

**POLYGYNY  
ACCORDING  
TO THE WORD  
OF YEHOVAH**

**E Boyd and Kendra Daniels**



*Artist Claudia Tremblay*

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## Definitions

Please read the following section of definitions, even if you think you already know what they mean. It's important to understand the various terms according to Scripture when discussing this topic, instead of the typical secular definitions and understanding. This is how we will use these terms in this paper.

**Sin:** Defined by Torah/the Law – 1st John 3:4 Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the Law: for sin is the transgression of the Law.

**Adultery:** A *married* woman having sexual relations with anyone other than her husband, or a man (whether married or single) having sexual relations with a *married* woman. Strong's defines it as, "A woman who breaks wedlock". Please see further discussion on adultery below.

**Alef Male:** This is a personal term that we use to describe a man that has a positive proven track record with his already existing family and marriage, of being solid, strong, addiction free, self-controlled, fulfilled and is truly the spiritual leader and head of his home in Torah and the faith. This is not to be confused with a man who is a domineering, controlling, self-centered narcissist.

<http://tobearlpha.com/alpha-male-characteristics/>

**Fornication:** Any sexual activity that is forbidden by Yah in Torah. It can include incest, rape, male or female idolatrous prostitution, bestiality, having sex with an unclean woman/menstruating, sodomy/men having sex with other men, and adultery would also fall into this category.

**Monogamy:** A man having only one wife.

**Polygyny:** A man having multiple wives.

<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/pronunciation/english/polygyny> (For a verbal demonstration of how to correctly say it)

There are only two righteous forms of 'marriage' in Scripture- monogamy and polygyny (being one husband with multiple wives). Any other relationship is not a 'marriage'. For the purposes of this paper, we are specifically discussing monogamy and polygyny.

**Polygamy:** A wide umbrella term that includes many forms of sexual unions, most of which are classified as sin according to Biblical standards. The next three terms (plus polygyny) would come under the umbrella of 'polygamy'.

**Polyandry:** A woman with multiple men as sex partners that she is faithful to.

**Polyfidelity:** Multiple men with multiple women, being faithful as a unit.

**Polyamory:** Multiple sexual partners that are not faithful, i.e. swingers.

**License:** The vehicle by which the government takes away a right or privilege, then grants permission to exercise that right or privilege by paying money that, without such authorization, would constitute an illegal act. We do not encourage anyone to obtain marriage licenses from the state or government.

**Bigamy:** A term not used until the 14th century, a person having multiple spouses and multiple marriage licenses in place, with the connotation of secrecy and subterfuge, hiding the additional spouses from one another.

**Patriarchy:** Social organization marked by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family, the legal dependence of wives and children, and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the male line.

**Marriage:** To the best of our understanding, an *ideal* marriage in the eyes of Yah would be:

- 1) A father (with counsel from the mother) finds a righteous groom for his virgin daughter or finds a righteous bride for his son.
- 2) The daughter agrees to the match (begins the betrothal period).

3) They have a public ceremony where the groom makes a vow that he is taking her in covenant as a 'wife'.

4) There are multiple witnesses to the public vow.

5) They have sexual relations to consummate the covenant marriage.

6) The bed linens, with evidence of her loss of innocence, are given to her parents for safe keeping.

**Sister-Wife (SW):** A Biblical term used to describe another wife that is married to her husband.

**Concubine Wife:** A woman who has been sold to a man, starting as a maid or house servant, but is eventually elevated to the position of a wife. She comes with no dowry, but is instead working to pay a debt owed that is owed. There's a place in the Torah that calls Jacob's concubines 'wives' so they're equivalent to a regular wife, with their sons having inheritance rights. A regular wife, as opposed to a concubine wife, comes with a bride price/dowry and owes no debt.

**Torah:** The first five books in the Bible.

**Yehovah or יהוה:** The Father's Personal Name:

**Elohim:** A Hebrew word meaning 'God', a title for the Father

**Yeshua** (or commonly, but incorrectly referred to as 'Jesus'): The Son's Personal Name

**Yah:** The shortened form of the Father's Name:

**Ruach haQodesh:** The Holy Spirit

**Brit Chadasha:** The Renewed Covenant/New Testament

**Renewed Covenant:** The New Testament

## Introduction

What you are reading is our study of the Scriptural precepts of plural marriage/**POLYGYNY** (or more commonly, but inaccurately called 'polygamy'). We have tried to record every Scripture we've ever seen or known to be used for or against the concept of plural marriage. 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. We want to encourage you to put aside your biases, your current assumptions, and trust wholly on what the Scriptures actually say, be led by the Ruach haQodesh (Holy Spirit) and trust in the wisdom of יהוה.

It's sometimes very startling and disturbing when we are persecuted and vilified for believing in and supporting a man's Torah-given right to have more than one wife. Yet these same people (from all different belief systems) that persecute us, easily and readily accept others in their lives who live in sodomite relationships, lesbian relationships, are serially sexually promiscuous with a revolving door of partners, or are Sabbath breakers, eaters of pork and celebrating pagan holidays, etc. They have no problem accepting those sinful behaviors by their families and friends but are very quick to call polygyny 'sin', rebuke us and decide to no longer fellowship with us. People tend to make rude assumptions about us and condemn polygyny, but it's a common and persistent lifestyle option in Scriptures which is never forbidden or called 'sin'. Doesn't that strike you as, "Calling good evil, and evil good"? And not only that, but they revile us for *only believing in it*, while these other immoral people in their lives are actually *living and practicing their 'sin'*. Honest ignorance on this topic abounds, even in our Torah movement, but few will admit to being ignorant or go about correcting this deficit in their knowledge of His Word. The Torah regulates how a man is to practice polygyny in

multiple places. Does Yah regulate how a man can 'sin'? Certainly not! So, before you click that unfriend option, or refuse us entry into your congregation because we believe in and support polygyny, perhaps you should first consider why you are willing to walk with others in your life who are habitually sinning and living lawlessly but are not okay with accepting us. Our heart and desire is to serve Him to the best of our ability, and that includes acknowledging and giving assent to His *entire written Word*, not just the parts we're comfortable with. We do the very best we can to refuse sin and darkness, and to walk in His light. And please remember that we are commanded to love even our enemies. Surely you would not view us as your 'enemy' simply for believing in and supporting a very common, accepted Biblical practice? But even if you do, you're told to love us anyway.

Not many are aware of this, but culture teaches a different definition of adultery than what the Bible does- *culture* says that any time a married man or a married woman has sex with anyone outside their marriage it's adultery. But that is not true *according to Scripture*. We're not wanting to rock anyone's world, but this truth needs to be made known in the Torah community! Looking at the word adultery in its context all throughout His Word, it's only used when a married woman is unfaithful, OR when a man (whether single or married) has sex with a MARRIED woman. The man's marital status has no bearing whatsoever! Adultery is always defined by the marital status of the woman, but never by the man. A careful read of the passages of Eze. 16:32, Lev. 20:10, Deut. 22:22-24, then compare those to Deut. 22:28-29 makes this clear.

Have you ever wondered why Numbers chapter 5 talks about the ceremony for jealousy, but it doesn't include some kind of procedure for when a wife is jealous and suspects her husband of sexual infidelity? It's because a man is allowed to have more than one wife according to Torah. In Romans 7:1-3 it says that only the woman is bound to her husband. It says nothing about a man being exclusively bound to just one woman as long as he lives. So, in taking all of that information into consideration, it must be true that in Matthew 5:27-28 means that whenever any man looks upon a *married* woman to lust after her that he has committed adultery in his heart. Since the people in Yeshua's day understood the definition of adultery was always with a married woman when Yeshua made that statement, they knew He meant lust after a *married* woman was committing adultery. The Greek word γυναικά (G1135 gynaika) in this verse has been translated as 'woman', but in every other instance in Matthew's gospel it's translated as 'wife'.

It should read this way:

**Matthew 5:27 & 28** "You heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone looking at a <married> woman/wife to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

The Hebrew word definition from Strong's for adultery is -

H5003

נָאַפֵּה

nâ'aph

naw-af'

A primitive root;

to commit adultery;  
 figuratively to apostatize:  
 – adulterer (–ess),  
 commit (–ing) adultery,  
 \*\*\*woman that breaks wedlock\*\*\*

So, we see that a man having relations with a *married* woman is adultery, but not because he might be married, but because *she is married*.

### **Eastman Bible Dictionary**

“Conjugal Infidelity – An adulterer was a man who had illicit intercourse with a married or a betrothed woman, and such a woman was an adulteress. Intercourse between a married man and an unmarried woman was fornication. Adultery was regarded as a great social wrong, as well as a great sin.”  
 (M.G. Easton M.A., D.D., Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Third Edition, published by Thomas Nelson, 1897. Public Domain).

### **Smith's Bible Dictionary**

Exodus 20:14 – The parties to this crime, according to Jewish law, were a married woman and a man who was not her husband. The Mosaic penalty was that both the guilty parties should be stoned, and it applied as well to the betrothed as to the married woman, provided she were free. Exodus 22:22–24 – A bondwoman so offending was to be scourged, and the man was to make a trespass offering. (Smith, William, Dr. "Entry for 'Adultery'". "Smith's Bible Dictionary". 1901).

### **Encyclopedias – International Standard Bible Encyclopedia**

Adultery – “In Scripture adultery designates sexual intercourse of a man, whether married or unmarried, with a married woman”. (Orr, James, M.A., D.D. General Editor. "Entry for 'ADULTERY'". "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia". 1915).

We want to make it very clear that we are not in any way advocating polygyny for men (or women) who have an addiction to porn, uncontrolled lust, a history of unfaithfulness, lack of self-control, or have no care for the hearts of their wives, destroying and ripping them apart because of sexual unfaithfulness. Polygyny *is not* for fulfilling unrestrained lust. If a husband is in any way disregarding his wife's mental, emotional or sexual health through the abuse of porn, cheating, prostitution, etc., he is not a candidate for righteous polygyny. And believe it or not, we've heard testimonies from men that were once addicted to porn and prostitution who when they discovered the righteousness and provision for adding more wives in the Bible, repented and turned away from their addictions. They decided instead that they wanted to live within His guidelines, with hope and anticipation of Him bringing good wives and helpmates. They walked away from that darkness, bondage, sin and shame to seek Him with their whole heart, giving Him dominion over their sexuality! They found freedom from shame and exchanged it for hope in His instructions for marriage and families! Yes, it's a long difficult process, righting wrongs with their wives, rebuilding trust, creating a track record of faithfulness, dependability and sexual purity, but it has happened! That is the beauty of His truth and Torah! "The truth will set you free!"

A common initial response we hear from people when we share our views on polygyny is that

lust must be the primary and sole driver for such an endeavor. While that certainly may be the ill motivation for some men, and we've met some unfortunately, that is not true for all men. For the purposes of this paper, let us all agree that there might actually be righteous men now who desire to build His kingdom through polygyny, just like there were in Biblical times– building strong families, and raising Torah children that will glorify the Father, Yeshua and Torah. These men have no porn addictions, are not selfish users of women, and are looking for wives, not bed partners. Most of us know and understand that lust will take, use and abuse the body while discarding the spirit and soul of a man or a woman. But surely you can see that a righteous man that is praying and patiently waiting for another wife/wives does not discard any part of the woman he will marry and really wants to cover her spiritually and protect her from sexual predators! This good man's intentions are to bless a wife– not use her, take advantage of her, sexually exploit her, and then throw her away for another woman somewhere down the road! He's looking for *marriage*, not a revolving door with many sex partners like male whores do! Marriage is a lifelong commitment where a husband provides spiritually, financially, emotionally, offers physical protection, and is looking for the same things with any additional wives that he has with his first wife– companionship, friendship, support, fun, laughter, a mother for his children, and yes, sex. If a man has a good, solid, loving, giving marriage with one wife, why wouldn't he want that multiplied with more wives since it's acceptable according to Torah? There's nothing to forbid him from having more blessings in his life to love him! And there's also nothing forbidding a single woman or a single mother with children from desiring and wanting an Alef Male as a husband and father for her children. It makes all kind of sense for her to pick a man with a proven track record of leading his family well and righteously. You know there are *many* single women out there, desperate for a *good* man to help her, rescue her, love her, and that will respect her! Should she have to settle for a lesser man, a non-Torah keeping man because these modern wives that are married to the Alef Males refuse to share? Is that right according to Torah? Is that a Torah keeping wife loving her single female neighbors? Or is that selfishness, with our culture's stamp of approval?

One of the most frequent arguments against polygyny that we hear is that Adam only had one wife, so that must be His 'perfect will' or intention, and since that's the way it was in the beginning, all men should be monogamous. It's our thought that in the beginning Adam's marital status is given as our first example of marriage because *most* men should be monogamous. We are certainly not advocating that *most* men should go find more wives! Given that 50% of all monogamous marriages end in divorce, it's clear that *most* men do not have this marriage thing all figured out and can't even govern and lead one wife very well, much less more than one. So, we suggest that only *a few* rare men (those we like to call 'Alef Males') should be the only ones to even consider the life style of polygyny. We have numerous friends that do live this way and we can guarantee from their testimonies that living polygyny in this American culture is *very* difficult, challenging, disappointing, hurtful, etc. But we've also heard lots of stories of success, happiness, contentment, fulfillment, and if it were to end for some reason, these people would seek out another polygynous relationship. The rewards can be great and worth the struggle, but it's not for the faint-hearted! We also caution that if a man is an 'Alef Male', that doesn't automatically make him qualified to lead a polygynous home. If his wife/wives are not in agreement to adding another wife, we suggest he cool his jets, pray, be patient and be *genuinely* loving, reaffirming his commitment to her, solidifying the foundation of his already established marriage/home ***and wait***. Bringing another wife into a war zone is *not* wise. The

'wife of your covenant/youth' must be secure, happy, trusting in her husband's integrity and character, and if she's not, the husband **must** repair the damage he's done first!

**Malaki 2:13-15** **And this you have done a second time: you cover the altar of יהוה with tears, with weeping and crying, because He no longer regards the offering, nor receives it with pleasure from your hands. 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. 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.**

Back to Adam again- we also like to point out that Adam is not praised anywhere in all of Scripture, and he can hardly be called a good role model for marriage or family. Through him, a monogamous man, the fall of all mankind came. Consider a contrast between Adam (and us never seeing a single word of praise or adulation about him) and that of King David (who is continually praised and lauded all over Scripture, and him having many wives). Or look at the contrast between Adam, the 'first Adam', and Yeshua being called the 'last Adam'. Adam brought all mankind into the destruction of sin, but Yeshua came as the 'last Adam' to redeem and restore us. It's quite obvious that Adam and Yeshua are polar opposites, and yet King David and Yeshua are quite similar. Isn't Yeshua's parable of the 10 virgins quite similar as well to King David and his multiple wives? Have you ever considered before that King David (having many wives) is a type and shadow of Yeshua, our King of Kings and Lord of Lords? Yeshua even bears the title, 'Son of David' many times in the Renewed Covenant. And consider this about King David, that it can very well be His will for **some** men to have multiple wives:

**Acts 13:20-23** **"And after that He gave judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Shemu'el the prophet. But then they asked for a sovereign, and Elohim gave them Sha'ul the son of Qish, a man of the tribe of Binyamin, for forty years. And having removed him, He raised up for them Dawid as sovereign, to whom also He gave witness and said, 'I have found Dawid the son of Yishai, a man after My own heart, *who shall do all My will.*' From this one's seed, according to the promise, Elohim raised up for Yisra'el a Saviour, Yeshua..."**

We do advocate for **some** men (Alef Males that have a proven track record with their already existing families and marriages, of being solid, strong, content, fulfilled and that they are leading them in Torah and the faith) that they *might be* a candidate for polygyny. And even then, if at the wedding husbands have made vows to "forsake all others", then they are bound to keep the vows they made. If a wife somehow miraculously decides to release her husband from his marriage vow of fidelity and is on board with adding additional wives, that's another matter altogether.

**Numbers 30:1-2** **And Mosheh/Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Yisra'el, saying, "This is the word which יהוה has commanded: When a man vows a vow to יהוה, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he does not break his word, he does according to all that comes out of his mouth."**

It's also true that all families, whether monogamous or polygynous, start out with one husband and one wife. Adam, and all men, *started* with one wife when they began their families. Adam chose not to add more. Biblically there is the *option* of continuing to have only one wife, or the *option* of adding more. Monogamy is not commanded, and neither is polygyny. Both are *options*. Deciding which one is best for a family is the husband's choice with a wife having a very strong vote. So, if you're reading this and you're already defensive and feeling scared about this whole idea, relax! The option of polygyny is quite possibly not even there for you and your family/marriage. And if you do come to that conclusion, as we did, that polygyny can be done righteously according to Torah, it doesn't mean that it's necessarily for you either. You can emotionally and intellectually agree to the truth of polygyny without living it yourself.

Another frequent argument against polygyny is that "...*the wives will be jealous of each other and it will be chaos!*" Our response is that jealousy and fits of rage are works of the flesh that need to be overcome, just like all the other things that are carnal and selfish.

**Galatians 5:19–21** *And the works of the flesh are well-known, which are these: adultery, whoring, uncleanness, indecency, idolatry, drug sorcery, hatred, quarrels, jealousies, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, envy, murders, drunkenness, wild parties, and the like – of which I forewarn you, even as I also said before, that those who practice such as these shall not inherit the reign of Elohim.*

**Proverbs 14:30** *A healthy heart is life to the body, but jealousy is rottenness to the bones.*

In order to be 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 has with her 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 jealous, envious, lavish, self-indulgent, selfish, self-focused, and stingy natures. Is it any wonder we are not willing to share our righteous husbands without jealousy and insecurity? We've been taught from birth in our Western society that it's romantic/right/expected/assumed that a husband is to only love one wife life-long and for his entire world to revolve solely around her.

**John 15:9–13** *"As the Father has loved Me <Yeshua>, I have also loved you. Stay in My love. If you guard My commands, you shall stay in My love, even as I have guarded My Father's commands and stay in His love. These words I have spoken to you, so that My joy might be in you, and that your joy might be complete. This is My command, that you love one another, as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this: that one should lay down his life for his friends."*

Are we to suppose that only men are to lay down their lives? In our perverse culture, that means men are expected to lay down their wills and their wants at the feet of their wives! Is this really how He intended family life to be? What about wives laying down their will, their selfishness and their

place on the throne in their homes? Women say quite frequently that the husband is the head of the home, but when it comes right down to it in reality and in the doing of it, are wives willing to let the husbands lead in this area of marriage? Or will the husbands get outright rebellion and willful tirades?

We do want to caution all wives who may be considering the possibility of polygyny- it is vital and necessary that you have a very strong sense of personal identity, self-confidence, awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses, while at the same time not being competitive with a sister-wife in the areas of her strengths or weaknesses. A polygynous family must at all times be about the unity of the family as a whole and not seeking what is best for an individual wife and her own will and welfare. Sister-wives are not your competition nor your rivals, but rather your partners in life and love and family! Truly loving a sister-wife means that you are excited and happy for her in her strengths, her knowledge, her successes, and yes, even in her happiness, contentment and fulfillment in her relationship with your husband! The secular world encourages enmity and contention between women, most noticeably in the work place, but this was not true in the ancient Hebrew culture. Women used to understand their need for female companionship and help. They would do laundry together, preserving and fermenting foods together, sewing and quilting together, birthing babies together, training/schooling children together and just simply sharing life's joys and trials together. All those wonderful bonding activities went away when women were forced to go to work outside the home and their closest allies became their fiercest enemies. What we want to encourage is for that same community mindset to return to the Hebraic culture and thinking. We must renew our minds and return to our roots in this area as well.

It's very easy to believe that all countries have the same mind set and culture that we have in America because it's our frame of reference, but to the contrary, one out of four countries in the world legally allows polygyny. We keep *talking about* going back to our Hebraic roots, so *let's do it* in this area of marriage as well, where a man having multiple wives is common and normal and not thought of as twisted, selfish, perverted, or somehow bent! **Most** of the patriarchs (Alef Males!) had multiple wives! Renew your minds, refusing Greek culture and conditioning, and *at least consider* what He's written.

Something else to consider is the number of righteous men in the congregations (whether married or single), versus the number of single women, who are looking for righteous, believing husbands, 'Alef Males'. The numbers are very disproportional, with the single women far outnumbering the men, and it's been this way for ages. War in Biblical times caused many women to be widowed. Who would all of those widows have married? Was she to wait for a scarce, single man to find her and rescue her and her children, or did Yah, in His mercy, allow a righteous married man to take more than one wife? It could very well be that polygyny is His welfare system, but 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.

Does it make sense that Yah would allow polygyny to save widows and orphans due to the fall out of war in Biblical times, but then He decided polygyny was sinful and wrong and changed His mind about it in modern times, but then during the end-time tribulation men are to offer protection to women and orphans once more and then He'll be okay with it again? Perhaps *our thinking* needs to

change, and realize that once again, Yah does not change, truth does not change, sin does not change, and righteousness does not change! Polygyny has always been allowed and sanctioned by Yah and it has never changed.

And, in these end times, we are far outnumbered in the world compared to unbelievers – unbelievers in Yeshua, unbelievers in Torah, and unbelievers in Yah altogether. Of all the people in the world, who should have multiple wives and producing bountiful, righteous progeny? We should! The very first command in Torah from Yah is to be fruitful and multiply, and then in Deuteronomy He says to teach our children His Instructions/Torah!

**Deuteronomy 6:1-9** *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, 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. And you shall hear, O Israel, 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. Hear/SHEMA, O Israel: יהוה our Elohim, יהוה is one! And you shall love יהוה your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your might. And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be in your heart, 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, and shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

A few excerpts from a newspaper article in Israel in December 2016 titled, *In Defiance of Israeli Law, Polygamy Sanctioned by Top Rabbis, by David Sedley*

*"Each year, a number of Israeli rabbis affiliated with the rabbinate give permission for dozens of Orthodox Jewish men to take a second wife, despite the fact that polygamy is illegal under state law, an exposé by Channel 10 television revealed on Monday."*

*"An organization catering primarily to the Jewish Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox communities actively encourages and facilitates polygamy, claiming the practice will help reduce the number of single women within their communities and at the same time give Jews an edge in the demographic race against Arabs in Israel. The organization also holds regular parlor meetings for couples looking for an extra wife to join the family, Channel 10 found. Reportedly the majority of these second wives are women who did not grow up in the Orthodox community but joined it later in life and are struggling to find a spouse."*

*"In response, a spokesperson for The Complete Jewish Home told Channel 10 that since the law banning multiple marriage for men was not enforced within Arab communities it was discriminatory against Jews. 'In practice the state allows polygamy within the Arab sector, and due to this their natural population growth is greater than that of Jews,' the spokesperson said."*

Kendra and I believe in the Scriptural precepts of patriarchy, that the Father has established a pattern for the family with the husband/father as the head and the wife/mother in submission to him.

We do not hold to the idea that this demeans or degrades women but protects and enables them to fulfill their role according to His design. Women are in submission to their husbands, but not to be abused, mistreated, neglected or made slaves to him. A wife being in submission (sub-mission) to her husband means that she has a duty and responsibility to *support his mission* for the family. She is her husband's equal in *value and worth* in the Father's eyes, but she does not hold the same level of *authority* within the home or in a congregation.

There are only a few places in Scripture where we get to see the family dynamics in play of those who had multiple wives. We see the issues and problems they had in these few examples and most have concluded that Yah must be teaching that monogamy is His only plan for marriage. Yet if we apply that same reasoning to some of the monogamous marriages seen in Scriptures, we'd conclude that monogamy is a failure as well. Does anyone say of monogamous marriages, "Don't get married because it's stressful, chaotic, there's jealousy and insecurity and it won't ever work!"? No, not really, but we do in fact know that *many* monogamous marriages were exactly like that! If Yah is showing us examples of the issues and problems found in marriages, it's so we can learn to avoid those mistakes in our own marriages, whether they be monogamous or polygynous.

**1 Corinthians 10:1-12** For I do not wish you to be ignorant, brothers, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were immersed into Moshe in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed, and the Rock was Messiah. However, with most of them Elohim was not well pleased, for they were laid low in the wilderness. And these became examples for us, so that we should not lust after evil, as those indeed lusted. And do not become idolaters as some of them, as it has been written, "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and stood up to play." Neither should we commit whoring, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell, neither let us try Messiah, as some of them also tried, and were destroyed by serpents, neither grumble, as some of them also grumbled, and were destroyed by the destroyer. And all these came upon them as examples, and they were written as a warning to us, on whom the ends of the ages have come, so that he who thinks he stands, let him take heed lest he fall.

So, what can we deduce from the few life experiences we've seen in Scripture regarding polygyny? Immediately below is a list of men who had multiple wives, most of which we know nothing about, whether they were good experiences or not. It seems to be true that if a husband/wife or a father/mother plays favorites within a family, there will be jealousy, chaos, discord and dysfunction! . We've also noticed that in those few examples in the Bible where we see the marital dynamics in play, that there was always favoritism. Was it really the fact that there were problems and strife because there were multiple wives, or was it because favoritism always caused pain, feelings of rejection and loneliness? May we all heed that example and steer clear of those terrible experiences!

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. Only a few are discussed more fully in this paper, while most of the others not at all.

<b>Abdon*</b> – Judges 12:13	<b>Ezrah</b> – 1 Chronicles 4:17–18	<b>Şaharayim</b> – 1 Chronicles 8:8
<b>Abiyah</b> – 2 Chronicles 13:21	<b>Gid'on</b> – Judges 8:30	<b>Solomon</b> – 1 Kings 11:3
<b>Abram</b> – Genesis 16:1, 16:3 & 25:1	<b>Hĕman*</b> – 1 Chronicles 25:4	<b>Shim'i*</b> – 1 Chronicles 4:27
<b>Aḥab</b> – 1 Kings 20:3	<b>Hoshēa*</b> – Hosea 1:3 & 3:1	<b>Shim'on</b> – Genesis 46:10
<b>Aḥashwērosh</b> – Esther 1:9	<b>İbtsan*</b> – Judges 12:9	<b>Terah*</b> – Genesis 11:26 & 20:12
<b>Ashhur</b> – 1 Chronicles 4:5	<b>Kalĕb</b> – 1 Chronicles 2:18–19, 2:46–48	<b>Tsiba*</b> – 2 Samuel 9:10
<b>Bĕlshatstsar</b> – Daniel 5:2	<b>Lemek</b> – Genesis 4:19	<b>Tsîdqiyahu</b> – Jeremiah 38:23
<b>Ben-Hadad</b> – 1 Kings 20:3	<b>Maķir</b> – 1 Chronicles 7:15	<b>Ya'ir*</b> – Judges 10:4
<b>David</b> – 1 Samuel 18:27, 19:11–18; 25:43–44; 25:39; 2 Samuel 3:3–5; 3:13–14; 6:20–23; 12:7–8; 12:24; 16:21–23; 1 Chronicles 14:3	<b>Menashsheh</b> – 1 Chronicles 7:14	<b>Ya'aqob (Yisra'ĕl)</b> – Genesis 29:23; 29:28; 30:4; 30:9
	<b>Mered</b> – 1 Chronicles 4:17–19	<b>Yehoram</b> – 2 Chronicles 21:14
	<b>Mosheh</b> – Exodus 2:21; 18:1–6; Numbers 12:1	<b>Yehoyada</b> – 2 Chronicles 24:3
<b>Eliphaz</b> – Genesis 36:11	<b>Naḥor</b> – Genesis 22:20	<b>Yehoyākin</b> – 2 Kings 24:15
<b>Elqanah</b> – 1 Samuel 1:2	<b>Reḥab'am</b> – 2 Chronicles 11:18–23	<b>Yerahmē'ĕl</b> – 1 Chronicles 2:26
<b>Ěsaw</b> – Genesis 26:34 & 28:9	<b>Sha'ul</b> – 1 Samuel 14:50 & 2 Samuel 3:7	<b>Yissaskar</b> (Tribe) – 1 Chr 7:4, Num 1:29

\* Polygyny by implication

There is no commandment that prohibits a man from having multiple wives. It cannot possibly be called a 'sin'. In fact, quite to the contrary, there are several places in the Torah that tell a man how he is to go about having more than one wife. Is it possible that Yah would try and regulate something that is 'sin'? Of course not! So, if you can find any verses 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 Torah or in His commandments.

#### My testimony (Boyd):

I have been studying what Scriptures have to say about marriage, sex and polygyny since 1992. In the beginning I denied the truth of Scriptural polygyny, never even considering it to be Biblical, but instead trusted in what I had been taught as a young Christian man. At the time, I didn't understand the powerful influences pagan cultures has had on Christian beliefs, primarily the Gnosticism and Hellenization of 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. I was shocked, surprised, skeptical and quite a bit suspicious! How could this be? I started collecting, reading and studying every argument on Scriptural 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 reasoning were feeble and their arguments flawed, then their assertions on polygyny would be false. But after testing it, it proved true and made sense, harmonizing with all of Scriptures. I finally had to come to the conclusion that the Scriptures do support the practice of polygyny being righteous, despite what I had been taught and despite what the church had been teaching for centuries. I saw this as yet another step in my journey to submit to the will of יהוה as revealed in His Scriptures and my continuing effort to divorce myself from worldly understandings and practices.

I believe that Yah 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 and has always been to seek and know the truth, to live by the principles of Torah, Scriptural patriarchy, to be a mediator and servant of יְהוָה, to guide my life and 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. I continue to study and grow in His truth.

I was a bit hesitant before Kendra and I met in person to tell her that I believed in polygyny. We had been talking on the phone quite extensively and when I told her about my beliefs in polygyny, I fully expected her to end our relationship right there and block me on Facebook. But she didn't, halleluYah! She understood it permeated Torah, but had never really considered that it might be for today as well. I was convinced that Yah had sent her in answer to my prayers. She was everything I wanted, but even more, what I needed. My marriage with Kendra started off a little bit rocky because of my belief in polygyny. The first six months of our marriage was filled with her suspicions of infidelity and the strife that resulted from my belief. I even added a clause in our ketubah/marriage contract hoping to quell her jealousy and insecurity. That I would not seek or pursue another wife, with the understanding that if she ever changed her mind that she would free me from that promise. But because she knew I continued to believe that Yah would permit me to have another wife, she was constantly watching my every move, questioning just about everything I did, searching my phone and computer history for evidence I was hiding something from her. She was looking for some sign that I was not who I said I was or that I was cheating on her. I felt like I was constantly under a microscope, never trusted and always guilty until proven innocent. Six months into our marriage I had to leave on a business trip for a week. When I returned I received a totally unexpected surprise. Kendra told me that not only had she changed her mind about polygyny, but she wanted to introduce me to someone she thought I could court and possibly marry! What a shock! I still call this my modern day miracle!

Well, it didn't work out with the woman Kendra introduced me to, but that's alright. I only want what Yah has in store for me- His very best! When *and if* He ever blesses me with another wife, I trust that it will be *very obvious* that she has been sent by Him and that we have His blessing. Until then, I am content to remain monogamous with Kendra as my only wife. ~Boyd

Kendra has come to the same conclusions as I have regarding polygyny, and has been very diligent in her studies on this topic. I have been so very blessed to be married to such a wonderful, beautiful, 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 quickens my desire to protect, lead and spiritually cover her.

#### Kendra's testimony:

*Yah played Matchmaker and sent Boyd to meet me 9-11-2013. 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 by his hesitant revelation as he thought I would be. I had been studying the Torah for 7 years by then and I had seen that many of the patriarchs had multiple wives 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, not immediately but soon after, if he was willing to 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 (*ketubah*) to not ever seek out another woman emotionally, sexually or spiritually. But, we did make a verbal agreement that if I ever changed my mind about polygyny, that I was allowed to present him with any possible candidates for a sister-wife that I would like, with him having full veto rights. What I really wanted though was for him to completely change his belief about it. Knowing that his belief had not been changed intellectually caused me to be quite insecure and jealous.

Boyd and I never fought about anything in our early marriage, except about other women, me being hyper-vigilant and having gross paranoia. 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, that polygyny was for today too. I would ask a random question here and there about polygyny 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.

I remember having quite a few big fights that stemmed from my insecurities. Being insecure and jealous are two of the ugliest, scariest, most terrifying emotions I have ever felt! It was HORRIBLE and I HATED feeling that way! So sometime in the Spring, when Boyd went on a business trip for about a week, I decided I NEEDED to do my own Bible study on the topic because I felt like I was in bondage to these ugly emotions, and since he was going to be gone for over a week, I would have plenty of time to really dig into it. And I did. What I discovered in the rest of the Tanakah about polygyny quite surprised and shocked me! I had no idea that it was in there SO MUCH! I knew the Torah well, but had never really paid much attention to the topic as I read the rest of my Bible. 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, with His blessing. When I changed what I thought about it in my head, my heart began to change as well. My husband calls it his own modern-day miracle! I was so very 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!

One of the first times that He spoke to my spirit about polygyny was very startling and literally stopped me in my tracks. I was moving around the house doing various chores and all of a sudden in my mind I made this CRAZY connection: A wife approaches one of her close female friends and extols the many virtues of her husband while hoping that her friend might be interested in joining her family as a wife. Doesn't that seem very similar to how we're told that believers in the body of Messiah are told to go out into the world and share the Good News about the amazing Messiah finally coming to Israel to redeem her from her sins? I remember literally stopping what I was doing and standing there with my mouth dropped open in astonishment! What a picture! Isn't it basically, "Come meet my awesome Groom!"? What wife in her right mind would see such a thing and make such a connection, unless it was from Him?

I continued to study the Bible, looking for evidence of His view of polygyny, and even got bold enough in late Spring of that year to begin asking others on Facebook what they thought about it, going all the way into the Fall of that same year. I sadly lost a lot of friends during that time. Every time the subject of multiple wives came up in the Torah Portions, I would post about it,

wanting interaction and discussion, to see if there were flaws in my thinking and understanding. One of those posts got over 450 comments! It wasn't unusual to get comments full of anger, ugly accusations, subtle perverse insinuations, etc., with little reason or logic or Scriptural proof for their stance. I post on it only occasionally now. I will say that many of those debates on my wall on FB have only solidified my belief that polygyny can be done righteously, with His approval, and yes, even with His leading.

Another thing that was confirmed for me is that the biggest impediment against polygyny is women's fear. That fear may manifest as anger, jealousy or insecurity, but those all stem from FEAR- Fear that their husbands will no longer love them, that they'll abandon them, that they won't want them sexually anymore, that they'll be proven to be inferior or less worthy, or that they'll be neglected. I won't deny that those are all real possibilities with a husband having multiple wives, but those different scenarios can just as easily happen within a monogamous marriage in the form of cheating and infidelity, and it really just depends on the husband and what his character is. If a husband is reliable, truthful, faithful, fair and just in his decisions, servant-like in his behavior, then he will most likely remain so if he were to add another wife. Sometimes our fears are just unreasonable and we need to do that inner work in ourselves to be able to allow our husbands to answer His call of polygyny.

So now Boyd and I are on the same page with this belief in polygyny, but that does not necessarily mean that I will ever have a sister-wife. We decided early on that we were going to wait on Him, and His choice, if it's even something He wants for us. It may not be. Polygyny is not for every married couple. 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! ~Kendra

Please realize that some of our reasoning below are unfinished and incomplete. This is a living document that we add to whenever we find or discover a new insight in Scripture. Please do not critique our arguments based on our failure to properly or completely express them – look at the Scriptures that we're basing our interpretations on and test them for yourself. This research paper is our examination of both the Scriptures that people use to prove 'monogamy only' and those used to prove the righteousness of polygyny. We 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. יְהוָה is pro-marriage!

All listed verses are from The Scriptures 1998 version, available free online by E-Sword or the MySword app, from the Institute for Scriptures Research (ISR), unless otherwise indicated.

## The Scriptures We Have Found Regarding Polygyny and Our Comments

### *Genesis 1 – Be Fruitful and Multiply*

Genesis 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 carried out much more quickly by the polygynous family. A husband with two or more wives can have many more children than just one wife can. And most of the patriarchs did have more than one wife, which led to many sons and daughters. But please don't misunderstand; we're not saying that **יהוָה** is telling everyone to be a polygynist by this command. There are certainly many monogamous families bearing witness to this by having many children. As evidenced by all those who are now turning their hearts back to the patriarchal fathers, this Torah Observant movement is but a small remnant and going through birth pangs, 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 more than that!

### *Genesis 2 – Creation of a Help Meet*

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

**יהוָה** created Chava (Eve) out of Adam to be 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 Yah in the Garden, then why are we not also advocating nudity as our standard for dress? Or that we are all gardeners? The fall of man changed our standards for nudity/modesty and required more diversity in professions. 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 the command of **יהוָה**. It may have been that monogamy would have been the only type of marriage and we would also be without shame in our nakedness. **יהוָה** has established three marital states; *celibacy* when we are married to no one (see Paul's/Shaul's *opinion* on this), *monogamy*, a marriage to one, and *polygyny*, a marriage to two or more wives, as illustrated in His Word.

Eliezer means, "my El/God is help." Abraham sent his servant, Eli 'ezer' to find a bride for his son Isaac. Eliezer is a type and shadow of the Holy Spirit/Ruach haQodesh, with Abraham being a type and shadow of the Father of the Groom. Ezer means help. We see this same word when it says that Yah will make Adam a helper in Gen 2:18. Eliezer found a bride for the groom, and the 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 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) עֶזֶר

BDB Definition:

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

The Hebrew word for oppose is – neged (H5048) נֶגֶד

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 **שָׁלַח** drew Chava/Eve 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 Spirit is with all of us, instead of being as our carnal nature dictates, there will be much more shalom/peace 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 *in faith* on Him for direction of whether polygyny is even for a family, or if He wills for a family to have a particular sister-wife, there should be peace and unity. But, if the husband steps out of line, and the wife sees her husband 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, and 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 protecting the peace of his family. A smart and discerning man will only add another wife when it will be a benefit to his first wife/wives and the family as a whole. 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 protect and shelter women and children. It's a righteous endeavor 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. A man's job is to protect and shield them first from any dangers or threats outside the family.

## ***Genesis 2 – One Flesh***

**Genesis 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. 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, 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 may 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 by adding another wife 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 first wife.

All families start as monogamous. After that, the man is allowed to add wives or not, as he is led. Yah gave the Israelites a *complete set* of teachings and instructions. Did He somehow forget to include a prohibition against plural marriage?

## ***Genesis 4 – Lamek Protected After Killing a Man***

**Genesis 4:19–24 And Lemek took for himself two wives, the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Tsillah. And Adah bore Yabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents, with livestock. And his brother's name was Yubal. He was the father of all those who play the lyre and flute. As for Tsillah, she also bore Tubal-Qayin, a smith of all kinds of tools in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Qayin was Na'amah. And Lemek said to his wives, "Adah and Tsillah, hear my voice! Wives of Lemek, listen to my words! For I have killed a man for wounding me, even a young man for hurting me. For Qayin is avenged sevenfold, and Lemek seventy-sevenfold."**

Lamek is the first polygynist mentioned in Scripture although he may not be the first to have taken more than one wife. What I see here is a man declaring that Yah will protect him in the same way that He protected Cain. Notice that Lamek killed a man who wounded and hurt him. Sounds like self-defense, hence the declaration that Yah will avenge him seventy-sevenfold.

## ***Genesis 20 – King Avimelech Blameless for Taking Another Wife***

**Genesis 20:1–18 And Abraham set out from there to the land of the South, and dwelt between Qad̄esh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar. And Abraham said concerning Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Avimelek sovereign of Gerar sent and took Sarah. But Elohim came to Avimelek 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.” However, Avimelek had not come near her, and he said, “**יְהוָה**, would You slay a righteous nation also? “Did he not say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she, even she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ <sup>6</sup>In the integrity of my heart and in the innocence of my hands I have done this.” 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. “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.” So Avimelek rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and spoke all these words in their hearing. And the men were greatly frightened. And Avimelek called Abraham 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.” And Avimelek said to Abraham, “What did you have in view, that you have done this matter?” And Abraham 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. 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. 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.”’ Then Avimelek took sheep, and cattle, and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham. And he returned Sarah his wife to him. And Avimelek said, “See, my land is before you, dwell wherever it is good in your eyes.” 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.” <sup>17</sup>And Abraham prayed to Elohim, and Elohim healed Avimelek, and his wife, and his female servants [concubines], so they bore children, for **תָהָר** had closed up all the wombs of the house of Avimelek because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife.

Did you see in verse 4 that King Avimelek claimed that Gerar was a righteous nation? **יְהוָה** did not contradict him. Isn’t righteousness defined in Scripture as obedience to His Instructions? (See Deuteronomy 6:25 & 26) Notice also in verse 17 that King Avimelek already had a wife, and yet you hear no condemnation from **יְהוָה** about him trying to add another wife (Sarah). Yah even declares that the king did no wrong. Elohim even agrees with King Avimelek in verse 6 when he said he was adding another wife in the integrity of his heart and innocence of his hands. **יְהוָה** kept him from sinning, not because taking Sarah as another wife was a sin, but because taking her while she was married to Abraham would have been adultery. King Avimelek was sternly rebuked for trying to add a *married* woman to his household and would have cursed his nation if **יְהוָה** had not stopped him from taking Sarah. I also see in verse 17 that **יְהוָה** healed King Avimelek’s concubines so that they could bear children, and there’s no condemnation from **יְהוָה** for having concubines.

## ***Genesis 29 – ٢٩ יְהוָה Helps the Unloved Wife***

**Genesis 29:30-35** And he also went in to Rahel, and he also loved Rahel more than Lé’ah. And he served with Laban still another seven years. And **תָהָר** saw that Lé’ah was hated, and He opened her womb, but Rahel was barren. And Lé’ah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Re’ubén, for she said, “For **תָהָר** has looked on my affliction, because now my husband is going to love me.” And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Because **תָהָר** has heard that I am unloved, He gave me this son too.” And she called his name Shim’on. 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 Léwi. And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Now I praise **תָהָר**.” So, she called his name Yehudah. And she ceased bearing.

If **יהוָה** 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 Leah get out of the marriage to Jacob altogether? Instead He helps her find value in Jacob's eyes by opening her womb, which in the culture of that day and today brings much favor to a woman. And while He blessed Leah with a fruitful womb, He favored Rachel and her descendants when she bore the favored son, Joseph.

This also helps to illustrate Jacob'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, we believe, was the primary cause of strife in their families, not polygyny.

### ***Genesis 30 – Elohim Blesses Lě'ah for Giving Jacob a Wife***

**Genesis 30:17-18** And Elohim listened to Lě'ah, and she conceived and bore Ya'aqob a fifth son. 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 Yissas̄kar.

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

### ***Exodus 1 – Kill All the Newborn Boys***

**Exodus 1:22** And Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Throw every son who is born into the river, and keep alive every daughter."

Not a proof of polygyny, but an interesting situation created by the death of all newly born males in the Mitsrite (Egyptian) captivity. Wouldn't this mean there would be a shortage of husbands in approximately 20 years? How would the Israelite go about solving this problem?

### ***Exodus 2- Adultery***

**Exodus 20:14** You do not commit adultery.

We are asked quite often why Yah would allow men to have multiple wives, but women cannot have multiple husbands. The "Do not commit adultery" command made it into the top 10 commandments. That alone gives it a heavier weight. It's our understanding that He does not want a wife mixing her husband's seed with another man's seed in her womb. He is very particular about genealogy (going to great lengths to record various family lines in the Bible) and He does not want any doubt as to inheritance rights or progeny/blood lines. Yah has a definite abhorrence for mixing certain things, and mixing men's seed seems to be one of them as well.

**Revelation 3:15 & 16** I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would that you were cold or hot. So, because you are *lukewarm*, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

**Leviticus 19:19** You shall keep My statutes.

You shall not let your cattle breed with different kinds.

You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed.

And you shall not allow clothing mixed of linen and wool to come on you.

A man who establishes another marriage covenant with a second or additional wives is not committing adultery. The Hebrew word *nā'aph* (נָאָף) that we translate as adultery literally means

'woman breaks covenant' or 'woman breaks wedlock'. There is not one single place in Scriptures where a man is accused of committing adultery when he is known to be married and the woman is single/unbetrothed, or when a man has more than one wife. Adultery is committed when it involves a *woman who is already married to another man* and the wife 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 'puts away' his wife without giving her a written certificate of divorce. In the eyes of **יהוָה** the wife is still married to her original husband if she does not have that written divorce. But because of the husband's action in putting her away illegally without a 'get', he is guilty of and shares responsibility in her adultery if she has sex with another man or marries another man (Matt 19:9a).

And thirdly, a man marrying a woman who has been illegally put away by her husband without a written divorce decree and is not legally divorced (Matt 19:9b) commits adultery.

In all three cases, the state of *the woman's marital status* is what determines whether or not adultery has been committed.

We find it quite strange that the secular government will not get involved when adultery has been committed, which is clearly a *sin* in Scripture, but they do want to get involved if a man has two or more wives, *which is not a sin*.

### ***Exodus 18, Numbers 10 & 12 – Mosheh's Wives***

**Exo 18:1 & 27** And Yithro, the priest of Midyan, Mosheh's father-in-law, heard of all that Elohim had done for Mosheh and for Yisra'el His people, that **יהוָה** had brought Yisra'el out of Mitsrayim. ...And Mosheh sent off his father-in-law, and he went away to his own land.

**Num 10:29–30** And Mosheh said to Hobab, the son of Re'uwl'el the Midyanite, Mosheh's father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which **יהוָה** said, 'I give it to you.' Come with us, and we shall do good to you, for **יהוָה** has spoken good concerning Yisra'el." And he replied to him, "I am not going, but I am going to my own land and to my relatives."

**Num 12:1** Now Miryam and Aharon spoke against Mosheh because of the Kushite woman whom he had taken, for he had taken a Kushite woman.

Given these three passages, it appears Moshe/Moses had three wives. It's possible that Jethro and Hobab are the same man, but I find that doubtful. One is called a priest of Midian and the other is identified by his father. Jethro went back to Midian and Hobab was still there. And it is well known the Midianites and Kushites are not the same country or peoples, so the Kushite woman was not Zipporah. All three passages occur within a year of each other, so it's likely that all three wives were alive and married to Moshe.

### ***Exodus 20 – Do Not Covet***

**Exodus 20:17** You do not covet your neighbour's house, you do not covet your neighbour's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, or whatever belongs to your neighbour.

The 10th Commandment, of what are considered the greatest and most important Commandments, lists that we are not to covet a neighbor's wife. Yet there is no follow-on command

to not covet a neighbor's husband. Men are forbidden from wanting, desiring or coveting the wife of another man, but women are not forbidden from wanting, desiring or coveting another woman's husband. There is no condemnation from Yah for that desire anywhere in Scripture. It can even be seen as righteous and proper for her to desire a good righteous man who has been proven to be a strong, spiritual leader and a solid provider.

### ***Exodus 21 – If he takes another wife***

**Exodus 21:7-11** **And when a man sells his daughter to be a female servant, she does not go out as the male servants do. 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. <sup>9</sup>And if he has engaged her to his son, he is to do to her as is the right of daughters. <sup>10</sup>If he takes another wife, her food, her covering, and her marriage rights are not to be diminished. And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out owing no silver (debt).**

Here the word engaged means to 'betroth to', so marriage is the intent at the time of bond-servant purchase. He would decide if he was going to take her as a wife during her servitude. If he decides not to marry her, he has several options- ransom her back to her father, her family, to a fellow countryman, or marry her to his son. These options may 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 outside 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...***

**Leviticus 18:1-30** **And יְהוָה spoke to Mosheh, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, 'I am יְהוָה your Elohim. 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. Do My right-rulings and guard My laws, to walk in them. I am יְהוָה your Elohim. And you shall guard My laws and My right-rulings, which a man does and lives by them. I am יְהוָה. No one is to approach anyone of his own flesh to uncover his nakedness. I am יְהוָה. <sup>7</sup>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. The nakedness of your father's wife you do not uncover, it is your father's nakedness. <sup>8</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>The nakedness of your son's daughter or your**

daughter's daughter, their nakedness you do not uncover, for theirs is your own nakedness. <sup>11</sup>The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, brought forth by your father, she is your sister, you do not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your father's sister you do not uncover, she is your father's flesh. The nakedness of your mother's sister you do not uncover, for she is your mother's flesh. The nakedness of your father's brother you do not uncover, you do not approach his wife, she is your aunt. The nakedness of your daughter-in-law you do not uncover, she is your son's wife, you do not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your brother's wife you do not uncover, it is your brother's nakedness. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>And do not take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive. And do not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness in her monthly separation of uncleanness. And do not have intercourse with the wife of your neighbour, to defile yourself with her. 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. And do not lie with a male as with a woman, it is an abomination. 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. Do not defile yourselves with all these, for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am driving out before you. Thus the land became defiled, therefore I punished it for its crookedness, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. 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, because the men of the land who were before you have done all these abominations, and thus the land became defiled, So let not the land vomit you out for defiling it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. For whoever does any of these abominations, those beings who do them shall be cut off from among their people. 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 we believe the meaning of 'uncover his/her nakedness' can mean much more than just seeing them unclothed. While seeing a near relative's nakedness is forbidden, these passages also include a prohibition against marriage or any sexual relations.

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 only was forced on them. It's from this Greek and Roman mindset in 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 the force of punishment by their conquerors. Those of us returning to Torah should understand the cultural pressures that have caused much change and untruth to creep into the body. Polygyny is just another change that took place. A lot of the credit for this can be laid at the door of the Roman Catholic Church. No surprise there!

This passage is addresses the uncovering of a son's mother, but it also addresses a son seeing the nakedness of his father's wife. There is a clear distinction between "the nakedness of your mother" and "the nakedness of your father's wife". The "nakedness of your father's wife" would indicate she's either a step mother, or perhaps a sister wife to his mother. See also – "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."

A lot of these verses 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 are 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.

### ***Numbers 12 – Miryam/Miriam Challenges Moshe’s Marriage***

**Numbers 12:1-10** Now Miryam and Aharon spoke against Mosheh because of the Kushite woman whom he had taken, for he had taken a Kushite woman. And they said, “Has יְהוָה spoken only through Mosheh? Has He not also spoken through us?” And יְהוָה heard it. And the man Mosheh was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth. And suddenly יְהוָה said to Mosheh, and Aharon, and Miryam, “You three, come out to the Tent of Meeting!” So, the three came out. And יְהוָה came down in the column of cloud and stood in the door of the Tent, and called Aharon and Miryam. And they both went forward. And He said, “Hear now My words: If your prophet is of יְהוָה, I make Myself known to him in a vision, and I speak to him in a dream. “Not so with My servant Mosheh, he is trustworthy in all My house. “I speak with him mouth to mouth, and plainly, and not in riddles. And he sees the form of יְהוָה. So why were you not afraid to speak against My servant Mosheh?” And the displeasure of יְהוָה burned against them, and He left. And the cloud turned away from above the Tent, and look: Miryam was leprous, as white as snow! And Aharon turned toward Miryam, and look: a leper!

There is a theory that the Kushite woman spoken of here is Tzipporah, yet Tzipporah was a Midianite, not a Kushite. These are two different regions or countries, Midian being in Arabia and Kush located in Africa. Also, the time that has elapsed between Moshe marrying Tzipporah and the Kushite woman is such that they cannot be the same woman. And if they are the same woman, why did Miryam wait so long to confront Moshe for marrying her? With the evidence given, they have to be two separate women. Was Tzipporah still living when Moshe married the Kushite woman? The last mention of Tzipporah is in Exodus 18:2 and the first mention of the Kushite woman is in Numbers 12:1. The estimated time between the two passages is likely a few months to a year. Given that there is no mention of Tzipporah’s death, it is likely she is alive when Moshe marries the Kushite woman.

### ***Leviticus 20 – Do Not Marry a Woman and Her Mother***

**Leviticus 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 יְהוָה setting another standard for polygyny. It explicitly prohibits a man from marrying a woman and her mother, or marrying a woman and 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 a commandment simply prohibiting polygyny?

### ***Numbers 5 – Test for Unfaithfulness***

**Numbers 5:11-31** And יְהוָה spoke to Mosheh, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, ‘When any man’s wife turns aside and has committed a trespass against him, 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, 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, then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. And he shall bring the offering for her, one-tenth of an ēphah 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. And the priest shall bring her near, and shall make her stand before **תְּהִלָּה**. 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. And the priest shall make the woman stand before **תְּהִלָּה**, 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. 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. 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" – then the priest shall make the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman – "**יְהֹוָה** make you a curse and an oath among your people, when **תְּהִלָּה** makes your thigh waste away and your belly swell, 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, "Amēn, amēn." And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and shall wipe them off into the bitter water, 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. And the priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before **תְּהִלָּה**, and bring it to the altar. 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. 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. But if the woman has not defiled herself, and is clean, then she shall be clear and shall conceive children. This is the Torah of jealousy, when a wife turns aside under her husband's authority and defiles herself, 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 **תְּהִלָּה**, and the priest shall do to her all this Torah. 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 and keeping the lineage clear and uncorrupted. Yah stresses here the importance of a woman not allowing another man's seed to be mixed in her womb 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 makes 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 other women.

### ***Numbers 31 – Division of Spoils***

**Numbers 31:1-54** And **יְהֹוָה** spoke to Mosheh, saying, "Take vengeance for the children of Israel on the Midyanites. After that you are to be gathered to your people." 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 **יְהֹוָה** on Midyan. Send a thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel for the campaign." So, there were supplied from the tribes of Israel one thousand from each tribe, twelve

thousand armed ones for the campaign. 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. And they fought against the Midyanites, as יְהוָה commanded Mosheh, and slew all the males. 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. And the sons of Israel took all the women of Midyan captive, with their little ones, and took as spoil all their livestock, and all their possessions. And they burned with fire all the cities where they dwelt, and all their settlements. And they took all the spoil and all the booty, both of man and beast. 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 Israel, to the camp in the desert plains of Mo'ab by the Yardēn of Yeriho. And Mosheh, and El'azar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation, went to meet them outside the camp. 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. And Mosheh said to them, "Have you kept all the women alive? Look, they are the ones who caused the children of Israel, through the word of Bil'am, to trespass against יְהוָה in the matter of Pe'or, and there was a plague among the congregation of יְהוָה. 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. But keep alive for yourselves all the female children who have not known a man by lying with a man. 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. And cleanse every garment, and every object of leather and all the work of goats' hair, and every object of wood." 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 יְהוָה commanded Mosheh: Only the gold, and the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, 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. And you shall wash your garments on the seventh day and be clean, and afterwards come into the camp." And יְהוָה spoke to Mosheh, saying, "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. 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. And set aside a levy for יְהוָה 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. Take it from their half, and give it to El'azar the priest as a contribution to יְהוָה. And from the children of Israel'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 Lēvitites guarding the duty of the Dwelling Place of יְהוָה." And Mosheh and El'azar the priest did as יְהוָה commanded Mosheh. And the booty remaining from the plunder, which the people of the campaign had taken, was six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, and seventy-two thousand cattle, and sixty-one thousand donkeys, and thirty-two thousand human beings in all, of women who had not known a man by lying with a man. 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, and the levy unto יְהוָה of the sheep was six hundred and seventy-five. And the cattle were thirty-six thousand, of which the levy unto יְהוָה was seventy-two. And the donkeys were thirty thousand five hundred, of which the levy unto יְהוָה was sixty-one. And the human beings were sixteen thousand, of which the levy unto יְהוָה was thirty-two beings. So Mosheh gave the levy which was the contribution unto יְהוָה to El'azar the priest, as יְהוָה commanded Mosheh. And from the children of Israel's half, which Mosheh divided from the men who campaigned: now the half belonging to the congregation was three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep, and thirty-six thousand cattle, and thirty thousand five hundred donkeys, and sixteen thousand human beings. Then Mosheh took from the children of

Israel's half: one out of every fifty, drawn from man and beast, and gave them to the Lěwites, who guarded the duty of the Dwelling Place of יהוה, as יהוה commanded Mosheh. And the officers who were over thousands of the campaign, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, came near to Mosheh, 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. So we have brought an offering for יהוה, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, to make atonement for ourselves before יהוה." And Mosheh and El'azar the priest received the gold from them, all the fashioned ornaments. 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. The men of the campaign had taken spoil, every man for himself. 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 Israel before יהוה.

All of Numbers 31 describes 12,000 men of Israel 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 Israel, minus 320 for the Levites. The other 16,000 virgins were given to the men of war, minus 32 virgins who were given to the Levites. 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. And what happened to the men who received two virgins, did they marry both of them? Many of these virgins may have been too young to marry, so they most likely became slaves. They could have become concubines of their master when they grew older 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, those who were given two virgins, could have married both of his virgin slaves. This was done according to the instructions of יהוה – if He had wanted to ensure 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 Levites.

The whole point of destroying the Midianites was because they had led the men of Israel to sexual sin – see Numbers 22. 24,000 Hebrew men were killed because of idolatry and sexual sins with the Midianite women. 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 some of those men having multiple wives? Doesn't it make sense that He was *rewarding* those righteous men, Israelite warriors who did not succumb 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 the 15,968 virgins, not one became a second or third wife

to any of those 12,000 Hebrew men.

## ***Deuteronomy 7 – Do Not Take Pagan Wives***

**Deuteronomy 7:1–4** When יְהוָה your Elohim brings you into the land which you go to possess, He shall also clear away many nations before you: the Hittites and the Gergashites and the Amorites and the Kena'anites and the Perizzites and the Hiwwites and the Yebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you. And when יְהוָה your Elohim gives them over to you, you shall smite them and put them under the ban, completely. Make no covenant with them, and show them no favour. And do not intermarry with them – you do not give your daughter to his son, and you do not take his daughter for your son, for he turns your sons away from following Me, to serve other mighty ones. Then the displeasure of יְהוָה shall burn against you and promptly destroy you.

A word of caution about pursuing an additional wife– It is not going to be an easy endeavor. There are so many things that must be in order and it would be very wise to do this slowly, methodically, cautiously, *and most importantly, prayerfully!* Be absolutely sure that you've gotten a clear affirmative answer from the Father about adding another wife to your family. Your current wife must not only agree to the truth of polygyny in her head, but willingly *and emotionally able* to live it out in her life! You must count the cost ahead of time and know that you can financially afford another wife. Any potential that you would court or pursue *must* be a believer in Torah and open to the truth of polygyny. It's very tempting, once you realize how small the pond is that you must fish from, to go fishing in the larger pond of Christianity or secular women. ***DO NOT DO IT!*** We are not to make marriage covenants with unbelievers and those outside of Torah! The new wife must be able to mesh with your household and hold the same values, moral, ethics, priorities and spiritual beliefs. (Side-note: Adding a wife that is set on her way of calculating the calendar, that is opposed to yours, would be almost impossible to do harmoniously in a blended family with several wives and children). Different personalities must work well together. Being in the same approximate age range is good too. If the potential has children already, you may need to consider how her ex-spouse will handle the news of her being in a polygynous relationship. And finally, you would probably like to find a new wife that you're physically, spiritually, emotionally and intellectually attracted to. When you lay it all out here like this, it seems nigh impossible! But as with all things of faith, nothing is impossible with Yah, if it be His will. But marrying outside of Torah is not His will, so just don't go there.

## ***Deuteronomy 17 – Multiply Wives***

**Deuteronomy 17:14–17** "When you come to the land which יְהוָה 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,' you shall certainly set a sovereign over you whom יְהוָה 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. Only, he is not to increase horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Mitsrayim to increase horses, for יְהוָה has said to you, 'Do not return that way again.' 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 Solomon 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. Solomon's actions in marrying many women at once, as opposed to David's practice of adding wives one at a time, clearly contrasts this. It has also been argued that Solomon hoarded wives – that is, he took and kept wives in such numbers *for political power*, 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 identical wording is used in the very same manner, so the meaning must be synonymous. 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 as a way of retaliation for their former slavery. 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 David multiple wives, and He also blessed King Solomon 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 simply 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***

**Deuteronomy 21:15–17** 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. 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. 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, which we do not recommend, 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 or his sons.

### ***Deuteronomy 22 – Seizing a Virgin***

**Deuteronomy 22:28–29** 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, 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.

### ***Judges 8 – Gideon's Seventy Sons***

**Judges 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 Israel. 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 Rachel and Leah at Ruth's Wedding***

**Ruth 4:11** **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 Rachēl and as Lě'ah, the two who built the house of Israel. And prove your worth in Ephrathah and proclaim the Name in Běyth Lehem."**

It is often argued that because of the strife seen in the marriage of Jacob to Leah, and Jacob to Rachel, that polygyny must be wrong. Because of the treachery of Laban, Jacob was tricked into violating Lev 18:18, marrying the sister of the woman he was betrothed to. 800 years later, we see that Leah and Rachel are 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 daughters in many Jewish homes and every Sabbath in many Hebrew Roots/Messianic/Jewish congregations.

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

### ***1 Samuel 1 – Wives of Elqanah***

**1 Samuel 1:1-2** **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. 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 Samuel had two wives. One of the greatest judges and prophets written about in Scriptures came from the formerly barren wife in a plural marriage, similar to the circumstances with Jacob and Rachel, where יהוה blessed the second 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 – David's Wives***

**2 Samuel 12:1-8** **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. The rich one had flocks and herds, very many. 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. 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." And the wrath of Dawid burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As יְהוָה lives, the man who has done this is a son of death! Also, he has to repay fourfold for the lamb, because he did this deed and because he had no compassion." Then Nathan said to Dawid, "You are the man! *Thus said יְהוָה Elohim of Israel*, 'I anointed you sovereign over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Sha'ul. 'And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and Yehudah. And if that were not enough, I also would have given you much more!'"

From 2 Samuel 3, we know that David had six wives by the time he became king of Israel, and Nathan tells us who gave David 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 David was a man after the heart of **יְהוָה** and had at least eight 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 the gift of many wives from **יְהוָה** to David was a good gift?

### ***1 Kings 11 – Solomon's Love of Foreign Wives***

**1 Kings 11:1-6** And Sovereign Shelomoh loved many foreign women in addition to the daughter of Pharaoh: Mo'abite, Ammonite, Edomite, Tsidonian, and Hittite women; from the nations of whom had said to the children of Israel, "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. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. And it came to be, when Shelomoh was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other mighty ones. <sup>4</sup>And his heart was not perfect with **יְהוָה** his Elohim, as was the heart of his father Dawid. And Shelomoh went after Ashtoreth the mighty one of the Tsidonians, and after Milkom the abomination of the Ammonites. <sup>6</sup>Thus Shelomoh did evil in the eyes of **יְהוָה** and did not follow **יְהוָה** completely, like his father David.

Solomon married many, many *foreign, pagan* women who led him away from **יְהוָה** 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. Solomon broke two fundamental laws of **יְהוָה**- 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 David did before him. There was no way he could meet the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of all those wives and concubines. Solomon had many marriage ceremonies in which he wedded many women at once. A wedding ceremony is the joining of two people in the sight of **יְהוָה** – 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, the marriage covenant should be between 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 Romans 7:1-3 and 1st Corinthians 7:39. Yet Solomon was never rebuked for his many wives, but only for the idolatry that his pagan wives led him into.

## 1 Kings 15 – David was Righteous in All That He Did

1 Kings 15:1–5 And in the eighteenth year of Sovereign Yarob'am son of Nebat, Abiyam became sovereign over Yehudah. He reigned three years in Yerushalayim, and his mother's name was Ma'akah the granddaughter of Abishalom. And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him, and his heart was not perfect to יְהוָה his Elohim, as was the heart of his father Dawid. But for Dawid's sake יְהוָה his Elohim gave him a lamp in Yerushalayim, to raise up his son after him and by establishing Yerushalayim, for Dawid did what was right in the eyes of יְהוָה, 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 יְהוָה is that David 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 David had so many wives, given to him by יְהוָה and he did what was right in His sight, except in the matter of Uriyah the Hittite? Two curses were given as punishment by יְהוָה, 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 David required to annul his marriage to Bathsheba, nor set her aside, as we would expect.

## 1 Chronicles 2 – Caleb's Concubine

1 Chronicles 2:46–49 And Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, and Motsa, and Gazēz. And Haran brought forth Gazēz. And the sons of Yahdai: Reğem, and Yotham, and Geyshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Sha'aph. Ma'akah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah. And she bore Sha'aph the father of Madmannah, Shewa the father of Ma'kēna and the father of Gib'a. <sup>49</sup>And the daughter of Caleb was Aksah.

How is it that Caleb, 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 twice struck a rock in anger? If polygyny is a sin, wouldn't Caleb have been denied entry into the Promised Land as well? And while there are two men named Caleb mentioned in Scripture, we know this one 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 Chronicles 24:2–3 And Yo'ash did what was right in the eyes of יְהוָה all the days of Yehoyada the priest. And Yehoyada took for him two wives, and he brought forth sons and daughters.

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

## Nehemyah 13 – Solomon's Foreign Wives

Nehemia 13:26 “Did not Shelomoh sovereign of Israel 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 Israel. Even him foreign women caused to sin.

Here Nehemiah makes it clear that Solomon's problem was the sin of idolatry which he committed when his *foreign, pagan* wives led him astray, but not for having *many* wives. He was a

king like no other, who was beloved of Elohim, whose greatest sin was *idolatry*, but not multiple wives.

### ***Song of Songs 6 – Solomon's 141st Wife***

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

...

**8–9** There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and innumerable maidens. 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, queens and concubines, and they praised her. 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 Solomon is held up 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, Solomon wrote this song to his 141<sup>st</sup> wife. How is it that such a perfect union between a man and his wife, the standard by which **יְהוָה** Scripture holds 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 141<sup>st</sup> is righteous?

The following is a corrected translation from the literal Hebrew.

**Song of Songs 4:9–16** "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. 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! 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. A garden locked is my *sister-wife*, A rock garden locked, a spring sealed up. Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates With choice fruits, henna with nard plants, nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, With all the trees of frankincense, Myrrh and aloes, along with all the finest spices. You are a garden spring, A well of fresh water, And streams flowing from Lebanon. 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!"

**Song of Songs 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 Solomon writing poetry to the Shulamite girl (his 141<sup>st</sup> wife)– he calls her his 'sister-wife' repeatedly. Was Solomon calling his 141<sup>st</sup> 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. We wonder if this is where the current term came from, as well as in the popular television series called, Sister–Wives...?

### ***Isaiah 4 – Seven Women Shall Seize One Man***

**Isaiah 4:1–6** And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We shall eat our own food and wear our own clothes; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach." In that

day the Branch of יהוה shall be splendid and esteemed. And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for the escaped ones of Yisra'el. And it shall be that he who is left in Tsiyon and he who remains in Yerushalayim is called set-apart, everyone who is written among the living in Yerushalayim. <sup>4</sup>When יהוה has washed away the filth of the daughters of Tsiyon, and rinsed away the blood of Yerushalayim from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, then יהוה shall create above every dwelling place of Mount Tsiyon, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for over all the esteem shall be a covering, and a booth for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.

In the preceding chapters leading up to this passage, we see the destruction and curses visited upon the people for their sins. The men are killed by the sword for allowing the youth and women to rule over them (Isa 3:4 & 12) among other things. The women are humbled because of their pride, vanity and rebellion against His ways. Then at 4:1 we see a turning point- the women realize they need a man to take away their reproach. They are in need of a righteous covering to redeem them and restore them to a right relationship with the Father. It is after this that He will wash away their filth (verse 4). But what is the day in which this will happen? By Isaiah 2:2 we know it is in the days in which He will place the final Temple on the mountain top. This is a Temple that has not yet been built. The Millennial Reign, mentioned in Revelation chapter 20, is when His Son will rule and reign from His Temple on the mountains of Jerusalem.

Will there be marriage in the Millennial Reign? Yes, there will be. Ezekiel tells us that the priests serving in the Temple must only marry virgins (Eze 44:22), leaders will give their sons gifts (Eze 46:16) and sojourners will have children (Eze 46:22). There will be marriage and children born in King Yeshua's reign and Torah will rule His Kingdom (Deut 12:28). Anyone who has spent any time in any church/congregation will acknowledge that women far outnumber the men. In any body of believers, you will find more women than men, both single and married. If this pattern we see in congregations today is an indication of how many men and women will be seen in the resurrection, then women will again far outnumber the men. It might very well be necessary for men to have more than one wife, maybe even seven, as this verse in Isaiah states.

### ***Jeremiah 3 – Israel and Judah, Wives Of יהוה***

**Jeremiah 3:6–10** And יהוה said to me in the days of Yoshiyahu the sovereign, “Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there committed whoring. And after she had done all these, I said ‘Return to Me.’ But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Yehudah saw it. And I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel 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. And it came to be, through her frivolous whoring, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and wood. 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 (allegorically) the husband of Israel and Judah, the Husband of two sisters. He is identifying Himself as a polygynist.

### ***Jeremiah 31 – נסיך יהוה New Marriage Covenant with Israel and Judah***

**Jeremiah 31:31–32** “Behold, days are coming,” declares יהוה, “when I will make a renewed covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 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 יְהוָה.

And here is a second witness- it cannot be stated any clearer than at the end of verse 31. Not only does יְהוָה 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, becomes truth by the power of His utterance and authority- see Psalms 33:4, Psalms 119:160 and Psalms 145:17.

### *Jeremiah 51 – Widows of יְהוָה*

Jeremiah 51:5 "For neither Yisra'el nor Yehudah is widowed by Elohim, יְהוָה of hosts, though their land has been filled with sin against the Set-apart One of Yisra'el."

And here is a third witness- how could יְהוָה declare He will not make Israel (Israel) and Yehudah (Judah) 'widows' unless they were already His wives, plural?

### *Ezekiel 23 – Oholah and Oholib, Wives of יְהוָה*

Ezekiel 23:1–4 And the word of יְהוָה came to me, saying, "Son of man, there were two women, daughters of one mother. And they whored in Mitsrayim, they whored in their youth. There their breasts were handled, and there their maiden nipples were squeezed. 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.

...

Ezekiel 23:36–37 And יְהוָה said to me, "Son of man, judge Oholah and Oholibah! And declare to them their abominations. 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 the fourth witness and what seals it for us- here יְהוָה is clearly calling Himself the husband of Oholibah and Oholah, the husband of two wives, and even calling them sisters! Even if you argue that it's only allegorical, it's still a statement by יְהוָה of a condition that He is identifying with and applying to Himself. Can יְהוָה do or call Himself anything sinful, even allegorically? We know that יְהוָה 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 יְהוָה 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 יְהוָה do is permissible for us, if it is possible for us to do. He is יְהוָה and obviously we can't do everything He does. Yet He is the example by which we judge holiness and righteousness.

### *Malaki 2 – Treachery Against the Wife of Your Youth*

Malaki 2:14–15 And you said, "Why?" Because יְהוָה 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. 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 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 **יהוָה**. Or we may be rewarded for nurturing them into a closer relationship to Yah.

To become one flesh is the physical act of intimacy that ideally begins on your marriage night. Do the Scriptures say that 'the two become one'? No, it says they become 'one flesh' or 'basar echad'. 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. 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 the oneness with his wife in the eyes of **יהוָה**. If a married man can become one with a harlot, according to Sha'ul/Paul, 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. Jacob 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, if practiced according to **יהוָה**'s plan. 'To become one flesh' is another way in which Scriptures describe the act of 'knowing' someone, which is the language of describing sex. 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.

We've come to the passages in the New Testament/Brit Chadasha that relate to polygyny. Before we get into those verses, we'd like to share the following information that is not well known regarding the early Christian forefathers and what they thought and believed about a man having multiple wives:

From the website of Biblical Families, from Dr. K.R. Allen:

*"Some today write and teach that there was no practice of polygyny in the time of the early churches. This is a very common assertion by many. It is so common that many take this ideology at face value and thus continue to spread this viewpoint. However, if one uses first hand historical resources and does original research one will find this idea is without merit. Examination of the original firsthand eyewitnesses in the early church period and immediate generation after shows us the practice had not died out."*

*Josephus himself made these statements about polygyny in his historical writings. In speaking of King Herod, Josephus recorded this: 'Now Herod the king had at this time nine wives; one of them, Antipater's mother, and another the high priest's daughter, by whom he had a son of his own name'. (The Antiquities of the Jews, 17:1:3:19). So, by this historical statement, we know the practice existed among the time of Christ and the apostles.*

*Second, when we move a little past the time of the Apostles, we also find that one of the early church fathers spoke of this as still a common practice of his time. Though this father apparently had*

some type of issue with it, he still acknowledged that it was indeed practiced in his time. Justin Martyr said in his teaching to Trypho, 'If, then, the teaching of the prophets and of Himself moves you, it is better for you to follow God than your imprudent and blind masters, who even till this time permit each man to have four or five wives'. (Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1. p. 266). Additionally, Justin Martyr spoke to how widespread this doctrine was in his day. He stated that these people, these Jewish believers of their nation, were taking many wives "over all the earth" (Ibid, p. 270). Justin was born around 110 or 114 and lived to around 160 or 165. Therefore, we know that he was not a direct disciple of any of the apostles, which may help to explain why he opposed something none of the apostles ever opposed. Since he never had any interaction with any of the apostles, that increased his odds for embracing serious error. But his speech reveals the widespread practice of this doctrine in his day and dispels the myth that this practice did not exist in the early era of church history.

Nonetheless, with these two quotes we see that in Christ's time and in the immediate period after the apostles the polygynous lifestyle was still evident. This testimony also coincides with one modern day Jewish Rabbi who says that the practice among the Jewish people did not die out until around the 10th century. Alfred J. Kolatch, a graduate of Yeshiva University, and an ordained leader from the Jewish Theological Seminary, has served as a Rabbi of several congregations. He says: 'The illustrious Rabbenu Gershom ben Yehudah (960–1028) of Mainz Germany, who because of his brilliance was known as the Me'orHa-Golah (Light of the Exile), sought to establish monogamy as a rule of Jewish law. His goal was to avoid conflict with the Church . . . . About one thousand years ago, he convened an assembly of rabbis from various European countries, and they insisted on a ban on polygamy. Anyone who violated the ban, which became known as the cherem d'Rabbenu Gershom, was excommunicated' (Inside Judaism, p. 396).

Therefore, according to both first hand eyewitnesses we know that polygyny did not cease among the Hebrews or Christians, some of which were certainly Hebrew Christians. Later testimony agrees with this historical analysis as well."

### **Matthew 19 – Divorce and Two Become One Flesh**

**Matthew 19:3–6** And the Pharisees came to Him, trying Him, and saying to Him, "Is it right for a man to put away his wife for every reason?" And He answering, said to them, "Did you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, 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? So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what Elohim has joined together, let man not separate."

It is 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 and no more.

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? 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, that is also good! But meeting physical needs should never be the primary reason to marry another wife, just as it should not have been the primary reason for establishing the first marriage! *Not many are called to be celibate, and not many are called to be polygynous.*

### ***Matthew 22 – Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's***

**Matthew 22:17-21** “Then say to us, what do You think? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” But knowing their wickedness, **יהושע** said, “Why do you try Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the coin of the tax.” And they brought Him a silver piece. And He said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” They said to Him, “Caesar's.” And He said to them, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to Elohim what is Elohim's.”

Many argue that polygyny is illegal according to local governments and therefore cannot be practiced today. But I would ask, does the institution of marriage belong to Caesar or to **יהוָה**? We've seen what results when men follow Caesar's definition of marriage- unprecedented divorce, sodomite unions, broken homes with absentee fathers, men and women breaking their marital vows of faithfulness, etc. Marriage does not belong to Caesar- it belongs to **יהוָה**. When we follow His rules, His instructions, as Képha/Peter) instructs in Acts 5:29, we must allow and support polygyny. And even if you believe you must obey Caesar, he only declares that a man or woman can only have one marriage license in effect at one time. It is not illegal in most states for a man to live with more than one woman. If he and his wives agree and come together as husband and wife before **יהוָה**, and make public vows with witnesses, then they are married in His sight.

See the 'Reference Links' on the last page for an article that explains why having even one marriage license is granting the government a partnership in your family and rights to your children and any assets you have.

### ***Matthew 25 – Parable of the 10 Virgins***

**Matthew 25:1-13** “Then the reign of the heavens shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five foolish. Those who were foolish, having taken their lamps, took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their containers with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom took time, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard, 'See, the bridegroom is coming, go out to meet him!' Then all those maidens rose up and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us of your oil, because our lamps are going out.' 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.' 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. And later the other maidens also came, saying, 'Master, Master, open up for us!' But he answering, said, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 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 girls are simply guests at the wedding party, or as commonly seen today, as helpers for the bride/bridesmaids. Instead, they should be properly portrayed as virgins that are *betrothed*, waiting to be given in marriage. The parable of the ten virgins describes the relationship between the betrothed virgins (Believers/Bride)

and Yeshua (the Bridegroom). We can know that the ten virgins are betrothed to the groom, 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 this pagan practice of bridesmaids in a parable.

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.

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 **שׁׁוֹרֵת** says four times that He is the husband of two wives, as seen in Ezekiel and Jeremiah, 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 modeling what He saw His Father allegorically do and Yeshua shares a parable of a bridegroom with 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.

### ***Romans 13- Submit to Secular Laws***

**Romans 13:1-7** *Let every being be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from Elohim, and the authorities that exist are appointed by Elohim. So he who opposes the authority withstands the institution of Elohim, and those who withstand shall bring judgment on themselves. For those ruling are an object of fear, not to good works, but to evil. Do you wish to be not afraid of the authority? Do the good, and you shall have praise from it, for it is a servant of Elohim to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid, for it does not bear the sword in vain. For it is a servant of Elohim, a revenger to execute wrath on him who practises evil. Therefore, it is necessary to be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of the conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are servants of Elohim attending continually to these duties. Render therefore to all what is due to them: tax to whom tax is due, toll to whom toll, fear to whom fear, respect to whom respect.*

Another frequent objection we hear is that the laws in America prohibit a man from having more than one wife. In reality, the truth is that the government is more concerned about making money on marriage licenses and making sure a man doesn't have more than one marriage license in place. When we investigated the ramifications of having even one marriage license with the state, we discovered these things to be true: (Taken from the website and link provided below).

*"From the State's point of view, when you marry with a marriage license, you are not just marrying your spouse, but you are also marrying the State. The most blatant declaration of this fact that I have ever found is a brochure entitled "With This Ring I Thee Wed." It is found in county*

courthouses across Ohio where people go to obtain their marriage licenses. It is published by the Ohio State Bar Association. The opening paragraph under the subtitle "Marriage Vows" states, "Actually, when you repeat your marriage vows you enter into a legal contract. There are three parties to that contract. 1) You; 2) Your husband or wife, as the case may be; and 3) the State of Ohio." See, the State and the lawyers know that when you marry with a marriage license, you are not just marrying your spouse, you are marrying the State. You are like a polygamist. You are not just making a vow to your spouse, but you are making a vow to the State and your spouse. You are also giving undue jurisdiction to the State. When you marry with a marriage license, your marriage is a creature of the State. It is a corporation of the State. This grants the State undue jurisdiction over your marriage. In 1993 for example, parents were upset here in Wisconsin because a test was being administered to their children in the government schools which was very invasive of the family's privacy. When parents complained, they were shocked by the school bureaucrats who informed them that their children were required to take the test by law and that they would have to take the test because they (the government school) had jurisdiction over their children. When parents asked the bureaucrats what gave them jurisdiction, the bureaucrats answered, "your marriage license and their birth certificates." Judicially, and in increasing fashion, practically, your State marriage license has far-reaching implications."

Please read the entire article here to understand this in its fullness:

<http://mercyseat.net/mscc/2015/10/07/marriage-licenses/>

### ***1 Corinthians 5 – Father's Wife***

**1 Corinthians 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 uncovering his father's nakedness by taking one of his wives. It is possible that the father was a widower or divorced and he had simply remarried after his first wife, but it's also possible he had multiple wives.

### ***1 Corinthians 6 – Adulterers Will Not Inherit Heaven***

**1 Corinthians 6:9-10** 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, 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 will 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/Jacob, Mosheh/Moses, Gideon, David and Shemu'el (Samuel), were 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 sins.

### ***1 Corinthians 7 – Own Wife and Own Husband***

**1 Corinthians 7:2-9** But because of fornication, let each one have his own wife, and let each woman

have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife what is her due, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 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. 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. And I say this as a concession, not as a command. 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. And I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am, 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 an additional wife, rather than to burn? This can certainly be viewed this way. And is it entirely hypocritical to judge a man negatively for having multiple wives, who he *marries* and provides for long term in all matters—shelter, clothing, food, protection, spiritual leading, love, etc., but they do not judge a single man who is continually going from woman to woman, having serial sexual escapades, and using them sexually, hurting them emotionally, not giving but taking from them, not providing anything for them long term, etc? Society accepts such behavior, and yet it is not to the benefit of the women! How many secular family members, friends, church members or men in the congregations are 'whore mongers', yet a blind eye is turned toward their selfishness? But they want to kick a man out of the congregations or refuse fellowship because he has multiple wives, which is *not a sin*? We've actually experienced ourselves people cutting us out of their lives and congregations for simply *believing in and supporting* polygyny! And yet they allow other people to remain in their lives who are in known habitual *sin*. It can be so very frustrating!

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' a different word, idios (ἰδιος) is used for 'own'. A search here reveals that it is used when ownership is known to be multiple or shared. 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. Paul/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 mutual pleasure and enjoyment as man and wife.

### ***1 Corinthians 7 – Only a Wife is Bound***

**1 Corinthians 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 witnessed by 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' in the Brit Chadasha***

**1 Corinthians 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 Kěpha/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 more likely that some of the emissaries had multiple wives?

### ***1 Timothy 3 – Husband of One Wife***

**1 Tim 3:1-5** **Trustworthy is the word: If a man longs for the position of an overseer, he desires a good work. An overseer, then, should be blameless, the husband of one wife, sober, sensible, orderly, kind to strangers, able to teach, not given to wine, no brawler, but gentle, not quarrelsome, no lover of money, one who rules his own house well, having his children in subjection with all reverence, 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. Paul is clearly listing the requirements of a *leader* in a congregation and not all men. But you must also consider that Moshe led the Israelites while possibly having multiple wives, as did David, Gideon, and others. The Greek word 'one' (μιας – mia) 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 μιας (mia) never means 'one and only one', but it can mean 'one of a set'.

Isn't it interesting though that Paul 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 that a leader must only have one wife or a wife? This passage from Sha'ul must be *his opinion* and not Scripture, as we know he does not add to the commandments of יהוה.

### ***1 Timothy 4 – Forbidding to Marry***

**1Timothy 4:1-3** **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, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having**

been branded on their own conscience, 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 *by culture* and not Scripture. 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.

### ***Titus 1 – Commands of Men Who Turn from the Truth***

***Titus 1:10–16*** For there are many unruly men, senseless talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths have to be stopped, who upset entire households, teaching what they should not teach, for the sake of filthy gain. One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." This witness is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, in order for them to be sound in the belief, not paying attention to Yehudite fables, and commands of men who turn from the truth. Indeed, all matters are clean to the clean, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving no matter is clean, but both their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know Elohim, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unfit for any good work.

One of the immediate assumptions people tend to make about others who believe in and support polygyny is that it's entirely lust based, motivated and driven by perversion. While unfortunately we cannot deny that we have also seen and heard about such men, that is not necessarily true for most. Without the motivating factor of attraction and lust, most men would likely decide that women are not worth the hassle. Women are complex, confusing, perplexing, ever varying, and wonderful, delightful enigmas! If Paul says that if a man lusts and burns with sexual desire that he should marry his first wife, why would it be such a bad motivation for a second wife? Should lust be the primary impetus for any marriage? We emphatically suggest not! What are the main and most common drives for any marriage? Companionship and friendship, to fulfill a man's desire to lead and protect women, attraction and sexual desire, and to produce heirs. Why would these incentives be noble and right and good for a first wife, but suddenly become perverse, twisted and ungodly with a second or additional wives? I'll tell you why- the culture and its idea of romantic, singular love! From the article, The History of Monogamy, by Israel C.S. Lim: *"Even the word, Romantic tells us where monogamy is from, the Roman culture and the Roman Empire which is Western Europe, where values contradict biblical standards. And we can be so blind as not to see it before our eyes when we read the word Roman-tic, and yet we expound and exalt it at every wedding and declared it as holiness at every pulpit! To be very romantic is to be very Roman. To be very Roman is to be very anti-patriarchy and very anti-God."*

## ***James 2 – Abraham’s Righteousness***

**James 2:23** And the Scripture was filled 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? No.

## ***Hebrews 11 – Hall of Faith Includes 'Alef Males'***

**Hebrews 11:1-40** And belief is the substance of what is expected, the proof of what is not seen. For by this the elders obtained witness. By belief, we understand that the ages were prepared by the word of Elohim, so that what is seen was not made of what is visible. By belief, Hebel offered to Elohim a greater slaughter offering than Qayin, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, Elohim witnessing of his gifts. And through it, having died, he still speaks. By belief, Ḥanok was translated so as not to see death, “and was not found because Elohim had translated him.” For before his translation he obtained witness, that he pleased Elohim. But without belief it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Elohim has to believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who earnestly seek Him. By belief, Noah, having been warned of what was yet unseen, having feared, prepared an ark to save his house, through which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to belief. By belief, Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he was about to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By belief, he sojourned in the land of promise as a stranger, dwelling in tents with Yitsḥaq and Ya'aqob, the heirs with him of the same promise, for he was looking for the city having foundations, whose builder and maker is Elohim. By belief also, Sarah herself was enabled to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the normal age, because she deemed Him trustworthy who had promised. And so from one, and him as good as dead, were born as numerous as the stars of the heaven, as countless as the sand which is by the seashore. In belief all these died, not having received the promises,<sup>|super 1</sup> but seeing them from a distance, welcomed and embraced them, and confessed that they were aliens and strangers on the earth. For those who speak this way make it clear that they seek a fatherland. And yet, if they had indeed kept remembering that place from which they had come out, they would have had the chance to return. But now they long for a better place, that is, a heavenly. Therefore Elohim is not ashamed to be called their Elohim, for He has prepared a city for them. By belief, Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Yitsḥaq, and he who had received the promises offered up his only brought-forth son, of whom it was said, “In Yitsḥaq your seed shall be called,” reckoning that Elohim was able to raise, even from the dead, from which he received him back, as a type. By belief, Yitsḥaq blessed Ya'aqob and Ēsaw concerning that which was to come. By belief, Ya'aqob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Yosēph, and did reverence on the top of his staff. By belief, Yosēph, when he was dying, made mention of the outgoing of the children of Yisra'ēl, and gave orders concerning his bones. By belief, Mosheh, having been born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a comely child, and were not afraid of the sovereign's command. By belief, Mosheh, having become great, refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, choosing rather to be afflicted with the people of Elohim than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time, deeming the reproach of Messiah greater riches than the treasures in Mitsrayim, for he was looking to the reward. By belief, he left Mitsrayim, not fearing the wrath of the sovereign, for he was steadfast, as seeing Him who is invisible. By belief, he performed the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the first-born should touch them. By belief, they

passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, and when the Mitsrites tried it, they were drowned. By belief, the walls of Yeriho fell, having been surrounded for seven days. By belief, Rahab the whore did not perish with those who did not believe, having received the spies with peace. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to relate of Gid'on and Baraq and Shimshon and Yiphtah, also of Dawid and Shemu'el and the prophets, who through belief, overcame reigns, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became mighty in battle, put foreign armies to flight.

Everyone will easily agree that the people listed in this chapter were people of great faith and dedication, but few have considered the fact that many of them had multiple wives. Look at this chapter as to who had multiple wives and were considered righteous:

Abraham, Jacob, Moshe, Gideon, David, and Samuel (as a product of a polygynous marriage).

## Conclusion

The idea of polygyny takes some getting used to, and some contemplation and some soul searching, to even 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 her 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. Six 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-wife's 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.
- ❖ If two wives are both breastfeeding their infants, one wife has the freedom to be away for a time as her sister-wife nurses her baby in her absence.

### ***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 (three heads, or more, are better than just two) 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 when he needs to be sleeping and being prepared to go to work the next day- the sister-wife can be the primary source of assistance if she's able and willing.

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 peer pressure to dictate our beliefs, but we instead use Scriptures to discern 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 rarer. 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 of anger and shock. 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, on how the seventh day Sabbath was His set-apart day, etc? We all did, but then the truth settled in! This is just one more area that the Roman Catholic Church has changed and it has become Christian culture, but we as believers now must examine all of Scripture to find the truth behind this topic as well.

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. We sincerely appreciate your time in reading it and we hope that you will judge its contents with an open mind, search the Scriptures, and test everything. Please let us know if we have erred, failed or where we're doctrinally wrong. יהוה has given us a seeking spirit. He wants us to test His Scriptures and to hold fast to what is true, sound and good. We continually hope and pray that we do this with all things in our lives.

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

## ***Reference Links Cited in Paper***

- [The History of Monogamy](#)
- [Why you don't want a marriage license](#)
- [About Concubines](#) (paid site)
- [Polygyny in Israel](#)