

אמת

Emet - Truth

Psalm 69:13 - But as for me, my prayer is to You, O YHWH, at an acceptable time; O Elohim, in the greatness of Your loving kindness, Answer me with Your saving truth.

POLYGyny – WHAT SAY THE BIBLE?



Before we begin this study, let me first state this article is not promoting the practice or non-practice of polygyny. This article is simply to present the TRUTH of what Scripture says on this subject. If one chooses to engage in polygyny or monogamy it should be done according to the Torah/Law of YHWH! Now let's begin.

What defines sin? The Bible clearly tells us what sin is.

1 John 3:4 (King James Version) Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the Law (Heb. Torah): for sin is the transgression of the Law (Torah).

Romans 7:7 What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "You shall not covet."

James 2:11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the Law (Torah).

The Law/Torah that is being spoken about is found within the first 5 books of the Bible written by Moses. All understanding of sin and how it is defined should come from the Torah/Law! So now the question is; what does the Torah say about polygyny? What is polygyny? According to the American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition it is:

1. The condition or practice of having more than one wife at one time.

I don't use the word polygamy because it includes many practices within the definition as well that are not biblical (polyandry, polyamory, group marriage, etc). So polygyny is the practice of having more than one wife/woman/ishah at once. Wouldn't this be adultery and thereby a sin if a man is already married to one woman? Let's see what adultery is according to the Torah/Law? Let's look at the westernized world's definition of adultery first.

Adultery – Function: *noun*: voluntary sexual activity (as sexual intercourse) between a married man and someone other than his wife or between a married woman and someone other than her husband; also : the crime of adultery —compare FORNICATION — **adul-ter-er** /&-d&l-t&r&r/ *noun* — **adul-ter-ess** /-t&r&s/ *noun* – (Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law, © 1996 Merriam-Webster, Inc.)

Now this is the westernized world's definition of adultery, but what says the Scriptures? The 7th commandment states:

Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery." See also Deuteronomy 5:18

So here we see the Most High saying we are not to commit adultery but He does not define what adultery is or who exactly can or cannot commit adultery. When the New Testament uses the word adultery, it is already assumed what that word means. The reason being is because the Law/Torah has already defined what adultery is. From the definition we saw earlier adultery has to do with marriage. Is all sexual sins also defined as adultery? Let's look at some biblical sources and what they have to say about adultery.

Adultery: The parties to this crime, according to Jewish law, were a married woman and a man who was not her husband. (Smith's bible dictionary.)

Adultery: 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. (Easton's 1897 bible dictionary.)

So here we see adultery defined as having sex with a married woman. Let's look at the biblical definition of the word adultery and see if it matches.

H5003 – נָאֵף na'aph *naw-af* a primitive root; to commit adultery; figuratively, to apostatize:--adulterer(-ess), commit(-ing) adultery, woman that breaketh wedlock.

G3429 – μοιχάω moichaō *moichaō* 1) to have unlawful intercourse with another's wife, to commit adultery with.

According to the meaning of the Greek and Hebrew words translated adultery, adultery means a woman who breaks wedlock. THIS IS THE TRUE BIBLICAL MEANING! In the U.S. and most Christian churches adultery is seen as a married individual having sexual intercourse with someone of the opposite sex, besides their spouse, married or single. U.S. law and Christianity on this matter reflect the ideas of the Roman Catholic Church. However, this is not the biblical view! Let's further define what adultery consists of from Scripture. Let's go to the Law/Torah.

Leviticus 20:10-11 "If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. ¹¹If a man lies with his father's wife, he has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.

So here we see adultery as the action of a man sleeping with someone else's wife as the definition we read showed.

Deuteronomy 22:22-27 "If a man is found lying **with a married woman**, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel. ²³"If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city **and lies with her**, ²⁴then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, **because he has violated his neighbor's wife**. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you. ²⁵"But if in the field the man finds the **girl who is engaged**, and the man forces her **and lies with her**, then only the man who lies with her shall die. ²⁶"But you shall do nothing to the girl; there is no sin in the girl worthy of death, for just as a man rises against his neighbor and murders him, so is this case. ²⁷"When he found her in the field, **the engaged girl** cried out, but there was no one to save her.

Deuteronomy 22:20-21 "But if this charge is true, that the **girl was not found a virgin**, ²¹then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway of her father's house, and the men of her city **shall stone her to death because she has committed an act of folly in Israel by playing the harlot** in her father's house; thus you shall purge the evil from among you.

When the Scriptures say you shall not commit adultery, it has different meanings for both the man and woman. A married or engaged woman having sex with any man is adultery. A man whether married or single having sex with a married woman or engaged woman commits adultery! This is the real meaning of biblical adultery. The definition of the word alone is proof in itself, but these verses we just read further validate that.

Adultery always refers to the married or engaged woman and not a married or engaged man! There is not one verse that forbids an unmarried woman from engaging in a relationship with a man whether he is married or single! A man can only commit adultery, whether he is married or single, by sleeping with a married or engaged woman. So to be clear adultery means "sex between a married woman and a man who is not her husband" or in other words, "sex between any man and a married or engaged woman."

The last law concerning adultery is the penalty for committing adultery. The penalty for adultery is death of both parties involved. The woman dies because she has broken her marriage covenant or engagement and defiled herself with another man who is not her husband or fiancé. The man is in violation not because he cheated (a western term that doesn't exist in the Bible for a man) but because he violated another man's eesha/woman/wife/fiancé. Also, the Torah forbids a man from sleeping with another man's wife because it would result in her being defiled by a mixing of seed which is an unclean act and biblical no no (Deuteronomy 22:9, Lev 19:19)! The literal translation of Leviticus 18:20 reads:

Leviticus 18:20 `And unto **the wife** of thy fellow thou dost not give thy seed of copulation [sexual intercourse], for uncleanness with her. (Young's Literal Translation)

And lastly, the Scriptural view of a wife is that she belongs to her husband. She is his possession. Therefore, any man who had sex with her was also guilty of breaking the 8th commandment as well and was to be put to death along with the wife or engaged woman. The 8th commandment reads:

Exodus 20:15 You shall not steal.

Adultery can only be committed with a married or engaged woman. Let's look at more Scriptures that show adultery is committed with a married woman.

Ezekiel 16:32 "You adulteress wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband!

Jeremiah 29:23 because they have acted foolishly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives and have spoken words in My name falsely, which I did not command them; and I am He who knows and am a witness," declares YHWH."

Ezekiel 18:15 "He does not eat at the mountain shrines or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, or defile his neighbor's wife,

Ezekiel 33:26 "You rely on your sword, you commit abominations and each of you defiles his neighbor's wife. Should you then possess the land?"

Some will try to point to Proverbs 5 as speaking about a single woman who is an adulterous but this verse says nothing of the sort. Let's assume this Proverb is talking about being with an adulterous woman, it's talking about a woman who belongs to another man and not a single woman! For she is called an adulteress which we saw means "woman that breaks wedlock." To further confirm this we only need read verse 15

Proverbs 5:15 Drink water from your own cistern And fresh water from your own well.

I submit to you this Proverb is talking about a woman who is separated from her husband or a harlot. The word translated adulteress actually means (when pertaining to a woman) strange, harlot, prostitute or a woman who is separated from her husband. The Lexicon states:

Strong's H2114 - זָרַר zur zuwr Outline of Biblical Usage

- 1) to be strange, be a stranger
 - a) (Qal)
 - 1) to become estranged
 - 2) strange, another, stranger, foreigner, an enemy (participle)
 - 3) loathsome (of breath) (participle)
 - 4) **strange woman, prostitute, harlot** (meton)
 - b) (Niphal) to be estranged
 - c) (Hophal) to be a stranger, be one alienated

The KJV properly translates verse 3 and 20 of Proverbs chp 5.

³For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: ...²⁰And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

Let's sum up what we know about adultery so far. Adultery is sex between any man and a married or engaged woman (Leviticus 18:20, 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22-24). The penalty for adultery is death (Lev 20:10-11, Deuteronomy 22:22-27) unless rape is involved then only the man dies. Notice who the Bible says doesn't commit adultery. Adultery never involves an unmarried woman. NEVER! Only a married woman or engaged woman can be guilty of adultery as we have established. A married or engaged man can ONLY commit adultery with a married or engaged woman but never with an unmarried woman!

You might be asking, "So you're saying a married man can sleep with women who are not married or engaged?" The answer is YES. They must become his wife unless the woman's father refuses or she refuses to marry him. Although the Most High wants marriage to be the end result of sexual relations he doesn't force anyone to get married but a woman is considered humbled or violated if she was a virgin (Deut 21:14, 22:28-29). If a woman continued to have sex out of wedlock she was/is considered a harlot/whore which is considered a profane and shameful thing and she would be publicly disgraced and in some cases receive the death penalty (Gen 34:31, Lev 19:29, 21:7,9,14, Deut 22:13-14,20-21, Proverbs 6:26, 23:27, 29:3). Getting back on track, a married man is not guilty of any sin if he has sex with a woman who is not married. After the act takes place he is supposed to

marry the woman of whom he violated. [disclaimer: Now at this point let me make something clear, I don't endorse men run around and sleep with a bunch of women and neither does the Most High. Men who sleep with a bunch of women and not seeking a woman in righteousness to marry them according to the Torah will be held accountable by the Most High! The Most High will punish all those who turn our women into whores!

Hosea 4:14 I will not punish your daughters when they play the harlot Or your brides when they commit adultery, For *the men* themselves go apart with harlots And offer sacrifices with temple prostitutes; So the people without understanding are ruined.

Leviticus 19:29 'Do not profane your daughter by making her a harlot, so that the land will not fall to harlotry and the land become full of lewdness.

The Torah is about responsibility and accountability! Men who engage in plural relationships should be prepared to take care of these sisters and be a true husband to them NOT just some sleeping bundies.]

Now continuing on, unlearned Christian (an apparently some Messianic) leaders will say a married or engaged man is committing adultery if he sleeps with a woman other than his wife. They will even say if he has other wives it adultery. Having multiple wives as we saw beforehand is called polygyny. And as we just read a married or engaged man is not committing adultery by taken an unmarried or unengaged woman!

At one time, I thought how are all these men in the bible having all these wives when it is a sin. I assumed polygyny was a sin and that men were simply sinful and blatantly disobeyed "God's" commandments. But this is not the case! Since adultery was punishable by death under the law (Lev 20:10-11, Deuteronomy 22:22-27), and the law allowed, regulated, and commanded polygyny in certain instances; adultery cannot and is not synonymous with polygyny. Men and their wives were not put to death or accused of sin for having polygynous marriages! NOT ONE TIME!

Polygyny was very common in antiquity and still is common in the world today. Polygyny is recorded in the Scriptures very frequently! The Scriptures records all throughout its pages of men practicing polygyny including four Gentile kings (Gen 12:15; 20:17; Est 2:3; Dan 5:2). The first recorded man to take on multiple wives was Lamech (Gen 4:19). Even though Lamech is the only polygynist identified before the global flood, there is no reason and would be crazy to believe that he was the only one in that status. Terah, Nahor and Abraham (Gen 11:26; 16:3; 20:12; 22:20-24; 25:1-6). Esau had five wives (Gen 26:34; 28:9; 36:2-3) and Jacob had four (Gen 29:23-28; 30:4, 9). The twelve sons of Jacob and their descendants continued to be polygynous considering the number of men of fighting age and the number of firstborn counted after the Exodus (Num 1:2; 3:40). More names include: Simeon, (Gen 46:10; Ex 6:15), Manasseh (1 Chron 7:14), Moses (Ex 2:21; 18:1-6; Num 12:1), Caleb (1 Chron 2:18-19, 46, 48), Gideon (Judg 8:30), Jair (Judg 10:4), Gilead (Judg 11:1-2), Ibzan (Judg 12:9), Abdon (Judg 12:14), Elkanah (1 Sam 1:2), Jerahmeel (1 Chron 2:26), Ashur (1 Chron 4:5), Ezra (1 Chron 4:17f), Shimei (1 Chron 4:27), Machir (1 Chron 7:15f), Saul (1 Sam 14:50; 2 Sam 3:7), David (1 Sam 25:42-44), Ziba (2 Sam 9:10), Solomon (1 Kin 11:3), Rehoboam (2 Chron 11:18-23), Ahab (1 Kin 20:3), Jehoiachin (2 Kin 24:15), Shaharaim (1 Chron 8:8), Abijah (2 Chron 13:21), Jehoram (2 Chron 21:14), Joash, (2 Chron 24:2-3), Heman (1 Chron 25:4), Zedekiah (Jer 38:23), and Hosea (Hosea 1:3; 3:1). King Josiah (2 Kin 23:31, 36; 1 Chron 3:15). The tribe of Issachar was known for its practice of polygyny (1 Chron 7:4).

As often as polygyny occurs in the Scriptures amongst righteous and unrighteous men, you would think the Most High would have made it a point to condemn it and the people practicing it if it was a sin but He doesn't – NOT ONCE! The Christian church will try to tell you that polygyny was forbidden by the Most High but the Scriptures, more specifically the Torah/Law, show a different story. The commandments that YHWH gave Moses to give the

people also contains laws that govern polygyny. Here are the laws that forbid the type of women you were allowed to have in polygynous marriage.

Leviticus 18:17-18 You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and of her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; they are blood relatives. It is lewdness. ¹⁸You shall not marry a woman in addition to her sister as a rival while she is alive, to uncover her nakedness.

Leviticus 20:14-17 If there is a man who marries a woman and her mother, it is immorality; both he and they shall be burned with fire, so that there will be no immorality in your midst.

Here are laws that protect the treatment of the first wife and the firstborn.

Exodus 21:10 If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her (the 1st wife) food, her clothing, or her marital rights.

Deuteronomy 21:15-17 "If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him sons, if the firstborn son belongs to the unloved, ¹⁶then it shall be in the day he wills what he has to his sons, he cannot make the son of the loved the firstborn before the son of the unloved, who is the firstborn. ¹⁷"But he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; to him belongs the right of the firstborn.

The polygyny was a sin why is the Most High giving commandments to govern it? Many when asked this question cannot answer with a scriptural answer they will instead speak from opinion and feelings. Again, here are laws where men (no matter if they are married or single) are commanded to marry.

Deuteronomy 25:5-6 "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. ⁶And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.

Exodus 22:16-17 If a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, and lies with her, he must pay a dowry for her to be his wife.

Deuteronomy 22:28-29 If a man finds a girl who is a virgin, who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her and they are discovered, ²⁹then the man who lay with her shall give to the girl's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall become his wife because he has violated her; he cannot divorce her all his days.

The Most High even gave multiple wives to one of His greatest servants. Why would He do this if it was sin or wrong in His eyes?

2 Samuel 12:8 And I (YHWH) gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more.

Even the Priest, who knows the Torah/Law, gave wives to faithful servants of the Most High who were considered righteous even after marrying multiple wives showing YHWH's approval of polygyny.

2 Chronicles 24:2-3 Joash did what was right in the sight of YHWH **all** the days of Jehoiada the priest. ³Jehoiada took two wives for him, and he became the father of sons and daughters.

If one pays close attention when reading Leviticus 18, they would notice several commandments given by the Most High as to how men are to act toward their father's wives who are not their mother as well as the siblings produced by these relationships.

Lev.18:7-8 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, that is, the nakedness of your mother. She is your mother; you are not to uncover her nakedness. ⁸You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is your father's nakedness.

There are two individuals noted in verses 7 and 8 with whom a son is not to have intercourse with: his mother or his father's wife. The English word for mother in verse 7 is translated from the Hebrew word "em," whereas wife in verse 8 is translated from the Hebrew word ishah, which means a woman or wife. The Hebrew words em and ishah make a clear distinction between the mother and the wife, thereby indicating that the one spoken of as the wife is not the mother, but is another woman (i.e., wife). This wife could be the father's only wife who is not a person's mother or one of the father's wives who is not a person's mother. This law applies to both monogamous and polygynous relationships and is punishable by death (Deut.27:20, Lev.20:11).

Leviticus 18:9 The nakedness of your sister, either your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether born at home or born outside, their nakedness you shall not uncover... ¹¹ The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, born to your father, she is your sister, you shall not uncover her nakedness.

These commandments prohibits a man from having intercourse with a biological sister or a half-sister from either his father or his mother. This law also applies to marital relationships, whether monogamous or polygynous.

Notice also, there are no commandments concerning men being virgins, only women! There's even a penalty of death for a woman if she is found not to be a virgin upon betrothal (Deut 22:13-20). Women are supposed to be virgins when they marry unless special circumstances occurs such as the father refuses to let the daughter marry or the woman is a widow, etc (Exod 22:17). The reason men are not expected to be virgins or there's no law governing virgin men is because they are allowed to have more than one wife so they wouldn't be a virgin when they marry their second or more wives.

The New Testament further confirms that only a married man can marry more than one woman while a married woman is bound to her husband only. Notice what Paul says.

1 Corinthians 7:10-11 But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Master, that the wife should not leave her husband ¹¹(but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife.

Why did Paul (or more accurately the Master) say she must remain unmarried? Let's go to another epistle and see the answer to this question.

1 Corinthians 7:39 A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Master.

A woman cannot marry another man as long as she has a husband. As long as that man lives she belongs to him. Again we read:

Romans 7:2-3 For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. ³So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an

adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

Here we see the teaching, as the Torah also teaches, against a woman having more than one husband or sexual partner at time (also known as polyandry). Now, watch what Paul says concerning the married man.

1 Corinthians 7:27-28 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. ²⁸But if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you.

Notice Paul says the married man who is not with his wife can marry another woman while his wife yet lives and is not guilty of any sin. Why? Because polygyny is not a sin according to the Torah/Law. Shaul (Paul) says adultery is a sin and that those who commit this sin will not make it into the kingdom.

1 Corinthians 6:8-10 On the contrary, you yourselves wrong and defraud. You do this even to your brethren. ⁹Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of Elohim? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of Elohim.

Again notice the book of Romans 5:13 states if there is no law for something, it is not a sin. There is no law against polygyny, therefore, it is not a sin. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 as we just read mentions that adulterers will not inherit the Kingdom of Elohim, yet in Hebrews 11, we read about many polygynists who will inherit the Kingdom of Elohim. Therefore further showing polygyny is not adultery and is an acceptable form of marriage.

So Shaul, a student of the Torah, clearly shows that adultery and polygyny are not one and the same thing. This further confirms that adultery is only committed when a married (also engaged or separated but not divorced) woman breaks wedlock.

Although the Most High is not a physical being with physical wives He describes Himself as a polygynist (Jeremiah 3:6-14, 31:31-34). Now would He use a polygyny to describe His actions if it was a sinful thing? Yeshua likewise compares himself to a polygynist to teach a biblical principle (Matthew 25:1-13). Why would the Mashiakh do such a thing if it was a forbidden thing that he out spoke against as some wrongly teach? The TRUTH of the matter is polygyny is one form of marriage governed by the TORAH and practiced in the nation of Israel and other nations as well! There is not one verse in the Scriptures that say polygyny or having multiple wives is a sin.

Now some will try and say Yeshua came and changed the laws concerning polygyny and outright banned this form of marriage. They usually will site...

Matthew 5:31-32 "It was said, 'whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce'; ³²but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Matthew 19:8-9 He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. ⁹"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

Mark 10:11-12 And He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her; ¹²and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery."

Luke 16:18 "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.

Now let's establish a few things before we continue on.

Psalm 19:7 The Law of YHWH is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of YHWH is sure, making wise the simple.

The Torah of YHWH is perfect and needs no redacting or changing! No one can come along and say the Torah was wrong when it said this, here's what I say it should say. The person that does that is actually breaking Torah and in fact is in danger of judgment.

Deuteronomy 4:2 You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of YHWH your Elohim which I command you.

Anyone who comes along and add to or take away from the Torah is to be considered a false prophet; this includes Yeshua too if he speaks anything against YHWH's Torah!

Deuteronomy 18:18-20 I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require *it* of him. ²⁰But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'

Any prophet that speaks not after YHWH and His Torah in ancient Israel was to be put to death, that's how serious YHWH is about His word! We must also remember the Law/Torah determines what is and is not sin!

1 John 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also **the Law (Torah)**: for sin is the transgression of **the Law (Torah)**.

The Torah dictates what sin is and Yeshua must uphold that! So what did Mashiakh/Christ say concerning the Torah?

Matthew 5:17-20 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸"For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹"Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰"For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Yeshua cannot and did not come to change the Law/Torah! Whatever was sin or not sin according to the Torah prior to the Messiah is the same even today! YHWH does not say that something was ok for 4000 years but now suddenly I have changed my mind and I realize that now this is wrong and a sin. YHWH's moral character does not change and his standard for what sin is does not change as well.

Malachi 3:6, "For I am YHWH, I change not"

James 1:17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

If Yeshua changed YAH's Torah with a new one he would be "adding to" and "taking away" from it, which would be a sin in itself (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32, Proverbs 30:6, Jeremiah 26:2, Revelation 22:18-19), which we know he did not because Yeshua was without sin (John 8:46; 15:10, 2 Corinthians 5:21). In other words, whatever adultery was defined as in the Torah, Writings and Prophets is what Yeshua would have held to! As we saw adultery is defined as a married woman breaking wedlock! YHWH states over and over again in the Tanakh that adultery is a sin punishable by death and yet He regulates and governs polygyny showing the two are not one and the same thing.

Yeshua uses polygyny to teach a biblical lesson.

Matthew 25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²"Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. ³"For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. ⁵"Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. ⁶"But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ⁷"Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸"The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹"But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' ¹⁰"And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. ¹¹"Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.' ¹²"But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' ¹³"Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

Now in light of all we just read, let's look at those verses again. Let's re-examine Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:8-9, Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18. The argument goes, "Jesus himself said that polygyny is a sin."

These verses we read say nothing about polygyny. There talking about divorce. Yeshua is rebuking the practice of men putting away their wives for no reasons so they could marry a new woman without the responsibility of taking care of the old wife. Divorce for this reason is not allowed or condoned by Torah or any of the Tanakh (old testament). Read in context, Yeshua was responding to a question posed in Matthew 19:3.

Matthew 19:3 Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?"

The subject is about divorce not polygyny! Yeshua was not saying, "Whoever marries a second wife commits adultery..." He said, "Whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery." The issue was divorce and remarriage, not polygyny. Yeshua was not and could not overturn the Law/Torah which allowed and governed polygyny.

What about what Yeshua said about looking at a woman?

Matthew 5:27-29 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; ²⁸but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Right here anti-polygynist will say, "see here Jesus says to even look at a woman is adultery." First, let's look at the word lust in this verse. Most define the word lust as "any sexual thought for the opposite sex." Is this true? Let's see.

Lexicon Results
Strong's G1937 - *epithymeō*

ἐπιθυμέω

Transliteration
epithymeō

Part of Speech
verb

TDNT Reference
[3:168,339](#)

Outline of Biblical Usage

- 1) to turn upon a thing
- 2) to have a desire for, long for, to desire
- 3) to lust after, covet
 - a) of those who seek things forbidden

Vines
[View Entry](#)

Pronunciation
e-pē-thū-me'-ō

[\(Key\)](#)

Root Word (Etymology)

From [ἐπί \(G1909\)](#) and [θυμός \(G2372\)](#)

So the Greek word translated lust here can mean to desire, long for and covet. It has nothing to do with sexual desire. One can desire or long for anything. Desire/lust/longing/coveting are not always negative!

1 Timothy 3:1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires¹⁹³⁷ to do.

Hebrews 6:11 And we desire¹⁹³⁷ that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end,

Even having a desire for a woman is not a sin if she is not someone's wife (Exodus 20:17) according to Torah.

Deuteronomy 21:10-12 "When you go out to battle against your enemies, and YHWH your Elohim delivers them into your hands and you take them away captive, and see among the captives a beautiful woman, and have a desire for her and would take her as a wife for yourself, ¹²then you shall bring her home to your house, and she shall shave her head and trim her nails. ¹³"She shall also remove the clothes of her captivity and shall remain in your house, and mourn her father and mother a full month; and after that you may go in to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife.

These are all positive desires! Now let me ask you a question, is it a sin to lust/long for/desire after all women? Would that include a man's own wife? No, of course not! So what kind of woman (as well as other things) is it negative to have desire for? The 10th commandment alludes to the answer.

Exodus 20:17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Whoever this "woman" is that Yeshua (Jesus) is referring to, she is only the type of woman who may cause adultery. Will your wife cause you to commit adultery if you have sex with her or look at her? Obviously not. In order to understand which women may cause which men to commit adultery in their heart, we must first establish which women may cause a man to commit adultery in the flesh. If a woman cannot cause you to commit adultery in the flesh (such as your own wife), then that woman certainly cannot cause you to commit adultery in your heart! Adultery as we saw earlier involves a married woman breaking her marriage covenant. The world translated adultery here is:

Lexicon Results
Strong's G3431 - *moicheuō*

μοιχεύω

Transliteration <i>moicheuō</i>	Pronunciation moi-khyü'-ō (Key)
Part of Speech verb	Root Word (Etymology) From μοιχός (G3432)
TDNT Reference 4:729,605	Vines View Entry
Outline of Biblical Usage	
1) to commit adultery	
a) to be an adulterer	
b) <u>to commit adultery with, have unlawful intercourse with another's wife</u>	
c) <u>of the wife</u> : to suffer adultery, be debauched	
d) A Hebrew idiom, the word is used of those who at a woman's solicitation are drawn away to idolatry, i.e. to the eating of things sacrificed to idols	

Let's look at this verse again with this in mind.

Matthew 5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery ([unlawful intercourse with another's wife](#))'; ²⁸but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust ([desire](#)) for her has already committed adultery ([unlawful intercourse with another's wife](#)) with her in his heart.

So this verse is not talking about all women but those who are married to another man other than the one looking at them. So if that's the case then the word translated woman would logically have to mean wife or at least have the ability to mean wife within the passage. So what is the original word here translated woman?

Lexicon Results Strong's G1135 - <i>gynē</i>	
γυνή	
Transliteration <i>gynē</i>	Pronunciation gü-nā' (Key)
Part of Speech feminine noun	Root Word (Etymology) Probably from the base of γίνομαι (G1096)
TDNT Reference 1:776,134	Vines View Entry
Outline of Biblical Usage	
1) a woman of any age, whether a virgin, <u>or married</u> , or a widow	
2) <u>a wife</u>	
a) <u>of a betrothed woman</u>	
Authorized Version (KJV) Translation Count — Total: 221 AV — women 129, <u>wife 92</u>	

So almost 50% of the time, the Greek word gyne is denoted or translated as "wife" instead of "woman".

Matthew 5:31 "It was said, 'whoever sends his wife^{G1135} away, let him give her a certificate of divorce';

Here we see translators use wife instead of woman but in verse 28 decides to use woman. It's the same word! So logically, Matthew 5:27-28 would only make sense if it meant "wife", seeing that the term adultery means: "unlawful intercourse with another's wife."

Matthew 5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY ([unlawful intercourse with another's wife](#))'; ²⁸but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman ([literally wife or engaged woman](#)) with lust ([desire](#)) for her has already

committed adultery (**unlawful intercourse with another's wife**) with her in his heart.

According to scripture, if any man has sex with an unmarried woman, it was not considered adultery as we saw earlier! Adultery can only take place when the woman is married. An unmarried woman cannot cause a man (married or single) to commit adultery in the flesh, so she cannot possibly cause him to commit adultery in his heart. Or, in other words, if it is not adultery to have sex with an unmarried woman, it's not adultery to desire an unmarried woman. Even YHWH himself said that if one sees a beautiful woman he desires he can have her.

Deuteronomy 21:10-12 "When you go out to battle against your enemies, and YHWH your Elohim delivers them into your hands and you take them away captive, ¹¹and see among the captives a beautiful woman, and have a desire for her and would take her as a wife for yourself, ¹²then you shall bring her home to your house, and she shall shave her head and trim her nails. ¹³"She shall also remove the clothes of her captivity and shall remain in your house, and mourn her father and mother a full month; and after that you may go in to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife.

One thing the above passage teaches us about Matthew 5:27-28 is that to lust and desire after an unmarried woman is not a sin, if you desire her to be your wife, because she is not already taken. But lusting after a married woman is not okay, because she already belongs to another man. What about fornication? See article "What Is Biblical Fornication?"

Concluding this subject we see that adultery is sex between any man and a married, separated or engaged woman. A married man only commits adultery with a married, separated or engaged woman but not with a woman who's single. He also commits adultery if he puts away his first wife unlawfully and marries another (Exod 21:10, Deut 24:1-4, Hos 4:14, Mal 2:14-16, Mat 19:9). As long as a married man has not put away his first wife unlawfully, he could take to himself more wives.

A married man having sex with a married/engaged woman (other than his own) is adultery and required death (Lev 20:10-11, Deuteronomy 22:22-27). A married man having sex with an unmarried woman is not adultery and she was to become his wife (Exod 22:16-17, Deut 25:5-6, 22:28-29). A unmarried man having sex with a married/engaged woman, is adultery and required death (Lev 20:10-11, Deuteronomy 22:22-27). A unmarried man having sex with an unmarried woman, is not adultery and they are supposed to marry each other (Exod 22:16-17, Deut 25:5-6, 22:28-29).

What about the "Law of the Land?" The laws of the land do not supercede the Most High's Torah/Law. If the government said you no longer can keep the Sabbath are you going to stop keeping the Sabbath (those of you who truly keep the Most High's Torah)? Beside biblical polygyny is not against the law. Here's an article on the "law of the land" argument.

<http://www.biblicalpolygamy.com/exegesis/law-of-the-land/>

There are other objections to polygyny that I didn't address in this article for the sake of time. There are other articles on this subject from both sides of the argument all over the internet. Those who truly want to know the truth need only do a search but most importantly search the Scriptures and seek the Most High's wisdom as should be done on all matters. And remember we operate off the TRUTH of the Word and not our emotions!

As I stated at the beginning of this article, I'm not promoting the practice or non-practice of polygyny. This is not an article to promote the mistreatment of my sisters/akhayot in any fashion nor was this presented to change the minds of men to go out and start accumulating more wives to dog them out! This article is simply to present the TRUTH of what Scripture says on this subject and to divert some of the attacks on those who choose to live this lifestyle. It's not a law to have plural wives or practice this form of marriage (just like it's no

law to practice monogamy) BUT IT IS LAWFUL. If one chooses to engage in polygyny or monogamy it should be done according to the Torah/Law of YHWH!

Here's a site that deals with the common misconceptions of polygyny that I think is real good.

http://www.biblicalfamilies.org/common_misconceptions?sid=229a3d4469deb18e5c44b4e108d624ae

Also you can visit these links for some more excellent info on biblical polygyny.

<http://www.ecclesia.org/truth/polygamy.html>

<http://www.blainerobison.com/concerns/polygamy.htm>

<http://www.godrules.net/articles/polygamy.htm>

<http://www.biblicalfamilies.org/>

<http://amarthenazarene.com/uploads/lessons/BigBadPolygamy.pdf>

(www.wayofthenazarene.org)

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