

BIBLICAL MARRIAGE

Multiple Wives Marriage Is Not A Sin

The article is not intended for the purpose of promoting or to encourage multiple wives marriage. However, there are many who do not accept the concept of multiple wives marriage, view it as immoral and sinful while the Scriptures nowhere explicitly condemn it.

Some laws in the Pentateuch do appear to place Yahuah's stamp of approval on multiple wives marriage. For example note the rules and guidelines concerning the treatment of multiple wives (specifically prohibiting ill-treatment of the first wife after a second marriage) and the inheritance of the first born, if he happened to be the son of a less favored, wife.

"If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights, [Exodus 21:10]

If a man have two wives, the one beloved, and the other hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the first-born son be hers that was hated; then it shall be, in the day that he causeth his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved the first-born before the son of the hated, who is the first-born: [Deuteronomy 21:15-17]

It was an obligation for men to marry their widowed sisters in law and support her family. [Deuteronomy 25:5-10] The point that has to be considered is that the brother could very well already have been married.

When a man married a woman all her relatives became his kinsfolk. The only passages in the OT laws that prohibit polygamous marriages are those that would constitute incest. For example, a man could not marry a woman and her daughter or granddaughter (Leviticus 18:17), a woman and her sister as a rival (v. 18), or a woman and her mother (20:14).

The first instance of multiple wives marriage in the Bible was that of Lamech in Genesis 4:19: "Lamech married two women." Several prominent men in the Old Testament has multiple wives marriage. Jacob, David, Solomon, Gideon and others all had multiple wives.

There are only about eighteen specific examples of multiple wives marriage throughout the Old Testament.

The Most High is direct in what he say is sinful and direct in His punishment and he did not leave it for man's speculation and interpretation. Monogamists, on the other hand, believe that the model for marriage, instituted by Yahuah Himself, was one man and one woman, and that while Scriptural passages shows Yahuah permitting and regulating multiple wives marriage, they do not conclusively prove that He condones it.

We cannot simply make the assumption that the reason why the nation of Israel was punished was because of multiple wives marriage, there must be conclusive evidence to prove this theory. Therefore, why the prophets did not warn the nation if it was a sin. Amos 3:7. 2 Sam 12:7,8.

For argument sake, we can explore examples from men in scriptures who had one wife to support the one wife union debate and we can also explore examples from men who had multiple wives and concubines.

The fact remain that the Most High never allow a sinful act to go on for generations and not send the prophets to warn the nation to repent before executing judgement.

(Deut. 21:15-17), (Deut. 25:5-10)

Many cannot accept or comprehend why it was allowed. We do not have the complete understanding because we are many generations removed from that culture and have been raise up in a culture which frowns upon multiple wives marriage due the lack of understand and the Modern Day Abuses of Polygamy.

The Bible does not specifically say why Yahuah allowed multiple wives marriage. We can only speculate. However, there are a few key factors to consider. There have always been more women in the world than men. Current statistics show that approximately 50.5 percent of the world's population is women. Assuming the same percentages in ancient times, and multiplied by millions of people, there would be tens of thousands more women than men. Second, warfare in ancient times was especially brutal, with an incredibly high rate of fatality. This would have resulted in an even greater percentage of women to men. Third, due to patriarchal societies, it was nearly impossible for an unmarried woman to provide for herself. Women relied on their fathers, brothers, and husbands for provision and protection. Unmarried women were often subjected to prostitution and slavery. The significant difference between the number of women and men would have left many, many women in an undesirable situation.

So, it seems that Yahuah may have allowed multiple wives marriage to protect and provide for the women who could not find a husband otherwise. A man would take multiple wives and serve as the provider and protector of all of them. While definitely not ideal, living in a multiple wives household was far better than the alternatives: prostitution, slavery, or starvation. In addition to the protection/provision factor, multiple wives marriage enabled a much faster expansion of humanity, fulfilling Yahuah's command to "be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth" (Genesis 9:7). Men are capable of impregnating multiple women in the same time period; causing humanity to grow much faster than if each man was only producing one child each year.

Even while allowing multiple wives marriage, however, Yahuah's original intention was for one man to be married to only one woman: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24).

Same can be said Yahuah original intention was not for mankind to eat animal flesh. Adam and Eve did not eat meat before the flood (Genesis 1:29-30). But after the flood, man was allowed to eat meat (Genesis 9:3-4). When the Law of Moses was given, certain kinds of meat could be eaten, while others were prohibited as unclean.

In Deuteronomy 17:14-20, says that the kings were not supposed to multiply wives or horses or silver and gold. While this cannot be interpreted as a command that the kings must be monogamous, it can be understood as declaring the king should not use his power and authority to increase more wives than necessary will causes problems. This can be clearly seen in the life of Solomon (1 Kings 11:3-4).

The law did have some restrictions on multiple wives marriage, such as a man not marrying the sister or mother of his wife (Lev. 18:17, Lev. 20:14) and, in particular, foreign wives, because they would tend to tempt him towards their Gods (1 Kings 11:1-8). Solomon sinned, not because of the fact that he had many wives, but because he married women from foreign countries, and he did not tear down their places of worshipping false Gods (Deuteronomy 7:3). It would also appear that Solomon broke this law in that he multiplied seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines to himself (1 Kings 11:3). Solomon abused the right to take more than one wife.

Ephesians 5:22-33 speaks of the relationship between husbands and wives. When referring to a husband, it always also refers to a wife. "For the husband is the head of the wife... He who loves his wife loves himself. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh....Each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

Shaul appear to condemn multiple wives marriage when he addressed the qualifications for deacons and Elders. "Elders and deacons are to be the husbands of ONE wife"! (1 Timothy 3:2,12; Titus 1:6)

However, first of all this passage is not addressed to all believers in Messiah, but applies only to elders and deacons. We cannot take something that only applies to a specific group of men, and apply that too all men in general. This would be taking a verse out of its context.

Secondly, notice, these passages do not say "only" one wife. The Greek word that "one" is translated from here is word #3391, mia, and is also translated as "a" or "the first" in other parts of scripture. Thus the emphasis would be that an elder needs to be a married man, having children, and that he must not have divorced his first wife.

For example, in the following passages, the word "a" is the same word translated "one" above:

Matthew 21:19, "And when he saw a fig tree in the way..."

Matthew 26:69, "Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him..."

Revelation 9:13, "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice..."

Likewise, Elders and deacons are to be the husbands of a wife, and have children, because if he cannot rule his own household, how can he rule the assembly of Yahuah? This passage does not limit him to only one wife that is not its point. The purpose for these qualifications is stated in 1 Timothy 3:5, "(For if a man knows not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the assembly of Yahuah)?" The point is that he must be able to rule his wife and children, and if he has multiple wives, and is able to rule them, so much the better! Any man who can love and rule multiple women, and made them happy, according to the Word of Yahuah, is certainly qualified to rule a congregation of many other believers!

Another example of how the word "one" is translated is when scripture speaks of Yahushua having risen "the first day of the week" (Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:2,9, Luke 24:1, John 20:1,19), the phrase "the first" is translated from the same word that "one" is translated from above. Thus, it can also read as follows, "Elders and Deacons are to be the husbands of the first wife."

Again, the purpose for these qualifications is stated in 1 Timothy 3:5, "(For if a man knows not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the assembly of Yahuah)?" And if an elder or a bishop was

divorced from his first wife, he would be violating Yahuah's Law regulating multiple wives marriage, which states, "If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish" (Exodus 21:10). In other words, if an elder or a bishop was not still married to his first wife because of divorce, but married to other women, then he would be diminishing his first wife's food, raiment, and her duty of marriage, and therefore evidences that he does not know how to rule his own house, and therefore cannot rule the assembly of Yahuah.

Why did it change? It is not so much Yahuah's disallowing something He previously allowed as it is Yahuah's restoring marriage to His original plan. Even going back to Adam and Eve, multiple wives marriage was not Yahuah's original intent. Yahuah seems to have allowed multiple wives marriage to solve a problem. In these first instances necessity required this; when this necessity no longer existed, the thing became inexpedient.

"Multiple wives marriage is adultery?"

If multiple wives marriage was the same thing as adultery, therefore it should be punishable by death under the law (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22-23); adultery cannot be seen as synonymous with polygamy. Men and their wives were not put to death for having multiple wives marriages!

It is very important that we look to the Scriptures to define what "adultery" is instead of holding to a slanted Western definition of adultery. Adultery is seen as a married individual having sexual intercourse with someone of the opposite sex, besides their spouse, married or single. U.S. law on this matter reflects the ideas of Roman culture and the apostate Roman Catholic Church and is not aligned with Yahuah's laws.

The Scriptural view of the wife is that she is the property of her husband.

Even though a man can marry more than one woman without being charged with "adultery", a woman cannot marry more than one man (Romans 7:2-3, 1 Corinthians 7:39), and that if a woman is involved with another man, she will be charged with adultery. The reason the man is not mentioned by Shaul is because, according to the law, a man could marry another woman while his first wife was still alive and not be guilty of adultery.

**MARRIAGE IS NOT A CONTRACT,
BIBLICAL MARRIAGE IS A COVENANT!**

MYTH #1 "Once you have sexual intercourse with a person, you are now married to them" FALSE! Sex alone does not constitute marriage. If so, why would 1 Cor 7:2 indicate that sex without the benefit of marriage (covenant agreement) is immoral? Sex alone without any promises or vows is nothing more than adultery. We are commanded to Flee adultery. Sex "ALONE" is not marriage. SEX ALONE IS NOT ANYTHING BUT---->SEX. There are steps that have to take place in order for the sex to be counted as marriage.

MYTH #2. "Being engaged to a person does not mean that you are married to them" FALSE!!! In the eyes of Yahuah, an engagement is seen as the same as marriage. An engagement is the vow to carry out the rest, and vows are not to be broken...

Num 30:2 If a man vows a vow unto Yahuah, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceeded out of his mouth. This is how serious all of this is... The Law says that If a man entice a maid that is not betrothed (engaged) and he lie with her, he shall surely endow her to (then) be his wife (Ex 22:16). So in layman's terms, When a man runs game on a woman that he is not engaged to, in order to lie (sleep) with her, he must pay the price to be with her; in other words, he must marry her.

1. There must be a promise made (engagement)
2. Then the covenant of marriage must be consummation (sex) which seals the covenant (before women were virgins, and the blood was for the blood of the marriage covenant).

The Marriage between a Man and a woman is a direct replica of how Yahuah Married Israel. He took the same steps.....

First Yahuah became engaged when he swore (made a promise) to Abraham that he would bless his seed and that through his seed, all the nations of the Earth would be blessed (See Gen 22:16-18). Next Yahuah Married (the seed children) of Jacob or Israel (see the marriage covenant In Exodus 19:3-8) and Israel agreed saying "All that you hath spoken we will do" (That was the, I do). Then Moses took the blood and put it in a basin and read the vows (book of the covenant or law) in the audience of the people. This was the ceremony. His witnesses were the Heavens and the earth.

He said, "I which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divided the sea when the waves thereof roar; if those ordinances depart from before me, saith Yahuah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever (Jer 31:35-36 and Deut 30:19).

Then finally Moses sprinkled the blood of the covenant on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which Yahuah hath made with you concerning all these words. Then he was married to his people.

NOTE: It is wise to have a marriage certificate. If you don't want the state in your business, you should get a Ketubah which is a Hebrew marriage contract. (Search Ketubah online). This procedure will protect your spouse if something happens to you.

Final Thoughts

For most of the world, multiple wives marriage is unnatural, just as righteousness and honesty have become increasingly "unnatural." Our perception of things is relativistic -- it depends on our own spiritual condition and the way our minds have been trained. We, as bondservants of Messiah, ought to be trained by the word of Yahuah and not by the world. The morality of any issue hinges not on what man believes is right or wrong, but on Yahuah's view of the matter. It is His word that ultimately matters. The Law did not command us to have multiple wives and neither did it command us not to. It is sinful and immoral to practice multiple wives marriage because of lust and selfishness. However, multiple wives marriages are not a sin if done righteously as an act out of necessity.

Shalum

israeliteway.org