

Polygamous Marriages

Genesis 4:19 [NIV] *“Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah.”*

This is the first account of a polygamous marriage, in the Christian Bible.

Did God approve of men having more than one wife?

Repeatedly, the Christian Bible records what humans did.

But humans did **not** necessarily do what the Creator God intended they should.

Genesis 2:23-24 [NIV] *“The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman’, for she was taken out of man.’ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”*

This is the original decree of monogamy the Creator God gave at the time He created the first human beings.

One woman for one man.

However, the cultural practices of ancient societies did **not** reflect the original decree.

Matthew 19:3-6 [NIV] *“Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?’ ‘Haven’t you read,’ he replied, ‘that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’, and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.’”*

This statement of Jesus Christ reflects the New Covenant teaching that the sanctity of marriage involves a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman.

1 Corinthians 7:1-3 [NIV] *“Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to marry. But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfil his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.”*

Paul followed the teaching of Jesus Christ by affirming that each husband should have his own wife, and each wife her own husband.

1 Timothy 3:2 [NIV] *“Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,”*

Paul also confirmed this teaching by insisting that any Church leader should be the husband of but one wife.

Any other arrangement would bring reproach on the Church.

The New Testament upholds monogamy.

Therefore, the cultural practice of polygamy as recorded in the Old Testament of the Christian Bible **cannot** be viewed as a Christian model.

Many bitter conflicts and heartaches are also recorded in the Old Testament scriptures that were the result of polygamous marriages.

We only have to read the life histories of Abraham, Jacob, David and Solomon to provide us with specific examples of the bitter fruit of polygamy.

The exclusive nature of marriage both physical and spiritual [**Revelation 19:6-8**] teaches Christians to cherish monogamy **not** polygamy.

The Greek word translated “*bride*” is “*numphē*” which is singular, indicating that the church that marries Jesus Christ is considered as one body made up of many members. [**Ephesians 5:25; Ephesians 5:30-32**]

In addition polygamy is against the civil law in most Western nations and Christians have a duty to abide by civil laws that do not require them to disobey God. [**Romans 13:1-7**]