, and is clean, then she shall be clear and shall conceive children.

29 'This is the Torah of jealousy, when a wife turns aside under her husband's authority and defiles herself,

30 or when a spirit of jealousy comes upon a man, and he becomes jealous of his wife. Then he shall make the woman stand before יהוה, and the priest shall do to her all this Torah.

31 'And the man shall be clear from crookedness, but the woman bear her crookedness.' "

It's interesting that there's a test for a wife's unfaithfulness, but not one for a husband. Why is that? Why are wives tested for unfaithfulness while a husband is not? In this passage we see the importance of the wife remaining faithful to her husband, of keeping the lineage clear and uncorrupted. Yah stresses here the importance of a woman not allowing another man's seed to be

mixed with her husband's. The man who fathers a child must never be in doubt. She will die if she fails to prove her innocence of adultery.

If monogamy was His only plan, wouldn't He have provided a test for when a husband was unfaithful? This whole procedure only make sense if polygyny is acceptable in His eyes and if it is righteous for a man to pursue and have additional wives. There is no jealousy test for a husband when he courts and marries another woman.

Numbers 31 – Division of Spoils

Num 31:1 And יהוה spoke to Mosheh, saying,

2 “Take vengeance for the children of Yisra’ël on the Midyanites. After that you are to be gathered to your people.”

3 And Mosheh spoke to the people, saying, “Arm some of yourselves for the campaign, and let them go against the Midyanites to take vengeance for יהוה on Midyan.

4 “Send a thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Yisra’ël for the campaign.”

5 So there were supplied from the tribes of Yisra’ël one thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand armed ones for the campaign.

6 And Mosheh sent them on the campaign, one thousand from each tribe, them and Pinehas son of El'azar the priest on the campaign, with the set-apart utensils and the trumpets for sounding in his hand.

7 And they fought against the Midyanites, as יהוה commanded Mosheh, and slew all the males.

8 And they slew the sovereigns of Midyan with the rest of those who were pierced: Ewi, and Reqem, and Tsur, and Hur, and Reba, the five sovereigns of Midyan. And they slew Bil'am son of Be'or with the sword.

9 And the sons of Yisra’ël took all the women of Midyan captive, with their little ones, and took as spoil all their livestock, and all their possessions.

10 And they burned with fire all the cities where they dwelt, and all their settlements.

11 And they took all the spoil and all the booty, both of man and beast.

12 And they brought the captives, and the booty, and the spoil to Mosheh, and to El'azar the priest, and to the congregation of the children of Yisra’ël, to the camp in the desert plains of Mo'ab by the Yardën of Yeriho.

13 And Mosheh, and El'azar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation, went to meet them outside the camp.

14 But Mosheh was wroth with the officers of the army, with the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, who had come from the campaign.

15 And Mosheh said to them, “Have you kept all the women alive?”

16 “Look, they are the ones who caused the children of Yisra’ël, through the word of Bil'am, to trespass against יהוה in the matter of Pe'or, and there was a plague among the congregation of יהוה.

17 “And now, slay every male among the little ones. And every woman who has known a man by lying with a man you shall slay.

18 “But keep alive for yourselves all the female children who have not known a man by lying with a man.

19 “And you, camp outside the camp seven days. Whoever has slain any being, and whoever has touched any slain, cleanse yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day.

20 “And cleanse every garment, and every object of leather and all the work of goats' hair, and every object of wood.”

21 And El'azar the priest said to the men of the campaign who went to the battle, “This is the law of the Torah which יהוה commanded Mosheh:

22 “Only the gold, and the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead,

23 every object that passes through fire, you put through the fire, and it shall be clean; only, let it be cleansed with the water for uncleanness. And whatever does not pass through fire you pass through water.

24 “And you shall wash your garments on the seventh day and be clean, and afterwards come into the camp.”

25 And יהוה spoke to Mosheh, saying,

26 “Count up the plunder that was taken, of man and of beast, you and El'azar the priest and the heads of the fathers of the congregation.

27 “And you shall divide the plunder into two parts, between those who took part in the battle, who went out on the campaign, and all the congregation.

28 “And set aside a levy for יהוה on the men of battle who went out on the campaign: one out of every five hundred, of man, and of the cattle, and of the donkeys, and of the sheep.

29 “Take it from their half, and give it to El'azar the priest as a contribution to יהוה.

30 “And from the children of Yisra'ël's half you shall take one of every fifty, of man, of the cattle, of the donkeys, and of the sheep, of all the livestock, and give them to the Lëwites guarding the duty of the Dwelling Place of יהוה.”

31 And Mosheh and El'azar the priest did as יהוה commanded Mosheh.

32 And the booty remaining from the plunder, which the people of the campaign had taken, was six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep,

33 and seventy-two thousand cattle,

34 and sixty-one thousand donkeys,

35 and thirty-two thousand human beings in all, of women who had not known a man by lying with a man.

36 And the half, the portion for those who went out on the campaign, was in number three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep,

37 and the levy unto יהוה of the sheep was six hundred and seventy-five.

38 And the cattle were thirty-six thousand, of which the levy unto יהוה was seventy-two.

39 And the donkeys were thirty thousand five hundred, of which the levy unto יהוה was sixty-one.

40 And the human beings were sixteen thousand, of which the levy unto יהוה was thirty-two beings.

41 So Mosheh gave the levy which was the contribution unto יהוה to El'azar the priest, as יהוה commanded Mosheh.

42 And from the children of Yisra'ël's half, which Mosheh divided from the men who campaigned:

43 now the half belonging to the congregation was three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep,

44 and thirty-six thousand cattle,

45 and thirty thousand five hundred donkeys,

46 and sixteen thousand human beings.

47 Then Mosheh took from the children of Yisra'ël's half: one out of every fifty, drawn from man and beast, and gave them to the Lëwites, who guarded the duty of the Dwelling Place of יהוה, as יהוה commanded Mosheh.

48 And the officers who were over thousands of the campaign, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, came near to Mosheh,

49 and they said to Mosheh, “Your servants have taken a count of the fighting men under our command, and not a man of us is missing.

50 “So we have brought an offering for יהוה, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armllets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, to make atonement for ourselves before יהוה.”

51 And Mosheh and El'azar the priest received the gold from them, all the fashioned ornaments.

52 And all the gold of the offering that they presented to יהוה, from the commanders of thousands

and commanders of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty sheqels.

53 The men of the campaign had taken spoil, every man for himself.

54 And Mosheh and El'azar the priest received the gold from the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the Tent of Meeting as a remembrance for the children of Yisra'ël before יהוה.

All of Numbers 31 describes 12,000 men of Yisra'ël going forth and destroying the Midianites and the spoils they returned with and how they were divided. Upon returning from battle, we learn that the men of battle did not kill all the Midianites as instructed – they returned with all the women, and their children, as well as a significant number of sheep, cattle and donkeys, and all the riches they could collect. What's interesting is how יהוה instructed Mosheh to distribute these spoils, especially the females. All who had known a man (meaning they were not virgins) were killed, as well as all the male children. This left 32,000 virgins – half were given to the sons of Yisra'ël, minus 320 for the Lěwites (Levites). The other 16,000 virgins were given to the men of war, minus 32 virgins who were given to the Lěwites. Of the 12,000 Hebrew men who went to war, none were lost – not a single one. So 12,000 men were given 15,968 virgins. Is it reasonable to believe that many of the men were already married? Yes, and it is also reasonable to believe that many of the virgins were of a marriageable age. If you're being honest, it is highly likely that many of these virgins became wives of these men of war, either by becoming the wife of a man already married or by being one of the 3,968 virgins who were given to men who received two virgins. Many of these virgins were too young to marry, so they most likely became slaves. They could have become concubines of their master at a later date under the Exodus 21 regulation governing bond-servant brides or brides to their sons when they came of age. Even if all the 12,000 men of war had been single, some of the 3,968 men, who were given two virgins, could have married both virgin slaves. This was done according to יהוה's instructions – if He had wanted to insure that each man of war received only one virgin, then He would have done so and the surplus could have easily gone to the rest of the tribes or the Lěwites.

The whole point of destroying the Midianites was because they had led the men of Yisra'ël to sexual sin – see Numbers 22. 24,000 Hebrew men were killed because of the sexual sins with the Midianite women and idolatry. And notice in Rev 2:14– Yeshua calls the sin with the Midianite women whoring, not adultery. Would יהוה then sanction the sinning of the men of war by giving them virgins to marry, when doing so would lead to those men having multiple wives? Doesn't it make sense that He was *rewarding* the remaining righteous, Yisra'élite warriors who did not submit to the sexual temptation with the whores of Midian, by giving them virgins? And although it's possible, I do not believe that all these men kept these women simply as slaves. Torah specifically addresses how to handle the situation where female slaves are taken in war– see Deuteronomy chapter 21:10. It's simply unreasonable to believe that out of 15,968 virgins, not one became a second or third wife to any of those 12,000 Hebrew men.

Deuteronomy 17 – Multiply Wives

Deu 17:14 “When you come to the land which יהוה your Elohim is giving you, and shall possess it and shall dwell in it, and you shall say, ‘Let me set a sovereign over me like all the gentiles that are around me,’

15 you shall certainly set a sovereign over you whom יהוה your Elohim shall choose. Set a sovereign over you from among your brothers, you are not allowed to set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.

16 “Only, he is not to increase horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Mitsrayim to increase horses, for יהוה has said to you, ‘Do not return that way again.’

17 “And he is not to increase wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor is he to greatly increase silver and gold for himself.

Most translations say multiply instead of increase and the wording ‘multiply’ is supported by the NASEC dictionary. It’s believed that Shelomoh wrote the Song of Songs in the early part of his reign, sometime in the first 10 years. If this is the case, he would have had to marry one wife every five days or so, to total 1000 by the time he wrote the Song of Songs. While this is possible, it’s not likely. It’s believed instead that he married many women at once during a single ceremony, thus multiplying wives instead of adding. This clearly contrasts Shelomoh's actions in marrying many women at once, as opposed to Dawid's practice of adding wives one at a time. It has also been argued that Shelomoh hoarded wives – that is, he took and kept wives in such numbers for status, without any intention of fostering a relationship normally found between a man and a wife. Those who would argue that this passage is a mandate against polygyny will also have to reconcile that very same argument when applied to the proceeding verse to not multiply horses. The very same words are used in the very same manner, so the meaning must be the very same. Yet no reasoning person would argue that you cannot have more than one horse. And if read in context, it's referring to just kings and they are being prohibited from taking wives simply for the purpose of creating political alliances with foreign, pagan countries, and/or trying to return to Egypt. If it's read and understood that a king cannot have multiple wives, many horses or much gold, then יהוה Himself violated His own commandment, because He gave King Dawid multiple wives, and He also blessed King Shelomoh abundantly in gold, horses and all manner of riches. So it cannot be understood that He is forbidding a king from taking multiple wives. He doesn't want kings taking *foreign/pagan wives* for the purpose of creating alliances with other nations by means of marriage.

Deuteronomy 21 – A Man has Two Wives

Deu 21:15 Suppose a man has two wives—the one loved and the other unloved—and both the loved and the unloved bear him sons. But it happens that the firstborn son belongs to the unloved wife.

16 Now on the day he lets his sons inherit what he has, he must not treat the loved one’s son as firstborn, in place of the unloved one’s son, who is the firstborn.

17 Rather, he must acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the hated one, by giving him a double portion of all that he has. For he is the first of his vigor—the right of the firstborn is his.

This is a clear case of יהוה regulating inheritance in a plural marriage. Why not simply say that the second marriage is not valid and sons of the second wife are illegitimate? Instead יהוה protects the inheritance of the first born despite what the father may feel for his wives. He may favor any particular wife, but he cannot let that change the inheritance rights of his first born son. I will add that it's a poor steward who play favorites in the treatment of his wives.

Deuteronomy 22 – Seizing a Virgin

Deu 22:28 “When a man finds a girl who is a maiden, who is not engaged, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out,

29 then the man who lay with her shall give to the girl’s father fifty pieces of silver, and she is to be

his wife because he has humbled her. He is not allowed to put her away all his days."

Another case of implied polygyny – the man is required to marry the one he seized and he may never divorce her. He must marry her, even if he is already married. This obviously includes cases of rape but may also apply to instances of consensual sex between the man and a virgin. He has humbled her and she has lost one of her most valuable assets. If later she enters into a marriage and her lost virginity is discovered, it could lead to her death.

Judges 8 – Gideon's Seventy Sons

Jud 8:30 Now Gideon had seventy sons who were his direct descendants, for he had many wives.

Did Gideon have many wives before or after יהוה called him to free and defend His chosen people? Does it matter? If Gideon had them before, would יהוה have called him if polygyny was a sin? If after, wouldn't יהוה have known that he would become a polygynist?

In Judges 6:15, we learn that Gideon is the youngest son of a minor house (or family or clan) of Yisra'ël. He already has many servants of his own as we see in verse 27, so he already has an established household of his own. And by the number of servants, it is a large household and it seems likely that he would already have had many wives by that time. This may not be the case, as the text does not say. In Judges 8:20, we see that Gideon has a son old enough to carry his own sword and old enough to be with his father while on campaign, yet still young enough to likely never have killed in battle. I would guess his age could be between 8 and 18. This would show that Gideon had at least one wife when יהוה called him to serve.

Nowhere in Scriptures is Gideon ever rebuked for having many wives. He is held up as a mighty man of valor for יהוה and listed in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11.

Ruth 4 – Blessing of Raḥēl and Lě'ah at Ruth's Wedding

Ruth4:11 And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "Witnesses! יהוה make the woman who is coming to your house as Raḥēl and as Lě'ah, the two who built the house of Yisra'ël. And prove your worth in Ephrathah and proclaim the Name in Běyth Leḥem.

It is often argued that because of the strife seen in the marriage of Ya'aqob to Lě'ah, and Ya'aqob to Raḥēl, that polygyny must be wrong. Because of the treachery of Laḇan, Ya'aqob was tricked into violating Lev 18:18, marrying the sister of the woman he was betrothed to. 800 years later, we see that Lě'ah and Raḥēl used as an example and a blessing at the announcement of the marriage of Boaz and Ruth! And that traditional blessing is still said today over children in many Jewish homes and every Sabbath in many Messianic and Jewish congregations.

"May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah."

1 Samuel 1 – Wives of Elqanah

1 Sam 1:1 And there was a certain man of Ramathayim Tsophim, of the mountains of Ephrayim, and his name was Elqanah son of Yeroḥam, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Tsuph, an Ephrayimite.

2 And he had two wives, the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

Most people forget that the father of Shemu'el had two wives. One of the greatest judges and prophets written about in Scriptures came from a temporarily barren wife in a plural marriage, similar to the circumstances with Ya'aqob and Raḥēl, where יהוה blessed the plural wife who was without child. We also see the favoritism Elqanah shows Hannah later in the chapter. This may be the cause of the rivalry between Hannah and Peninnah, Elqanah's other wife. So, again we see an example of a husband favoring one wife over another and causing friction and tension between his wives.

Favoritism was causing the jealousy and rivalry, not plural marriage.

2 Samuel 12 – Dawid's Wives

2Sam 12:1 Then יהוה sent Nathan to Dawid. And he came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor.

2 "The rich one had flocks and herds, very many.

3 "But the poor one had only one little ewe lamb which he had bought and kept alive. And it grew up with him and with his children together. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom. And it was like a daughter to him.

4 "And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

5 And the wrath of Dawid burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As יהוה lives, the man who has done this is a son of death!

6 "Also, he has to repay fourfold for the lamb, because he did this deed and because he had no compassion."

7 Then Nathan said to Dawid, "You are the man! *Thus said יהוה Elohim of Yisra'el*, 'I anointed you sovereign over Yisra'el, and I delivered you from the hand of Sha'ul.

8 'And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Yisra'el and Yehudah. And if that were not enough, I also would have given you much more!

From 2 Samu'el 3, we know that Dawid had 6 wives by the time he became king of Yisra'el, and Nathan tells us who gave Dawid even more wives when he became king – Yah did! And He would have given him more if he had asked Him for more! Recall that Dawid was a man after יהוה own heart and had at least 8 wives at the time of his death. Now, can Elohim give a bad or sinful gift? Does not Yeshua teach us that the Father only gives good gifts? Doesn't this mean that יהוה gift to Dawid of many wives was a good gift?

1 Kings 11 – Shelomoh Love of Foreign Wives

1 Kings 11:1 And Sovereign Shelomoh loved many foreign women in addition to the daughter of Pharaoh: Mo'abite, Ammonite, Edomite, Tsidonian, and Hittite women;

2 from the nations of whom had said to the children of Yisra'el, "You do not go into them, and they do not go into you, for they shall certainly turn away your hearts after their mighty ones." Shelomoh clung to these in love.

3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines. And his wives turned away his heart.

4 And it came to be, when Shelomoh was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other mighty ones. And his heart was not perfect with יהוה his Elohim, as was the heart of his father Dawid.

5 And Shelomoh went after Ashtoreth the mighty one of the Tsidonians, and after Milkom the abomination of the Ammonites.

6 Thus Shelomoh did evil in the eyes of יהוה and did not follow יהוה completely, like his father Dawid.

Shelomoh married many, many *foreign, pagan* women who led him away from יהוה and into idolatry. His heart did not remain true to Elohim, as his father's had before him, as we are told at the end of verses 4 and 6. Shelomoh broke two fundamental laws of יהוה. He married many *pagan* women and in such numbers that they held a disproportionate influence over him. And he married multiple women at the same time, meaning he multiplied his wives, (Deuteronomy 17:17) instead of adding wives, as his father did before him. There was no way he could meet the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of all these wives and concubines. Shelomoh had many marriage ceremonies in which he wedded many women at once. A wedding ceremony is the joining of two people in יהוה sight – one man, one woman, one covenant, one marriage. To marry multiple women under one marriage covenant binds all the women to their husband under that one covenant. In other words, a marriage covenant is between יהוה, the husband and one wife. A woman may only have one marriage covenant at a time, while a man can have more than one, as shown in Rom 7:1–3 and 1 Cor 7:39. Yet Shelomoh was not rebuked for his many wives, but for the idolatry that his pagan wives led him into.

1 Kings 15 – Dawid was Righteous in All That He Did

1Ki 15:1 And in the eighteenth year of Sovereign Yarob'am son of Nebat, Aḅiyam became sovereign over Yehudah.

2 He reigned three years in Yerushalayim, and his mother's name was Ma'aḳah the granddaughter of Aḅishalom.

3 And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him, and his heart was not perfect to יהוה his Elohim, as was the heart of his father Dawid.

4 But for Dawid's sake יהוה his Elohim gave him a lamp in Yerushalayim, to raise up his son after him and by establishing Yerushalayim,

5 for Dawid did what was right in the eyes of יהוה, and did not turn aside from all that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriyah the Hittite.

The only accusation we see from יהוה is that Dawid turned aside from Him only in the matter of Uriyah, in his sin of adultery and murder, but NOT for his polygyny. How is it that Dawid had so many wives, given to him by יהוה and yet he did what was right in the sight of Him, except in the matter of Uriyah the Hittite? Two curses were given as punishment by יהוה, as fitting for those two sins. For his adultery, he lost the son conceived with Bathsheba during their adulterous joining. For murdering Uriyah, his house would never be free of the sword. Never was Dawid required to annul his marriage to Bathsheba, nor set her aside, as we would expect, if he had sinned by adding her as a wife after Uriyah's death.

1 Chronicles 2 – Kalēb's Concubine

1 Chr 2:46 And Ephah, Kalēb's concubine, bore Ḥaran, and Motsa, and Gazēz. And Ḥaran brought forth Gazēz.

47 And the sons of Yahdai: Reḡem, and Yotham, and Gēyshan, and Pelet, and Ēphah, and Sha'aph.

48 Ma'aḳah, Kalēb's concubine, bore Sheḅer and Tirḥanah.

49 And she bore Sha'aph the father of Maḏmannah, Shewa the father of Maḳbēna and the father of Giḅ'a. And the daughter of Kalēb was Aḳsah.

How is it that Kalēb, one of only two of the original men from the exodus, was allowed to enter the Promised Land while having two concubines, while Mosheh was denied entry because he struck a

rock in anger twice? If polygyny is a sin, would not Kalēb have been denied entry into the Promised Land as well? And while there are two Kalēb mentioned in Scriptures, we know this is one of the spies due to the reference to his daughter mentioned in verse 49.

2 Chronicles 24 – King Yo’ash’s Wives

2 Chr 24:2 And Yo’ash did what was right in the eyes of יהוה all the days of Yehoyada the priest.

3 And Yehoyada took for him two wives, and he brought forth sons and daughters.

Here a *righteous* king of Yisra’ēl had two wives chosen for him by the High Priest of יהוה, Yehoyada. Reading the account of Yo’ash, it's obvious that his heart sought יהוה and did what was right in His sight. Being guided by a righteous priest of יהוה, even marrying two wives was right in יהוה sight and Yo’ash did not stray until the death of Yehoyada.

Nehemiah 13 – Shelomoh’s Foreign Wives

Neh 13:26 “Did not Shelomoh sovereign of Yisra’ēl sin because of them? Among the many nations there was no sovereign like him, who was beloved of his Elohim, and Elohim made him sovereign over all Yisra’ēl. Even his foreign women caused him to sin.

Here Nehemiah makes it clear that Shelomoh's problem was sin of idolatry that he committed when his *foreign, pagan* wives led him astray, not having *many* wives. He was a sovereign like no other, he who was beloved of Elohim, whose greatest sin was *idolatry*, not multiple wives.

Esther 1 & 2 – Sovereign Ahashwērosh’s Second Wife Esther

Esther 1:19 "If it pleases the king, let a royal edict be issued by him and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media so that it cannot be repealed, that Vashti may no longer come into the presence of King Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal position to another who is more worthy than she.

A divorced queen might have been an endless source of trouble and problems for the king. By keeping her married to him, yet decreeing that she could never again enter his presence, the king and his advisors effectively neutralized her. So יהוה orchestrated the saving of the entire Jewish race through Esther, the second *polygynous* wife of the king.

Esther 2:1 After these events, when the wrath of Sovereign Ahashwērosh had ceased, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what had been decreed against her.

2 Then the sovereign’s servants who attended him said, “Let lovely young maidens be sought for the sovereign,

3 and let the sovereign appoint officers in all the provinces of his reign, and let them gather all the lovely young maidens to the citadel of Shushan, into the women’s quarters, under the hand of Hēgai the sovereign’s eunuch, guardian of the women, to give their preparations.

Here in the beginning of the second chapter of Esther, we learn that she became the second wife of Ahashwēros, along with an unknown number of concubines that were created as a result of the selection process of finding that wife. All the women that Ahashwēros had slept with would have become part of his harem.

Song of Shelomoh 6 – Shelomoh's 141st Wife

Song of Shelomoh 6:3 I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine. He browses among the lilies.

...

8 There are sixty sovereignesses and eighty concubines, and innumerable maidens.

9 My dove, my perfect one, is the only one, the only one of her mother, the choice of the one who bore her. The daughters saw, and called her blessed, Sovereignesses and concubines, and they praised her.

10 Who is she who shines forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, awesome as an army with banners?

The Song of Shelomoh is held as the perfect love story, of how a husband should love his wife and of how a man and a woman should relate to one another in the intimacy of their marriage. Take a look at verse 8 and count the queens and concubines – there are 140. Therefore Shelomoh wrote this song to his 141st wife. How is it that such a perfect union between a man and his wife, the standard by which יהוה Scripture hold forth for us, occurs after 140 previous marriages and relationships? Were none of them righteous in His sight? Would you assert that the first 140 were irrelevant and only the 141st is righteous?

The following is a corrected translation from the literal Hebrew.

Son 4:9 "You have made my heart beat faster, my sister-wife; You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes, With a single strand of your necklace.

10 "How beautiful is your love, my sister-wife! How much better is your love than wine, And the fragrance of your oils Than all kinds of spices!

11 "Your lips, my bride, drip honey; Honey and milk are under your tongue, And the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

12 "A garden locked is my sister-wife, A rock garden locked, a spring sealed up.

13 "Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates With choice fruits, henna with nard plants,

14 Nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, With all the trees of frankincense, Myrrh and aloes, along with all the finest spices.

15 "You are a garden spring, A well of fresh water, And streams flowing from Lebanon."

16 "Awake, O north wind, and come, wind of the south; Make my garden breathe out fragrance, Let its spices be wafted abroad. May my beloved come into his garden and eat its choice fruits!"

Son 5:1 "I have come into my garden, my sister-wife; I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. Eat, friends; Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers."

This is King Shelomoh to the Shulamite girl (his 141st wife) – he calls her his 'sister-wife' repeatedly. Was Shelomoh calling his 141st wife his 'sister', which is what I originally thought, because the English translations dropped the word 'wife' from the Hebrew text? Or, is this the term used in Biblical times for a wife who had many other wives in her household? It's very possible. I wonder if this is where the current term came from as well in the popular television series called, Sister-Wives.

Jeremiah 3 – Yisra'el and Yehudah, Wives Of יהוה

Jer 3:6 And יהוה said to me in the days of Yoshiyahu the sovereign, "Have you seen what backsliding

Yisra'el has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there committed whoring.

7 "And after she had done all these, I said 'Return to Me.' But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Yehudah saw it.

8 And I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Yisra'el had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Yehudah did not fear, but went and committed whoring too.

9 And it came to be, through her frivolous whoring, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and wood.

10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Yehudah has not turned to Me with all her heart, but falsely," declares יהוה.

Here יהוה is clearly calling Himself the husband of Yisra'el (Israel) and Yehudah (Judah), the Husband of two sisters. He is identifying Himself as a husband to two wives.

Jeremiah 31 – יהוה's New Marriage Covenant with Yisra'el and Yehudah

Jer 31:31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Yisra'el and with the house of Judah,

32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

And here is a second witness – It cannot be stated any clearer than at the end of verse 31. Not only does יהוה say that He was their husband, but declares that He will be again. I do not, cannot, believe that Elohim would or could call Himself anything sinful. Remember that whatever He declares, simply by declaring it, becomes righteousness by the power of His utterance and authority – see Psalms 33:4, Psalms 119:160 and Psalms 145:17.

Ezekiel 23 – Oholah and Oholib, Wives Of יהוה

Eze 23:1 And the word of יהוה came to me, saying,

2 "Son of man, there were two women, daughters of one mother.

3 "And they whored in Mitsrayim, they whored in their youth. There their breasts were handled, and there their maiden nipples were squeezed.

4 "And their names were: Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister. And they were Mine, and they bore sons and daughters. And their names: Shomeron is Oholah, and Yerushalayim is Oholibah.

...

36 And יהוה said to me, "Son of man, judge Oholah and Oholibah! And declare to them their abominations.

37 "For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. And they have committed adultery with their idols, and even offered their sons whom they bore to Me, passing them through *the fire*, to devour.

And this is a third witness and what seals it for me – here יהוה is clearly calling Himself the husband of Oholibah and Oholah, the husband of two wives, even calling them sisters! Even if you argue that it's only allegorical, it's still a statement by יהוה of a condition that He is identifying with and applying to Himself. Can יהוה do or call Himself anything sinful, even allegorically? We know that

יהוה does not sin. He never violates His own laws, and He would not call Himself the husband of two women if it were sinful. Some may say that this is יהוה and what He does or does not do, doesn't apply to us. But remember Yeshua said that He can only do what He saw the Father do. Yeshua instructs us that whatever we see יהוה do is permissible for us, if it is possible for us to do. He is יהוה and obviously we can't do everything He does. Yet He is the example by which we judge holiness and righteousness.

Malachi 2 – Wife of Your Youth

Mal 2:14 And you said, "Why?" Because יהוה has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have acted treacherously, though she is your companion and the wife of your covenant.

15 And did He not make one? And He had the remnant of the Spirit? And what is the one alone? He seeks a seed of Elohim. So you shall guard your spirit, and let none act treacherously against the wife of his youth.

What is the joining that He makes one? Is it meant in a physical sense or a spiritual, mental sense? We are each responsible for our own soul. We each will answer for the condition of that soul and the choices and decisions we made in life. When we eventually stand before Yeshua and receive judgment, we will not be bound to our spouse, nor will we will not hold a piece of their spirit in our hearts. We may no longer be bound to them by marriage and we will not be brought up or laid low by the condition of their soul. Although we may be held accountable for any damage or harm we might have visited on them if it caused them to stumble or turn away from יהוה. Or we may be rewarded for nurturing them into a closer relationship to Yah.

To become one flesh is the physical act of intimacy on your marriage night. You become related to the one you wed– you become kin, like brother and sister, but much more than that. Do the Scriptures say that 'the two become one.'? No, it says they become 'one flesh' or 'basar echad'. They become related. We are being instructed on the requirements for a marriage covenant – a man leaves his father and mother, cleaves to his wife, he goes into his virgin bride, sealing the covenant with her blood when he consummates the union with her. She becomes his wife at that moment and they become family, kin, related. Scriptures also tell us that a man may become one with a harlot, regardless of his marital status. There is no indication that the oneness with the harlot changes his oneness with his wife in יהוה eyes. If a married man can become one with a harlot according to Scriptures, it is reasonable that he can also become one with a second wife. Would it make sense that when Abraham took Hagar that it voided his oneness with Sarah? No, of course not. Taking an additional wife does not void a previous covenant. Ya'aqob had four wives, and each time he came together with each of them sexually, they became 'one flesh'. Oneness in Scriptures indicates the physical joining together that a man and wife share. It is this intimate act between them that binds them together as a family, if practiced according to יהוה plan. 'To become one flesh' is another way in which Scriptures describe the act of 'knowing' someone, the language of describing sex and by it, we become related to the one we become one flesh with. It's also reasonable to think that the becoming one flesh also refers to having a child, and having a husband's and wife's flesh become a new body in the form of a new child born to them.

Matthew 19 – Two Become One Flesh

Matt 19:5 and said, 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and

the two shall become one flesh’?

6 “So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what Elohim has joined together, let man not separate.”

It is also reasonable that the act of cleaving or holding on to someone does not mean one cannot cleave or hold on to another. We see this in 1 Cor. 6:17 – that we are all joined to the Master in one Spirit. Or look at Yeshua’s prayer in John 17:21, that all be one, 12 would be one, all believers would be one. Obviously we must not limit the language to mean that only two can become one.

Let's assume the Scriptures tell us that there is only one ideal marriage model – what would it be? Sha'ul (Paul) tells us that celibacy (or non-marriage) is best, but clearly we know that it's not the only way! He instructs that we should marry to keep from burning. What if a man's needs cannot, or are not, being met by his one wife? Is it not better to marry a second, rather than seek fulfillment from a harlot and burn in hell? Is it wrong for a husband to desire additional wives? Why? If he seeks another wife for the same reasons he sought his first, is this not just as righteous as his courtship to his first wife?

If you can remain celibate, that is good. If you can be fulfilled by one wife, that is good! If you need or want more wives for fulfillment and you can fulfill each of their needs as well, that is also good! But meeting your physical needs is not the primary reason to marry, just as it should not have been the primary reason someone established their first marriage! Not many are called to be celibate, and not all are called to be polygynous.

Matthew 25 – Parable of the 10 Virgins

Matthew 25:1 “Then the reign of the heavens shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

2 “And five of them were wise, and five foolish.

3 “Those who were foolish, having taken their lamps, took no oil with them,

4 but the wise took oil in their containers with their lamps.

5 “Now while the bridegroom took time, they all slumbered and slept.

6 “And at midnight a cry was heard, ‘See, the bridegroom is coming, go out to meet him!’

7 “Then all those maidens rose up and trimmed their lamps.

8 “And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us of your oil, because our lamps are going out.’

9 “But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, indeed, there would not be enough for us and you. Instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’

10 “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut.

11 “And later the other maidens also came, saying, ‘Master, Master, open up for us!’

12 “But he answering, said, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’

13 “Watch therefore, because you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of Adam is coming,

Some versions of the Bible use the term 'bridesmaids' or 'maidens' as a translation for the Hebrew or Greek word 'virgin', thus misleading the reader to believe that the women are simply guests at the wedding party, or as commonly seen today, as helpers for the bride. Instead, they should be properly portrayed as ones *betrothed*, waiting to be given in marriage. The parable of the ten virgins describes the relationship between the betrothed virgins (Believers/Bride) and Yeshua (Bridegroom). We can know that the ten virgins are betrothed, and not simply bridesmaids, for several reasons.

First, for the virgins to be bridesmaids there would need to be some Biblical or historical precedent for such a role in Jewish weddings, which there is not. The practice of bridesmaids and groomsmen started in the ancient Greece and Rome when people thought that demons could curse someone's marriage, so friends would be invited to dress like them to confound the demons. Yeshua would not use the pagan practice of bridesmaids in a parable to His lost sheep.

Second, the virgins that were taken "to the wedding" is consistent with the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, as used in Matthew 25, as well as Revelation 19:7–9, which is the covenant marriage of Messiah Yeshua and His brides (those chosen and betrothed in the Holy Spirit/Ruach HaKodesh).

Third, the word for virgin (Strong's G3933) indicates an 'espoused' or 'betrothed' virgin (see Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:27; 1 Corinthians 7:28, 34 & 36; 2 Corinthians 7:22). The virgins are ready to be married and are waiting for their groom to appear.

Fourth, throughout the whole parable there is no mention of a bride, singular. If these are bridesmaids, where is the bride? Would she not be with the bridesmaids? Isn't the duty of a bridesmaid to help and wait with the bride?

If you recall that יהוה says that He is the husband of two wives, as seen in Ezekiel 23, Jeremiah 3 and Jeremiah 31, then you must accept that polygyny is righteous – and we know that Yeshua can only do what He sees the Father do. As such, this parable can be seen in a whole new light – Yeshua is the bridegroom of 10 virgins, five of whom were foolish and had no oil (Spirit), while the other five had plenty of oil (Spirit) and entered into the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

1 Corinthians 5 – Father's Wife

1 Cor 5:1 It is commonly reported that there is *fornication* among you, and such *fornication* as is not even named among the gentiles, so as one to have his father's wife!

This is a direct violation of Lev 18:8. We must assume this is referring to one of his father's wives, who was not his mother or it would have said so. Doesn't this imply polygyny? Again, there is no mandate against polygyny, but a prohibition against incest– he was uncovering his father's nakedness by taking one of his wives. It is possible that the father was a widower and he had simply remarried after his first wife's death, but it's also possible he had multiple wives.

1 Corinthians 6 – Adulterers Will Not Inherit Heaven

1 Cor 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the reign of Elohim? Do not be deceived. Neither those who *fornicate*, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor greedy of gain, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers shall inherit the reign of Elohim.

This passage clearly states that adulterers will not inherit His kingdom. So if polygyny is an act of adultery, or some other sexual sin, then the polygynists of old would not inherit the Kingdom. Yet in Hebrews 11, it lists many of the patriarchs who will inherit eternal life with יהוה. Men such as Abraham, Ya'aqob (Ya'aqob), Mosheh (Moses), Gid'on (Gideon), Dawid (David) and Shemu'el (Samuel), all husbands of more than one wife. If these men are going to inherit the Kingdom, and adulterers and fornicators will not, then polygyny cannot be one of those sinful terms.

1 Corinthians 7 – Own Wife and Own Husband

1 Cor. 7:2 But because of *fornication*, let each one have his own wife, and let each woman have her

own husband.

3 Let the husband render to his wife what is her due, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

5 Do not deprive one another except with agreement for a time, to give yourselves to fasting and prayer. And come together again so that Satan does not try you because of your lack of self-control.

6 And I say this as a concession, not as a command.

7 For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from Elohim, one in this way and another in that.

8 And I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am,

9 but if they do not have self-control, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn.

Here we are clearly told one of the purposes of marriage is to keep a man from sin. And if the sole wife is unable to meet her husband's needs, is it not better for him to marry again, rather than to burn? This can certainly be viewed this way.

Looking at the first verse, the 'own wife... own husband' is interesting. The Greek words used in the 'own wife' passage are different from the 'own' used in the 'own husband' section. For 'his own wife' the Greek word *heautou* (εαυτου) is used and a search reveals that this is used primarily when 'ownership' or the possessiveness is implied to be exclusive. Such as 'my own mouth' or 'his own spirit' or 'her own life.' Occasionally it will be used where we might think ownership could be multiple, such as 'their own home' or 'her own son', but in these cases it's actually declaring the ownership to be exclusive. When *heautou* (εαυτου) is used we know that the ownership is sole or singular. In the passage where it states 'her own husband' the word *idios* (ιδιον) is used for 'own'. A search here reveals that it is used when ownership is known to be multiple. Such as 'his own city' or 'his own country' or 'his own language.' It is also used where the ownership is known to be singular, such as 'his own clothes' or 'thine own eye'. By these passages we can conclude that a husband 'owns' (*heautou*) his wife exclusively, but a wife may or may not 'own' (*idios*) her husband exclusively. She may be sharing 'ownership' with others. And please don't misunderstand- I am not saying that a man owns his wife as he would property, but that she belongs to him and him alone. It's very important that we see the distinction between these two different words for 'own' because it testifies to the fact that adultery is based on the marital status *of the woman* and not the man. She is solely her husband's, but her husband may not solely be hers.

We can view this in another way that will make it clear what this passage means. If I say 'every man to his own truck and every woman to her own car', we know that this is not stating that a man may only have one truck. But our cultural biases have led us to conclude that. Sha'ul is actually instructing us to not share our wives with other men. We are to keep them safe and secure, as a treasured jewel, for the mutual pleasure and enjoyment as man and wife.

Notice also that Sha'ul did not say 'adultery', but rather 'fornication'. That's because when a married man lies with an unmarried woman, it's not adultery. If a married woman lays with any man who is not her husband it is adultery. If this were not the case, then I believe Sha'ul would have said adultery instead of whoring.

1 Corinthians 7 – Wife is Bound

1 Cor 7:39 A wife is bound by Torah as long as her husband lives, and if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she desires, only in the Master.

This shows the marriage covenant is not just a simple contract or promise between a man and a wife. It's a vow to יהוה. If the husband dies, his wife is free to remarry. What if this widow desires a married man, in the "whom she desires" part? Reading Sha'ul words one could conclude he would allow this. Is the husband similarly bound in this verse? He is not – no Scripture binds the husband to only one wife in the marriage, as the wife is bound to only one husband. The living state of his current wife does not bind him as she is bound. He is free to marry another woman, even if his current wife is still alive and he is married to her.

1 Corinthians 9 – First use of the term Sister-Wife

1 Cor 9:5 Do we not have a right to take along a sister-wife as do also the other emissaries, and the brothers of the Master, and Kēpha (Peter)?

Most translations have changed this to 'believing wife', but the Greek in its literal form reads 'sister-wife'. Was Sha'ul saying that the wives of the emissaries were sisters? Or is it possible that some of the emissaries had multiple wives?

1 Timothy 3 – Husband of One Wife

1 Tim 3:1 Trustworthy is the word: If a man longs for the position of an overseer, he desires a good work.

2 An overseer, then, should be blameless, the husband of one wife, sober, sensible, orderly, kind to strangers, able to teach,

3 not given to wine, no brawler, but gentle, not quarrelsome, no lover of money,

4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in subjection with all reverence,

5 for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how shall he look after the assembly of Elohim?

In these passages, many have said that the requirements for an overseer apply to all men. I will not say such, for fear of incurring judgment on myself by adding to יהוה scriptures and I pray that I have not done so elsewhere. Sha'ul is clearly listing the requirements of a *leader* in a congregation and not all men. You must consider that Moshe led the Yisra'elites while possibly having multiple wives, as did Dawid, Gid'on, and others. The Greek word 'one' (μιας – mia) here is also translated as 'first' or even 'a' in many other passages. This is a more likely interpretation, since the rest of the passage says he must have experience leading others in his own home. An overseer must be a husband of his first wife or a wife. This usually will be the wife that was chosen for him by his parents. But μίας (mia) never means 'one and only one', but it can mean 'one of a set'.

Isn't it interesting though that Sha'ul himself was unmarried, as was Yeshua, as far as we know. Were they unqualified to lead a congregation? And where is this commandment in the Torah? This passage from Sha'ul must be his opinion again and not Scripture, as we know he does not add to יהוה commandments.

1 Timothy 4 – Forbidding to Marry

1 Tim 4:1 But the Spirit distinctly says that in latter times some shall fall away from the belief, paying attention to misleading spirits, and teachings of demons,

2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having been branded on their own conscience,

3 forbidding to marry, saying to abstain from foods which Elohim created to be received with

thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

By the false teachings on plural marriage, many are being told that they are not allowed to take additional wives. Is that not what this passage is addressing? Why would misleading spirits and demons push the false doctrine that polygyny is sinful? Wouldn't it make sense that it is to stop righteous families from producing righteous progeny more quickly? I believe we are in the end times, or are very near them, and most congregations believe in 'monogamy only' because they ignore the obvious passages where righteous polygyny is found. They are trusting in the beliefs that have been embedded in their own consciences. Also, remember the Hebrews were *frequently* polygynous, but the Greeks, and then the Romans forced monogamy on Israel after they conquered them. Please see the link provided at the end of this document titled "The History of Monogamy". This article clearly shows the false doctrine of 'Monogamy Only' in the Christian church. Today's culture continues on with the false teachings of the once universal (Catholic) church and the established laws of the land. When willing men and women are denied marriage, it is the teachings of demons and misleading spirits, and the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Scriptures.

Hebrews 13 – Marriage Bed Undefined

Heb 13:4 Let marriage be respected by all, and the bed be undefiled. But Elohim shall judge those who whore, and adulterers.

Those who establish another marriage covenant between Elohim and themselves with a second or additional wife are not committing adultery. The Hebrew word *nâ'aph* (נָאֵף) that we translate as adultery means 'woman breaks covenant' or 'woman breaks wedlock'. There is nowhere, not one place, where a man is accused of committing adultery when he is known to be married and the woman is single, or married to him and she's not his first wife. Adultery is committed when it involves a woman *who is already married to another man* and she is one flesh with a man who is not her husband. This is the only way a woman can commit adultery. A man can commit adultery in three different ways:

First, he has sex with a *married* woman who is not his wife.

Second, he illegally divorces his wife. He can do this one of two ways; he puts her away without giving her a *ghet* (a written certificate of divorce). Or his reasons for divorce are not valid. Even with a *ghet*, the divorce would not be valid if it's not done according to יהוה instructions. In יהוה eyes, she is still married to her original husband. But because of his actions in putting her away or divorcing her illegally, he is guilty of and shares responsibility in her adultery with her if she remarries (Matt 19:9a).

And thirdly, by marrying a woman who has been illegally put away or divorced (Matt 19:9b). In all three cases, the state of the *woman's marital status* is what determines whether or not adultery is committed.

James 2 – Abraham's Righteousness

James 2:23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed Elohim, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness." And he was called, "Elohim's friend."

Abraham is called a friend of יהוה, yet he was a polygynist. Would יהוה call someone a 'friend' who could not be saved because of his sin, or if he was unrepentant in his sin? In Hebrew culture, the word 'friend' is reserved for someone that they are in covenant with. It is not what our culture teaches, in that it's someone we are buddy-buddy with. Would Yah make a covenant with an unrepentant adulterer?

Conclusion

Kendra and I are believers in the entire Word of Yah and as such, we believe that His Word should permeate *every* area of our lives, even at the risk of losing family, friends, culture, political correctness or even in the face of persecution. We won't allow culture or pressure to dictate our beliefs, but rather use Scriptures to define what truth is in all topics. As we all know, it's very easy to twist Scriptures to verify a belief. But to go into a diligent study of the Word and let it define truth is much more rare. We have attempted to do so here and feel that we have seen His truth on this volatile, controversial topic. We understand that it produces hot emotions, outbursts and unbelief. Did we not all experience those things when people began telling us about the paganism of Christmas, Easter, the prohibition of eating pork and shrimp, etc? We all did, but then the truth settled in! This is just one more thing that the Roman Catholic Church has changed in the Christian culture, and we as believers now must examine all of Scripture to find the truth on this topic as well.

In order to be a well-adjusted, content and happy, a sister-wife or a wife has to learn to have a selfless, mature, Messiah-like love with a servant's heart, desiring that her sister-wife have all the joy and happiness that she does with their husband. I've (Kendra) often said that I want for my sisters in Messiah to have what I have with my husband! If I have an amazing, giving, loving man for a husband, (and I do!) wouldn't it be loving to want someone else to be just as blessed as I am? Or shall I stay stuck in the Western mindset of me, me, me, mine, mine, mine??? We have a very selfish culture in America, and that is not at all attractive to all the other cultures of the world! We are well known for our lavish, self-indulgent, selfish, self-focused, and stingy natures. Is it any wonder we are not willing to share our righteous husbands? We've been taught from birth that it's 'romantic' for one husband to only love one wife. Do you know where the word 'romance' comes from? Rome! –Greek, pagan, and 'monogamy only', which is completely contrary to the picture we have of *most* of the patriarchs. It's very easy to believe that all countries have the same mind set and culture that we have, but to the contrary, one in three countries allows polygyny. We *talk about* going back to our Hebraic roots, so let's do it in this area of marriage as well!

Something else to consider is the amount of righteous, married men in the congregations, verses the number of single women, who are looking for a righteous, believing husband, an 'Alpha Male'. The numbers are very disproportional, with the women *far* outnumbering the men, and have been for ages. War in Biblical times caused *many* women to be widowed. Who would all of these widows have married? Was she to wait for a single man to find her and rescue her and her children, or did Yah, in His mercy, allows a righteous man to take more than one wife? It could very well be that this is His welfare system, and the body of Messiah refuses to step up by allowing polygyny, and the government has had to care for the poor, widows, orphans, etc., instead of Yah's people. And, in these end times, we are far outnumbered in the world against the unbelievers – unbelievers in Yeshua, unbelievers in Torah, and unbelievers in Yah altogether. Of all the people in the world, who should be having multiple wives and producing bountiful righteous progeny? We should! The very first command in Genesis from Yah is to be fruitful and multiply, and then in Deuteronomy He says to teach our children His Instructions/Torah!

Deu 6:1 “And this is the command, the laws and right-rulings which יהוה your Elohim has commanded, to teach you to do in the land which you are passing over to possess,
2 so that you fear יהוה your Elohim, to guard all His laws and His commands which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days be prolonged.
3 “And you shall hear, O Yisra’el, and shall guard to do, that it might be well with you, and that you increase greatly as יהוה Elohim of your fathers has spoken to you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.
4 “Hear, O Yisra’el: יהוה our Elohim, יהוה is one!
5 “And you shall love יהוה your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your might.
6 “And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be in your heart,
7 and you shall impress them upon your children, and shall speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up,
8 and shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.
9 “And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

The idea of polygyny takes some getting used to, and some contemplation and some soul searching, to even be able to see the benefits, but they are there. Here are just a few that Kendra came up with:

~~*Benefits for Wives in Polygyny*~~

- ❖ A single woman who is looking for a good husband can ask questions of an already established wife and make sure beforehand that he's a proven, righteous husband that is already leading his family in a closer walk with יהוה.
- ❖ There is another woman in your life that will love you, support you, help you, encourage you, and want everything good for you that she has.
- ❖ There is more opportunity of having a family run business where the children are present, involved and being educated, as well as all the wives being under the direct supervision of their own husband, instead of another man's covering.
- ❖ Teaches you to be a person who will put others' needs before your own – you will have to learn to share a lot of things, and give more than take.
- ❖ Household chores are shared – cleaning, cooking, laundry, errands, etc.
- ❖ A more varied meal menu, if cooking duties are shared.
- ❖ No need for a babysitter outside the family – this also gives the option of date nights, long weekends and anniversaries alone with the husband while a sister-wife takes care of the kids.
- ❖ The first wife can help mentor a second, less experienced wife on a day to day basis in how to be a good wife without having to learn from her own mistakes and errors.
- ❖ If one wife is a night owl and the other is a morning glory, they will balance each other out – with children and the husband.
- ❖ More love, attention, affection, and discipline for the children – what child wouldn't want two mothers to love them and bless them instead of just one?
- ❖ If one wife dies for some reason, there is another mother already present to step in and take care of the children – one who already knows them, loves them, and can help them through it.

- ❖ Pushes a woman to excel and become a better wife because she has competition, and if it's a *healthy* kind of competition, it can be something that improves her and keeps her from becoming complacent.
- ❖ If one wife is an introvert, and the other an extrovert, one will be better at communicating than the other, but the other will think and process things more before speaking. Communication will be more balanced and productive. Also women need to talk and discuss things, sometimes overwhelming the husband.
- ❖ The wives will have a close, personal, intimate relationship with each other that will last FOREVER – just as a marriage does with the husband.
- ❖ Makes a wife grow spiritually – you will have to work on your short comings, faults, selfishness, etc. There's no hiding it from a sister-wife, like she may be able to with a husband.
- ❖ A wife can discuss with a sister-wife the struggles, fears, concerns, etc., that she has with the husband without fear of it leaving the family.
- ❖ If the husband wants more intimacy than one wife wants, a sister-wife will help lessen the frequency and pressure on the other wife.
- ❖ A barren wife can experience motherhood in her own home through a sister-wife's children.
- ❖ Sister-wives have companionship at home together while the husband is at work.
- ❖ A sister wife can help a lot with the struggles through child birth – coaching, support, bringing the baby to the mother, soothing and comforting the baby, caring for the baby while mom sleeps, changing diapers, etc.
- ❖ There are no worries about husband not getting that lovin' while a wife is in the late stages of pregnancy or recovering from childbirth – he'll have another wife to take care of his needs, and the new mom won't rush to re-engage before she's fully healed (6 weeks is a long time for a husband!)
- ❖ Insecurities will be forced to the forefront and a polygynous wife will have to deal with them. It causes self examination, discussions with the husband, seeing herself in a positive light, focusing on strengths instead of weaknesses, looking for the blessings she'll bring to the family, and to acknowledge that she's not perfect and be okay with that.
- ❖ If a sister-wife decides to work outside the home after her children are raised, then there's an extra income.
- ❖ Wives will have different strengths and weaknesses – housekeeping, cooking, child training, book keeping/finances, home schooling, etc. and they'll complement each other – making the family well rounded and more harmonious
- ❖ If husband has to go on business trips, sister-wives won't be alone or bored.
- ❖ If a wife is just 'not in the mood' occasionally, then he can go to the other wife and she doesn't have to feel guilty for telling him no.
- ❖ Wives learn proper boundaries and to not interfere in a sister-wives marriage, unless asked for counsel.
- ❖ If one wife wishes to have a home based business, such as midwifery, book-keeping, web-based selling, etc., a sister-wife can be a huge help in getting her started, advising and supporting. Extra income can help the family, as long as her primary focus is on her husband and children. Extreme care would have to be exercised to ensure all stay under the covering of their husband.

~~*Benefits for a Husband in Polygyny*~~

- ❖ It will increase his leadership/management skills, mediation, knowing the difference between equal and fair, recognizing and quelling favoritism, budget requirements, communication skills, etc.
- ❖ More alone time with each wife – divided household duties equals more free time.
- ❖ If one wife is lost due to death, there is another wife there to console and comfort the husband through the grief process, as well as caring for all the children.
- ❖ The home is run more efficiently (3 heads are better than 2) which brings greater honor to the husband, as the leader of the home.
- ❖ There is more incentive for the husband to come home and spend time at home when he has two or more loving wives and adoring children wanting his love, time and attention.
- ❖ Siring righteous offspring more quickly and numerous than in a monogamous marriage.
- ❖ One wife can help the husband better understand and relate to the other wife.
- ❖ If one wife is unclean/unavailable for sex, or recovering from childbirth, a husband has another wife that he can go to for sexual intimacy.
- ❖ More help with a newborn baby during the night, instead of it being a requirement for the husband, when he needs to be sleeping and being prepared to work the next day – the sister-wife can be the primary source of assistance.

When I started this research paper, I had no idea it would grow to be such a lengthy document and I thank you for having made it to the end. I sincerely appreciate your time in reading it and I hope that you will judge its contents with an open mind, search the Scriptures, and test everything. Please let me know if I have erred, failed or where I'm doctrinally wrong. יהוה has given us a seeking spirit. He wants us to test His Scriptures, to test Him and to hold fast to what proves true, sound and good. I continually hope and pray that I do this with all things in my life.

Shalom v'brachot, in Yeshua HaMashiach/ Peace and blessings, in Yeshua the Messiah
E Boyd Daniels and Kendra Daniels

Reference Links for Further Study

Righteous Warriors – <http://www.righteouswarriors.com/>

Biblical Polygamy – <http://www.biblicalpolygamy.com/>

Beth Lechem Messianic Ministry – <http://www.bethlehem.org/>

The History of Monogamy – <http://www.patriarchywebsite.com/monogamy/mono-history.htm/>