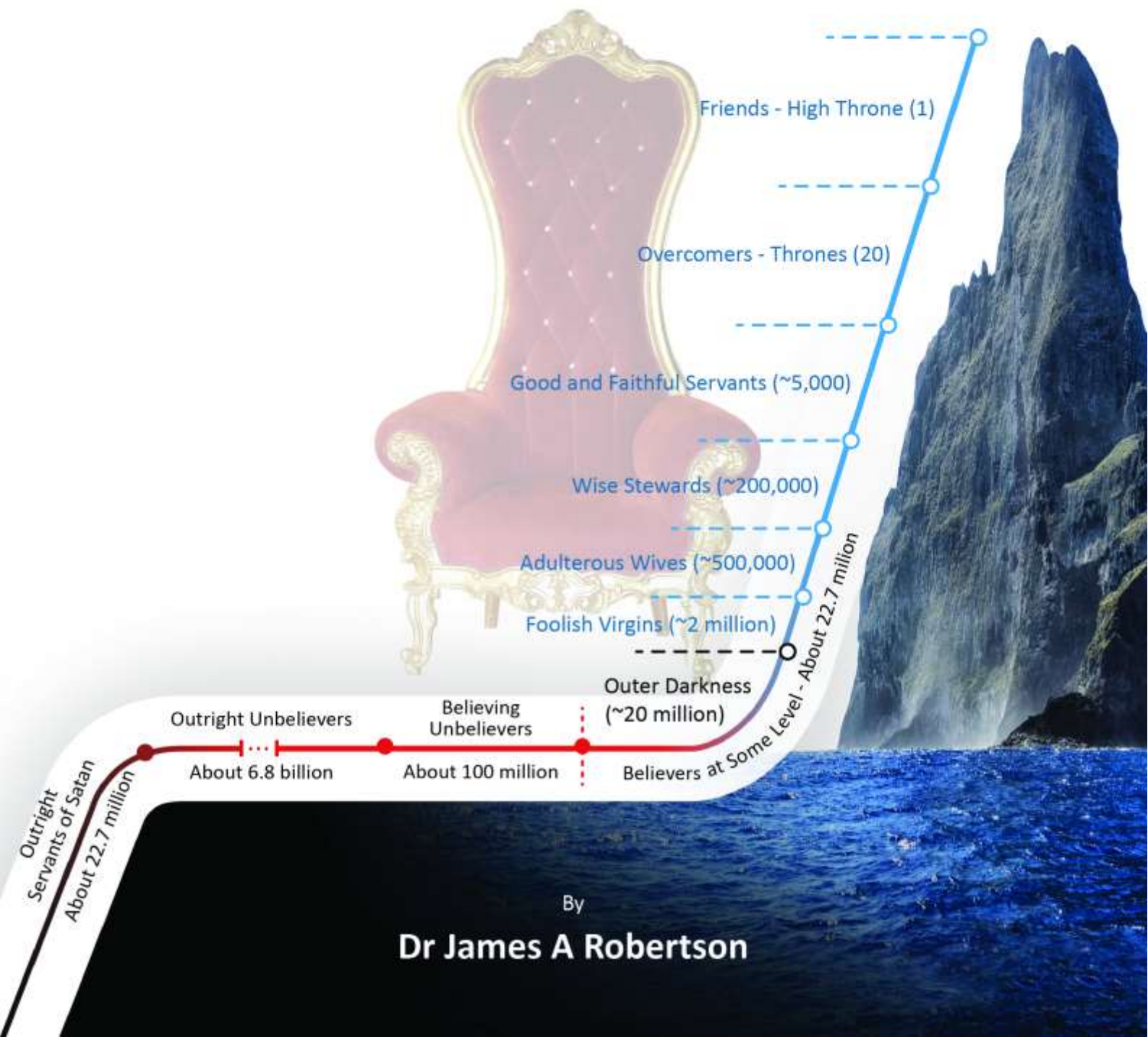


The Almighty Creator Desires a DEEP Personal Relationship with YOU!

Volume 5

Various Early eBooks written between 1998 and 2007



**The Almighty Creator Desires
a DEEP PERSONAL relationship with YOU!**

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Various Early eBooks written between 1998 and 2007

**End Time Issue Ministries
Dr James A Robertson**

This is the fifth volume in a set of eleven volumes (13 books). The printed version of the first volume, of "Most Important" writings, includes a CD with a collection of Recommended Worship Songs and a collection of material, including the website, on a memory device.

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Why Seek a DEEP Personal Relationship with the Almighty Creator?

As you open this volume the immediate question that may cross your mind is “why should I seek a DEEP Personal Relationship with the Creator, IF there IS a Creator.”

There is much in this collection of books to answer that question but let me give you the short form here:

1. The Almighty Creator created Human Beings so that EVERY ONE OF US might have a DEEP Personal Relationship with Him.
2. He also created us with the intention that He might actively participate in our lives help us with our daily tasks, help us to invent new things and generally participate constructively in every facet of our lives.
3. We are surrounded by evidence that the Creator exists. The complexity of the Universe, the Earth, the Plants, the Animals and Human Beings ALL point to the existence of the Creator.
4. The fact that all moderately advanced life forms reproduce sexually, which requires that the male and female fit together and function perfectly for the species to reproduce evidences the existence of a Higher Creative Power.
5. We are intended to live forever. When your body dies you will either go to Heaven, where, depending on the works you have done on Earth, you will receive a rank ranging from a place in the Outer Darkness with weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth through to an extremely high throne with great power, authority and splendour, it is your choice.
6. If you fail to believe, which is the ultimate sin, when your body dies you will become a disembodied Ancestor Spirit or Demon with a status in the Satanic realm associated with the evil you have perpetrated in this life. In general this will **not** be a particularly nice existence. At the end of this age, IF the Almighty loses His Contest with Satan you will remain on Earth with no motive power, not a pleasant state of affairs. If Satan loses, you will be cast

into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone where, in a moment of terror and torment, you will be utterly destroyed.

It is up to you, I have great certainty that the RIGHT way to live one's life is to serve the Almighty faithfully and qualify to sit on a High Throne for Eternity. This series of books contains much information geared to assisting you to do this.

I encourage you right now to take a quality decision to serve the Almighty faithfully to the end!

Why Read These Books?

This volume is part of a collection of thirteen books comprising roughly 7,000 pages and well over 1,000 articles that address a huge diversity of issues relating to seeking to draw close to the Almighty. These books include:

1. Commentary on the current state of the Earth and mankind.
2. Commentary on the direction in which mankind is going and what must still happen.
3. Commentary on how things got to be the way they are today.
4. Corrections to widely held errors and statement of important truths.
5. Principles with regard to drawing close to the Almighty.
6. Diverse other topics associated with the subject of developing a DEEP Personal Relationship with the Almighty Creator.

These volumes present in considerable detail my learnings from March 1993 to February 2019 including the outcome of years of prayer, fasting, separation and seeking. I believe that the Almighty Creator, Yah the Eternally Self-Existing has said that this collection of writings is important and valuable and, accordingly, on that basis, I commend them to you for your consideration and reading.

Much of what is presented in the books is also present on the website at www.ETI-Ministries.org

Companion Volumes

This volume is the fifth in a set which comprises eleven volumes and thirteen books comprising all writings of significance since the start of this ministry.

Volume 0:

Tables of Contents of all the Volumes in the set together with a set of teachings from the Radio Programme that commenced in October 2018 as well as other recent teachings that were written after the first volumes were finalized.

Volume 1:

Volume 1 contains what I consider to be the most important writings I have originated and includes a CD of Recommended Worship Songs plus a Memory Card containing all articles I have written plus books, audio teachings, videos and the website.

Volume 2:

All writings between the Day of Atonement 2014 and July 2018. These writings consolidate what I had learned and reported up to 2014 and represents a more mature view of those learnings. There is also a large collection of direct quotes given to me by the Almighty in 2014, I strongly recommend that you read this after reading Volume 1.

Volume 3:

All the Website Header Articles written in 2014 plus recent articles not included in Volumes 1 and 2. The Website Headers cover a very large diversity of topics – about 700 short to medium length articles. This volume is well worth reading in terms of getting answers to many questions.

Volume 4:

All articles published between the Day of Atonement 2009 and the Day of Atonement 2014. These articles cover a period where my understanding of diverse topics was maturing, particularly adjusting to the Bible NOT being “The Word of God” and Yahooshua {Jesus} NOT being the Almighty in the flesh. Many other topics are addressed.

Volume 5:

A collection of eBooks never formally published on a range of topics, written between 1998 and 2000 with one written

between 2004 and 2007. Most of these contain words and doctrine that I have since come to understand to be incorrect, however in all cases there is much in the core message that is relevant and sound.

Volume 6 to 9:

Many of the articles published from around Passover 2000 to the Day of Atonement 2009. These articles trace my journey from being a deeply committed Charismatic Christian with numerous spiritual experiences and believing that the Bible was “The Word of God” and that Jesus (Yahooshua) was the Almighty in the flesh to recognizing that both of these beliefs were false.

I also came to deeply understand that Islam and Judaism are belief sets that are EQUALLY valid to the Almighty and that Christianity is NOT the defining belief set. I now adhere to a set of beliefs that are effectively an interpolation between Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

These articles also trace the Prophetic shifts in the spiritual dispensation during this period including Satan being sentenced to 1,000 years in the Pit in 2003 and the shifts that have followed.

Volume 6

Writings in 2005 through to the Day of Atonement 2009. During this period I concentrated on secular activities at the expense of the Ministry and much of what I posted took the form of articles from other sources. During this period I was in a relationship that was also not supportive of the Ministry. This was also a period of consolidation with regard to my revised understanding of key principles as outlined above.

Volume 7

Writings in 2003 and 2004. A time of some personal turmoil and struggle. Also consolidating what I had learned in the years before this. In May 2003 I convened the Court of Heaven to Judge Satan and sentence him to the Pit for 1,000 years.

Volume 8

Writings in 2002. A period of intense learning and consolidation.

Volume 9

Writings in 2000 and 2001. A period of intense learning. During this period I was learning a lot about the errors of the Christian faith and correcting my learning in those areas. I

was also developing my understanding of the way that spiritual affairs operate. This was all preparation for sending Satan to the Pit in May 2003.

Volume 10:

Transcripts of a series of over 50 audio teachings on Marriage and the Almighty's plan for Marriage to be "Heaven on Earth" recorded in the second part of 2000. Also well as a series of prophetic messages that provide the lead-in to what is happening in the Spirit realm today. The teachings are also available as audio tracks on two CD's accompanying the book.

Dedication

This volume is dedicated to Yah the Eternally Self-Existing, the Almighty Creator of the Heavens and the Earth who is the reason for our existence – commonly but incorrectly referred to as “The LORD” and “God”.

This set has much to say about Yahooshua {Jesus} and is dedicated to him as the most powerful human being in the Universe and Lord of all Human Lords and King of all Human Kings. In this capacity he submits to the Almighty Creator as the ultimate Lord and ultimate King.

It is my prayer that through reading what is contained in this book you will draw closer to Him (Yah) and, if you do not yet know Him, that you will come to know Him.

On the Earthly Plane, this book is dedicated to Iain Peters who led me back to Father in March 1993 and set me on the course that has brought me to the point of publishing this book – Thank you Iain!

It is also dedicated to my parents, Angus and Thelma who laid the foundations in my life that have enabled me to do this work. Also my daughter, Alexandra, who I pray will one day embrace these truths.

Also to Ingrid, Geraldine and Esther who have materially stood by me at different times in my journey. Also to Margot who partnered with me throughout the time these volumes were being compiled.

Request for Judgment

The footer to every email I send out when I publish articles today reads:

May Yah, The Almighty Creator, bless you and keep you and make His face to shine upon you and give you His peace.

May Yah judge me severely and correct me harshly and show me the level of my present deception and how to correct it with regard to everything that I write and publish.

I pray this for you and for me as you read this document. The second prayer is particularly important since it gives Father Yah, the Almighty Creator, blanket permission to correct me any time I am in error. This is your best guarantee that what is contained in this document IS accurate AND you must STILL seek Yah for confirmation and clarification as I am constantly learning and therefore what I write may be incomplete or not entirely accurate in terms of the greater scheme of things.

Caveat

As a general rule Father Yah has impressed on me NOT to go back and edit previous messages. Accordingly you will find that some messages at some level do not agree with others. If I were to start trying to harmonize all my existing writings which run to over 1,000 articles I would stop writing new material. Where you find discrepancies please turn to Father Yah, HE has ALL the answers.

Note that in some of the older writings I was still under the impression that the Bible was the Inspired Word of Yah, Father subsequently corrected this error but I have NOT gone back and changed the documents that use that language in this volume or on the website.

Offense

There is much in this book to offend you, particularly if you are a committed believer, I counsel that where you find things that you do NOT understand or agree with that you put those items to one side and move on. In so counselling you I advise that this book is being compiled after years of intense seeking, fasting and close relationship with Father and I testify that the essence of many of the messages IS inspired and accurate

About the Cover

The image on the cover represents the continuum between deep / ALL evil which is Satan on the bottom left to ALL good and ALL truth which is Yah the Eternally Self-Existing, the Almighty Creator, which is on the extreme right.



The jagged steep mountain symbolizes how difficult it is to draw close to Father Yah in the present age and how easy it is to fall from any level through pride, self-righteousness and other sin and error.

This collection of writings and, indeed, all of my writings are about how to move from some position on this curve to the position on the top right which is occupied by people close to Father Yah with the designation of “Friend” being the highest status that any human being can aspire to in this life.

The components of the curve are as follows (statistics are as at 25 December 2015) for ALL religious groups worldwide:

1. Believers at Some Level – about 22.7 million made up of:
 - a. Friends (1) – high throne – put Father Yah first in their lives and serve Him faithfully.

- b. Overcomers (20) – throne – have overcome sin and the temptations of this world.
 - c. Good and Faithful Servants (~5,000) – significant measure of faithful service.
 - d. Wise Stewards (~200,000) – some measure of faithful service.
 - e. Adulterous Wives (~500,000) – some level of infilling of the Spirit of the Almighty but continue in error and unbelief.
 - f. Foolish Virgins (~2 million) – believe but no infilling of the Spirit of the Almighty.
 - g. Outer Darkness (the majority -- ~20 million) – at some level once believed sufficiently to qualify for Heaven but nothing beyond that.
2. Believing Unbelievers -- about 100 million – think they believe but so full of error they do not actually believe in the Almighty.
 3. Outright Unbelievers -- about 6.8 billion plus, the bulk of the population of the Earth – no awareness of any significance of the existence of the Almighty.
 4. Outright Servants of Satan -- about 22.7 million – at some level consciously serving Satan in roughly analogous groupings to those serving the Creator.

It is my hope that by reading this volume and by visiting my website at www.ETI-Ministries.org or www.End-Time-IssueMinistries.org you will be challenged to seek to move your life to the top right of the curve and become Father's Friend and qualify for a High Throne in Heaven for Eternity.

I hope that in time this volume will be accompanied by six further collection of my writings – these documents are in course of being compiled and most are available electronically if you would like to email me.

Refer to the articles "[The Demographics of the Kingdom of Yah on Earth Today](#)" and "[Demographics of the Kingdom of Yah elaboration](#)" in Volume 1.

Vocabulary

Throughout this volume I have used vocabulary that you may find unfamiliar. These words have been drawn from the roots of the faith which are most accurately reflected in the language today known as Hebrew which is most directly related to the language that was used at the time of Creation.

This language has rich meaning that is not always accurately translated in English and other modern languages. The meanings and transliterations that I use here are a mixture of what is academically recorded and what I have been shown by Father Yah, the Almighty Creator.

The most commonly occurring words that are used are:

“Yah” as in “Yah the Eternally Self-Existing” – the true name of the Almighty Creator. Frequently translated “The LORD”. “The LORD” has blasphemous connotations and should never be used to refer to the Creator.

“Yahooh” – most accurate transliteration of the Hebrew phrase which means “Yah the Eternally Self-Existing” which is more commonly but inaccurately transliterated as “Yahweh”. Frequently translated “The LORD”. Why a “Yahoo.com” email address takes the Name of the Almighty in vain.

“Almighty”, “Mighty One” or “mighty one” depending on context -- commonly but inaccurately translated “God” which has blasphemous connotations.

“El” – “Beloved Mighty One” – term of endearment for the Almighty Creator used by those close to Him. Frequently inaccurately translated “God”.

“Yahooshua” – meaning “Yah is Salvation” – the correct name of the man commonly referred to as “Jesus” and a common Hebrew name 2,000 years ago.

“Anointed by the Spirit of Yah”, **“Anointing of the Spirit of Yah”**, or **“Anointed One”** depending on context – commonly but inaccurately translated as “Christ” and incorrectly regarded as another name for Yahooshua {Jesus}. Source of much confusion regarding the identity of Yahooshua – Christ refers to Yah NOT Yahooshua.

“Qodesh” – commonly but inaccurately translated as “Holy” which has blasphemous connotations – means “set-apart”, “separated”, “dedicated to the Almighty”.

“Emissary” – a senior servant of the Almighty who is sent by the Almighty – commonly but inaccurately translated as “Apostle”. A senior rank on Earth.

“Spokesman” or “Spokeswoman” – commonly but inaccurately translated as “Prophet” or “Prophetess” – one who hears the Almighty and speaks on His behalf.

Names including Yah – see the article in section 6: “The TRUE Names of the Almighty in the Bible” for detailed discussion of all of these names. It is not possible to fully understand the history of anointed servants without knowing the extent to which the name of Yah is pervasive in that history.

“Stake” – Yahooshua died on a length of tree trunk, NOT a “cross” this is borne out by the Greek text. The cross is a Satanic symbol.

“Assembly” – commonly but incorrectly translated as “Church”.

“Pesach” – commonly translated as “Passover”.

“Shavuot” – commonly translated as Pentecost.

There are other words that are used in places in this volume but the above items are the most common words.

Throughout my writings incorrect words are reported in curly brackets in most cases e.g. “{Jesus}”.

Sponsorship

While some donations have been received the vast majority of the time, effort and finances used in the creation of these articles and in the preparation and publication of these articles has come from own endeavours and through the finances of the family units of which I was a member from time to time.

The principal source of funding of these physical volumes has been through my business, James A Robertson and Associates Limited.



This business provides consultancy and management services which provide the revenue that provides me with food, shelter and the finances used in the collation, preparation and publication of these volumes.

The logo is based on the Strategy – Tactics Matrix of Professor Malcolm McDonald. Strategy, which McDonald defines as “doing the RIGHT THINGS” is on the horizontal axis of the matrix and Tactics, which he defines as “doing THINGS RIGHT” is on the vertical axis. It follows that an organization or person who does the RIGHT things WELL will prosper and thrive.

James Robertson and Associates assists clients to do this with regard to business strategy, business information systems and business processes generally.

I have applied this same principle in my walk with the Almighty, constantly seeking to understand what He considers to be the RIGHT things and to do them WELL.

This set of books therefore are a resource to help you live your life such that on the Day of your Judgment you will find that you have done the RIGHT things WELL in the sight of the Almighty.

For more information see:

<http://www.James-A-Robertson-and-Associates.com/>

and

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/DrJamesARobertson>

In this business the Almighty has taught me a huge amount about business, strategy, ERP, human nature, etc. I would be happy to discuss how we can be of assistance to your organization.

I would like to acknowledge Russel Diniz and Remote Software Solutions who sponsored the uploading of articles from 2014 to 2018 onto the website and Nikita Narvekar who did the work. May the Almighty bless them abundantly.

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Also **Nikita Narvekar** who collated, sorted, classified and cleansed the articles for Volumes 4 through 9. I strongly recommend her work. May the Almighty bless her abundantly. She can be contacted at the following email ID:

sunshell.works@gmail.com

Also **Gratiela Dumitrescu** who created the covers for the book. May the Almighty bless her abundantly. I strongly recommend her and she can be found on Upwork at:

<https://www.upwork.com/freelancers/~0157ad00e64379df31>

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<https://www.upwork.com/freelancers/~017be35721b665562d>

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Foreword

On Friday 12th March 1993, having been awake all night running strategic processes to try and figure out why my life was such a mess and figuring out the most reliable way to kill myself the Almighty spoke to me audibly from within the room and said “Phone Iain Peters, he has something you need”.

I had been in an adulterous relationship with another man’s wife for two years. During that time we made love passionately and considerably hundreds of times but we never spoke of love – I believed I loved my wife and therefore could not love another woman. When the affair was exposed and I was forced to part company with my mistress who was also my personal assistant, I was devastated to learn that I was massively in love with her such that I could not visualize living without her and so I was seriously considering suicide.

I had been a believer, albeit a nominal believer, since I was confirmed in the Anglican Church at the age of around 13 years old and had been a server or Altar Boy from the age of nineteen for about six years. Eventually I became alienated from the church by the hypocrisy and teachings that did not make sense and so I walked away and progressively backslid to a point where I entered into adultery.

After the Almighty spoke to me I phoned Iain and he invited me to have dinner with him. After dinner he shared with me his living relationship with the Almighty in which prayers were answered and he experienced healing and divine provision. He lead me in prayer to rededicate myself to serving the Almighty.

Iain took me to his church and pointed me in the direction that I have followed ever since.

At that time I understood that my intellect had set me on a course that was headed for destruction and that if I had succeeded in killing myself at that time I would have found myself in Hell. I repented deeply and set myself to seeking to know the Almighty. I reasoned that He was the creator of all things and was therefore the Master Engineer and that, accordingly He would not expect me to compromise my Engineering rigour and disciplines in order to understand Him. Accordingly I set about learning about Him in a rigorous and disciplined fashion asking masses of questions.

Progressively over the years I came to understand that the Church and mankind generally were full of error and, increasingly I came to rely on hearing directly from our Father in Heaven.

The road was a difficult one with numerous pitfalls and traps and lots of painful lessons but, somehow, I have managed to stay more or less on track through all of this.

In 2000 I fasted seriously for the first time and started to receive dramatic revelation. This has continued with another program of fasts in 2010 and again in 2013 and 2014 leading to a point where I was extremely close to Father just before the Day of Atonement in 2014 which is when the two core articles in this volume were written – “*The Almighty Creator Desires a DEEP Personal Relationship with YOU!*” and “*Seven Components in Drawing Close to the Almighty Creator*”.

From 2000 onwards I published regularly on various email lists and in 2013-14 my wife at the time, Ester, helped me to build the present website, <http://www.ETI-Ministries.org>

During this journey I increasingly came to understand that the Creator, His True Name is “Yah the Eternally Self-Existing”, had created us to be His Friends and to work with us in discovering and learning about His Creation but that as a consequence of the fall of man virtually no human beings knew this let alone sought it with commitment. This understanding culminated in my decision to write the two articles above and that, in turn, has led to the creation of this volume in the hope that I will challenge a few people to seek to become TRUE FRIENDS of the Almighty.

I commend this volume to you as containing articles most of which were written under a significant anointing and with a significant level of inspiration and I pray that the study of this material will stimulate YOU to seek to become a FRIEND of Yah. I pray that I will soon be able to publish additional volumes and encourage you to contact me to obtain copies.

May Father bless you and keep you and make His face to shine upon you.

May Yah judge me severely and correct me harshly and show me the level of my present deception and how to correct it with regard to everything that I write and publish.

Warm regards and blessings,
James



James Robertson
End Time Issue Ministries
Emissary and Spokesman of Yah
London
25 September 2018

Website : <http://www.ETI-Ministries.org> and <http://end-time-issueministries.org/>

YouTube on the Global Flood: <http://www.YouTube.com/user/ProofOfGlobalFlood>

SlideShare Flood Presentations: http://www.slideshare.net/End_Time_Issue_Ministries

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100006994485801>

Google+: <https://plus.google.com/110001879332326921534>

Preface : An Engineering Approach to Relationship with the Almighty

Yah the Eternally Self-Existing, the Almighty Creator says:

"I am the most rational and understandable being in existence and yet the religious cranks and bible punchers have caused people to view me as irrational, unreasonable and nonsensical and therefore NOT worthy of rational consideration!"

And

"People insist on force-fitting me into their boxes according to their limited understanding and incomplete knowledge, instead of seeking to understand me and conform to me"

This volume is the culmination of applying Engineering Principles to the matters of the Almighty Creator since 1993



I have been designing and making things that work since about the age of five, I have a Bachelors Honours degree in Engineering and a PhD in Engineering and have been a registered Professional Engineer for many years.

I hold that Engineering is very robust and demanding -- things, whether machines, buildings, bridges, computer software, etc ONLY work if they are exactly designed, exactly built and exactly operated -- Engineering as an occupation and a way of doing things focusses on designing and building things that work reliably and sustainably for the design life of that item.

Between the age of around 24 and the age of 40 I became increasingly disillusioned with religion because it did NOT satisfy my requirements for rigour, precision, ability to be understood, etc. By rejecting the sloppy approach of established religion I made the mistake of also almost entirely rejecting the Creator as NOT existing, a mistake that many logical, thinking people make.

In March 1993, on the point of killing myself, the Almighty spoke to me audibly as described elsewhere in this Volume and I turned back to Him who had spoken to me.

In doing this I took a decision that since He had created everything with such obvious precision it was clear that He would NOT require me to compromise my Engineering ways of thinking and analysing and I therefore set about learning about Him on the basis that:

1. he is an Engineer amongst all His other talents and abilities;
2. therefore everything He does is logical and able to be understood;
3. He is willing and able to answer EVERY sincere, probing, inquiring question seeking after understanding.

He has operated with me on this basis now for over 24 years at time of writing (September 2017 -- age sixty three) and I commend this approach to anyone who is seeking truth and particularly to those sceptics who are highly educated and have been turned off belief in the Almighty as a consequence of the irrational and illogical teachings of institutional religion.

I hold that Engineering is one of the most demanding occupations on the planet today, make a mistake and buildings collapse, systems fail. The world of structures, machines, electronics, software is extremely unforgiving and therefore the level of rigor that Engineers perform adopt is great. I decided that the Almighty would NOT expect me to compromise on my Engineering rigor even a little bit and therefore EVERYTHING was capable of rigorous analysis and understanding.

In over 24 years I have NEVER found reason to go back on or question this decision.

I also chose to rely on the Almighty Himself to guide me.

Yes I would learn from people BUT, when I did NOT understand what they said or what they said did not work, I would ALWAYS turn to Him for answers. I have slipped on this a few times and relied on men BUT nearly ALL the time I have relied on Him to teach me. In the process I have come to understand that just about everything that the church teaches is massively in error and at odds with the truths of the Almighty, just as was the case in the days of Yahooshua {Jesus}.

Since 2000 almost all my learning has been directly from Him with other humans providing occasional snippets of information.

What is presented on my website and in this Volume is founded on these two principles:

1. Engineering rigour;
2. Answers directly from the Almighty.

This is underpinned by an intense personal experiential knowledge of the existence of the Almighty Creator grounded in His deep desire to have a DEEP personal relationship with each one of us AND to talk to us and counsel us and guide us in EVERYTHING.

He is JUST as interested in your areas of expertise and interest as you are. He created each one of us to walk with Him and talk with Him.

When considering what you find in this Volume and those that I hope will follow it, please keep in mind that you should NEVER follow me or ANY other human, follow ONLY Yah. It is up to YOU what you take from this Volume, you must exercise your intellect – by all means learn from my example and my teachings BUT always follow Yah alone!

Be aware that I am human and fallible and come from the same background of gross error as everyone else on this planet and, accordingly, my understanding today may still be skewed to some extent. That said, in many cases my understanding today is very different to what it was ten years ago or even more recently. Accordingly my recent articles may differ materially from earlier articles on the same subject. The more recent articles are generally more accurate.

At the end of the day YOU must discern what is truth and what is error in this Volume -- you are accountable for what you believe on the Day of Judgment and for what you do with what you read.

Should you find issues you disagree with you are welcome to contact me.

That said I testify that I have spent thousands of hours seeking to draw close to Father and that I have prayed regularly to be shown the level of my present deception and how to correct it and asked for judgement for sin so I DO have a high level of confidence that much of what is in this Volume IS largely given by Him and can be trusted.

I pray that as you read this Volume you will find reasons to draw closer to Him, that you will find answers to difficult questions and that your intellect will be challenged in the satisfying way that mine has been.

**James Robertson BSc (Eng), PhD
PrEng (Retired), LtCol (Retired)**

Overview of this Volume – Volume 5 in the set

This volume contains many of the eBooks that I wrote between some time in 1998 and 2007.

These eBooks were each written to address a specific subject area in depth. In many cases, since writing these books my understanding with regard to names and key areas of doctrine have changed, in some cases, radically. Nevertheless the core theme of each book remains valid and valuable and will, I believe, be of assistance to people seeking in those areas.

The eBooks contained in this volume are:

1. Preamble to Old Writings

An overview of key points in these writings where my understanding has changed significantly.

2. A Guide to Receiving Personal Prophecy (1998)

A discussion of points to keep in mind when an anointed servant speaks to one on behalf of the Almighty.

3. Poverty in the Church of Jesus Christ (1998)

Why many believers are in lack and what to do about it. My understanding on many points has evolved but the basic principles remain largely the same.

4. Y2K_Fact or Foolishness (1998)

The computer scare relating to so-called “Y2K” proved to be a damp squib, this article, written before Y2K happened examines various aspects of what was being said and evidences that the scare was largely unwarranted. Some spiritual interpretations are imputed.

5. Scriptural Definition of Marriage, Divorce, Adultery, etc (1999)

This book was written after a number of years of intense searching, seeking, praying, researching, etc and evidences in-depth from the Bible what the views of the Almighty are with regard to Marriage, Divorce, Adultery and related man-woman issues. This document is a weighty proof of a number of key points that are contrary to general church teaching and will give you a deep insight into the extent of error in the Christian Church with regard to just one of many areas of error.

6. The Responsibility of Believing Men Towards Single Believing Women (1999)

There are many more believing women than believing men, do those men have any responsibility towards those women? This book evidences that they do, although, after writing this, I came to conclude that what is recommended is effectively impossible to achieve in practice.

7. Is Polygamy Scriptural (2000)

A more concise examination of the fact that the Almighty created man and woman such that more than one woman could covenant with (marry) one man. This takes the form of a rebuttal of what was said on a TV program.

8. What is the origin and purpose of man (2007)

A structure discussion of Creation versus Evolution in which I set out to prove from own knowledge and experience that there really WAS a Creation. I have subsequently reduced this to a few much more concise articles but the line of argument followed here remains valid.

Our Father in Heaven, Yah the Eternally Self-Existing, created mankind to be His Friends and to do things with Him and learn with Him. Today virtually no-one on Earth knows this and a minute number of people are actually seeking to come to the point where they hear Father Yah tell them that they are His Friend. In fact, it is my understanding that, at the time of writing, 25 September 2018, there are only TWO people on Earth who Yah has actively named as being His Friends.

This document is intended to help you on your journey to learn about Father Yah and build a relationship with Him.

Audio Compact Disc and Memory Card with Website

In support of this Volume and the other Volumes in the series Volume 1 also contains an Audio Compact Disc with copies of the recommended worship songs with doctrinally erroneous elements removed as far as possible and accompanied with corrected listings of the words that are used in the songs.

The Worship songs plus corrected wording are also available at:
<https://www.eti-ministries.org/home/recommended-worship>

Volume 1 also contains a Memory Card which contains about 16 MB of data including a full copy of the website that you can browse on your computer without an Internet connection. A complete set of all the articles and books that I have ever written on the matters of the Almighty is also contained on the memory stick.

All volumes of this book in various formats, the content of the CD and the contents of the memory card can be downloaded from the webpage <https://www.eti-ministries.org/home/book-relationship/>

Email me at CD_and_Memory_Stick@ETI-Ministries.org to obtain a copy of these items if the weblinks do not work.

**The Almighty Creator Desires
a DEEP PERSONAL relationship with YOU!**

Volume 5

Various Early eBooks written between 1998 and 2007

Preamble to Old Writings – Written in 2006

This Chapter presents
Some caveats and clarifications relative to the very old articles
that follow in subsequent chapters.

The old documents that follow were mostly written in the late 1990's and reflect my understanding at that time.

Since then my understanding has evolved as set out below. This understanding may further evolve in time and may currently still contain error. You are therefore encouraged to seek the Almighty for guidance in all of what follows:

1. As far as i can determine the most accurate name for the Almighty is “Yah”. “Yah” is the essential name of the Almighty creator of the heavens and earth.
2. The Hebrew word widely translated “THE LORD” or “Yahweh” or “Yahoeah” or “Yahueh” is more accurately translated as “Yah the eternally self existing”.
3. The Hebrew word widely translated “God” or “Elohim” means “mighty one” or “Almighty” depending on context.
4. The name widely translated “Jesus” is more accurately translated “Yahooshua” which means “Yah is salvation”.
5. There are several Greek words widely translated “Christ” which would more accurately be translated as “the anointing of the Spirit of the Almighty / Yah”, “the anointed of the Almighty / Yah”, etcetera.
6. The Greek word widely translated “cross” actually means “stake” and refers to an upright post or tree trunk used as an execution instrument.
7. The word “Bible” actually means “book” and has no particular significance other than this.
8. The book commonly known as “The Bible” is a collection of writings that have been transcribed by human beings and in its current versions contains errors of transcription and errors of translation and is compiled from multiple ancient source documents that do not all agree.
9. The compilation of books known as “The New Testament” were almost certainly all or nearly all originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic and NOT Greek.

10. The compilation of writings in the book known as “The Bible” were written by human beings inspired by the Spirit of the Almighty BUT are not necessarily all 100% inspired and some of them contain contradictions or errors – it is up to each of us to seek the Almighty for guidance in interpreting and applying these writings.
11. The man known as “Jesus Christ”, that is “Yahooshua the anointed of Yah”, was a man filled with the Spirit of the Almighty NOT the Almighty in the flesh and he was resurrected as a legal consequence of living a sinless life NOT as a consequence of any divinity on his part. He accomplished a sinless life because as a spirit being prior to his birth as a human being he had served the Almighty as the first created being for a considerable time and therefore knew intimately the spiritual laws and the Kingdom of Heaven as he taught and applied them during his life on earth. His accomplishment makes it possible to seek to live a life like his in the knowledge of his humanity.
12. I am human and fallible and i have concluded that there is more of me and less of the Almighty in the teachings in this document than i believed at the time -- nevertheless these teachings were the culmination of years of study and prayer and were covered by considerable prayer at the time it was written and accordingly i do believe that there was a high level of inspiration in much of what is recorded. **However you should exercise discernment in reading these documents and make your own decisions about what is valid and what is not.**

Please take account of these factors in considering these teachings.

I pray that you will find them valuable and that you will draw valuable lessons from listening to them.

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Note: Please refer to the **Caveat on page xii** and the section on **Vocabulary on page xv** for cautions regarding doctrine and word usage in the older eBooks that is inaccurate. Apart from these errors these eBooks contain much valuable information.

eBook 1:
A Guide to Receiving Personal Prophecy -
Published in 1998

This eBook presents some thoughts on considerations
When receiving personal direction from people
who claim to speak on behalf of the Almighty

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED AS AN AID
FOR THOSE RECEIVING PERSONAL PROPHECY FROM THE AUTHOR
IT IS, AS NOTED, BASED ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
AND MAKES NO CLAIM TO BE COMPREHENSIVE
THEREFORE, PLEASE SIFT WHAT IS WRITTEN AND,
IF YOU FIND THAT IT IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH YOUR
OWN KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE,
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO LET ME KNOW
I LOOK FORWARD TO LEARNING MORE WITH YOUR HELP

**A GUIDE TO
RECEIVING PERSONAL PROPHECY
IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST:**

(BASED ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE)

**How to receive direction from God
through His prophets**

AN END TIME ISSUES PUBLICATION

“This, however, will be true **only if** you obey the word of God your Lord, carefully keeping this entire mandate that I {Moses} am prescribing to you today. God your Lord **will then bless you** as He promised you, so that you will extend credit to many nations, but you will not need any credit for yourselves. You will thus dominate many nations, but none will dominate you.”

(Deuteron-omy 15:5-6 The Living Torah)

1. INTRODUCTION

This document has come about as a result of personal observation over several years, both as a recipient of personal prophecies and as an observer of the response of others to personal prophecy given by me. In particular, I have been greatly saddened by the extent to which I have seen people who have received personal prophecy regularly go off and do exactly the opposite of what I heard God tell them to do.

By way of example, God informed a woman, recently divorced from a man who was involved in Satanism, that He would cut her off from her past and gave a detailed picture of Him surgically extracting her from all to do with the past. He warned of a few weeks discomfort whereafter He would start to restore what had been stolen. She proceeded to resolutely hold onto the house that belonged to her ex-husband and, when he moved into the house she proceeded to go to bed with him. In another case, a man whose wife had deserted him for another man and who together with her lover was subjecting his son to unmentionable abuse was told by God that He had delayed the serving of the divorce summons by the wife in order that the husband could serve first. He went out and, based on the counsel of well meaning fellow believers, withdrew his summons. In both cases, the victory that God had planned for them was totally frustrated by their wilful disobedience to the word of God delivered through His prophet.

It is important when considering the issue of prophecy in the Church of Jesus Christ at the end of the age (time of writing 1998) to realize that the gift of prophecy has been largely suppressed and neglected throughout most of the centuries since the death of the Apostles who wrote the New Testament. Prophecy, the voice of God through His earthen vessels, the prophets, to His people, is one of the most powerful gifts available to the church today. Accordingly, Satan has done much to discredit modern prophecy. The Apostolic is even less evident.

As a consequence, whereas in the heyday of prophets such as Elijah and others, there were "schools" of prophets where it appears that young prophets underwent an apprenticeship, today, there is hardly any such training. Consequently, most modern prophets, including the author, have learnt how to use the gift of prophecy by way of a process of Holy Spirit led discovery.

2. THE ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE OF TRUE PROPHECY

Rick Joyner, in his book, *The Final Quest*, reports the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as saying the following:

*"What you are thinking is true, but this comparison of man to God is not just in size. You began to experience the power of My words. To be entrusted with My words is to be entrusted with the power by which the universe is held together. I did not do this to make you feel small, but to help you to understand the seriousness and the power of that with which you have been entrusted -- the word of God. In all of your endeavors, **remember that the importance of a single word from God to man is of more value than all of the treasures on earth.** You must understand and teach My brethren to respect the value of My word. As those who are called to carry My words, you must also respect the value of your own words. Those who will carry the truth must be true."*

We thus see clearly the significance that the Lord Jesus places on the words that He speaks to us. From this, the true value of personal prophecy becomes apparent but, at the same time, so does the magnitude of sin of those who claim to prophesy in His name but whose claim is false. This document is intended to assist you to reap the full value from any word that you receive from God and, at the same time, to assist you to evaluate whether the vessel through whom the prophecy is delivered is, in fact, speaking as God's instrument.

3. HOLINESS AND SANCTIFICATION IN THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET

Allied with the limited extent of modern prophecy, there is an associated failure on the part of most Christians to recognize that God is calling them to Holiness and Sanctification. This is the subject of a number of discourses in course of preparation by the author. The first, entitled "*Poverty in the Church of Jesus Christ: a Discourse on Contributory Factors (Based on Personal Experience) (Towards Holiness and Sanctification / Circumcision of the Heart / Growth IN CHRIST)*" is available in draft. As a consequence, God has found himself speaking through vessels which are seldom as "in tune" with His Spirit as He would probably like.

Any prophet whom you permit to speak into your life should be seeking God and seeking to become Holy before God in order to be a vessel for honour. If he is, he should have a reverence for words and concern for the truth. A prophet who makes jokes, particularly those that involve untruths, is unlikely to have a full revelation that "the power of life and death is in the tongue" and that we will be called to account for every idle word we speak.

At the same time, do not overlook the fact that God once spoke through a donkey and on various occasions spoke through men who were anything but sanctified at the time. The condition of the person prophesying is therefore not always an indicator. Conversely, a person who prophesied a week ago with great accuracy will not necessarily prophesy again with the same accuracy if something has gone seriously wrong in his life. There is a great onus on prophets to live a life of integrity and constant seeking of God.

4. THE PENALTY FOR FALSE PROPHETS IS ETERNAL DEATH

As a consequence of the above, there has been a tendency for prophets to "miss it" on a regular basis and to regard "missing it" as acceptable. Another phrase for sin happens to be "miss the mark", that is, missing it is a sin. Therefore, no prophet can afford to be complacent about "missing it". The nett effect of this sloppy attitude is a reluctance on the part of many people to accept any form of prophecy and, certainly, a reluctance to base critical life decisions on prophecy. Since I truly believe that God has primarily given us prophecy in order to assist us to make critical life decisions, you will see that Satan has had a measure of success in his efforts to discredit prophecy.

In this regard, it is vital that every person who claims to be a prophet and particularly any person who gives prophecy of a directional nature, understands that they are taking their life in their hands. It is clear to me that any person who claims to speak for God but speaks from his own intellect or understanding or hears another voice such as a spirit of divination or a familiar spirit, is lying. As I read the Bible, it is quite clear, all liars and ALL false prophets will ultimately face death, in the form of separation from God by way of the lake of fire and brimstone. Simply put, they will burn in hell for eternity! As far as I can see, any prophet who does not admit this consequence of false prophecy AND FEAR IT, should not be given the time of day. A prophet who does not fear God and the possibility of error, will not seek God with the determination necessary to hear God clearly and will not have the integrity to confess and repent should he realize that he was not hearing God clearly at a particular time.

5. NOT ALL ARE PROPHETS

There is a tendency in the modern church to confuse the "Office of Prophet" and the "gift of prophecy". All spirit filled believers may prophesy from time to time but this does not make them prophets. It seems to me that people who encourage people to "stir up the gift" and prophesy over others are making a serious mistake. In my experience and understanding, it is GOD who determines when a person will prophesy. Trying to hear God on demand is likely to lead to witchcraft and

divination, if God is not speaking to you and you really desire to hear something, rest assured, Satan WILL accommodate you.

The office of prophet is a senior office in the army of God, the Bible says, "first Apostles, second prophets" (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 2:20 & 4:11). God speaks to His church primarily through His apostles and prophets. He speaks to every individual who is willing to listen, for their personal edification, instruction and guidance, He speaks to evangelists in order that they may minister effectively as evangelists, to pastors so that they may pastor effectively and to teachers so that they may teach with authority and revelation. In each case, the person involved may hear the voice of God in accordance with his calling and office, this does not make them prophets. All may, on occasion, at God's discretion, prophesy, either because He does not have a mature prophetic vessel available, because He wishes to confirm the word of a prophet, because He wishes to let the person know that they will be called to the office of prophet in due course or for other reasons which it is not our preserve to know.

It seems to me that only a person called to the office of prophet will truly comprehend the awesome responsibility associated with giving directional prophecy to any person.

6. DISCERNING THE VOICE OF GOD

From the preceding sections, it is apparent that any recipient of prophecy in this age is faced with a challenge. On the one hand, there is a distinct possibility that a prophecy could come from an earthen or even contaminated vessel and may not be from God AT ALL. There is also the possibility that the core of the message was from God but that the prophet amplified it from his own understanding, thus corrupting the message.

If the prophecy is of any import to your life, then it is vital that you assure yourself that God has spoken to you and not man or Satan. Following are a few suggestions that may help:

1. It seems to me that you should be in a place spiritually where you desire to hear from God. This does not mean that God will not speak to you at other times but at those other times when you are not where God wants you to be, be prepared to receive words of correction and even rebuke, depending on your level of maturity. Many do not wish to believe that God delivers words of rebuke today, in my experience He does.
2. The Word of God is quite explicit, God knows the thoughts of our minds and the desires of our hearts. Satan cannot read your heart or mind. Satan can only plant thoughts in your mind and watch to see the response, if you are not on your guard, it is possible for Satan to get you to think that the thought was yours and the response was from God. This can be avoided.

If you are seeking guidance from God, make an effort to sanctify yourself. If you are aware of any sin in your life, deal with it and through reading the Bible and praying daily, seek to come into a position where, as far as possible with your present level of maturity, Satan is not contaminating your thoughts. I am not advising you to seek to become perfect before God speaks to you, I am only suggesting that if you start asking questions of God while in sin, the questions may not necessarily be coming from you. Equally, in such circumstances, you may not be willing to receive the answers. Particularly, recognise that YOU not Satan are the biggest single obstacle to receiving from God.

At all times, test your questions AND the answers you receive, against the Word of God.

3. Recognizing that God knows your heart and your mind, you should make a point of ONLY discussing your most vital concerns and questions with HIM silently in your spirit (your heart through your mind). If you never articulate your questions to God to any other person and do not even articulate them to the open air (which is heavily infected with demons and fallen angels), then only God knows that you asked the question and therefore, only God can answer you.

In my own experience, this has proved to be an almost infallible aid to communicating with God and discerning His answers, not only those given through prophets but through His Word and even through secular sources.

Accordingly, if, in your heart, you have cried out to God for an answer to specific questions and have NEVER, EVER, communicated those questions to any other person and never spoken them out, even in a seemingly empty place, you can have a high degree of confidence that a person claiming to be a prophet who gives you the answer to that question has been sent by God.

If the person prophesying over you has never met you before and knows absolutely nothing about you, it is much more difficult for their own understanding to get in the way. Prophets are human and, sometimes, can desire to help people they know by giving a word from God. Sometimes, their own understanding adds to what God is saying. This is not to say that a prophet you know well cannot prophesy over you, simply that a prophet who knows nothing about you has no possibility of adding or subtracting from the word he gives you.

For this reason, a true prophet who is mature and responsible, should restrain you from telling him too much about yourself before he prophesies and should limit his social interaction before a meeting to the absolute minimum. This way, all concerned can have the assurance that at least the element of the flesh has been minimized.

4. If a prophecy is truly directional, God will often but not always, include elements of information that could not be known to the prophet other than by the Spirit of God. This will enable you to have greater confidence in the prophet. Be cautious in reading too much into such statements, Satan also knows what is going on to a great extent (hence my emphasis on not talking about your questions).

Such clues may not be very specific, virtually all the prophets that I know of today are not that well attuned to hear the Spirit of God that they can give exact dates, places, names and the like all that frequently. Be alert for clues such as "you are facing a major decision", "God shows me that you have been facing a brick wall", etc. If you immediately recognize such phrases as describing something that you have been crying out to God about, there are strong grounds to believe that God has spoken. However, if you have heard that a prophet is coming to town and you have told all and sundry that this is your problem, such guidance is not worth much, even if God has spoken, how will you be sure?

Silence and discretion are important elements of receiving guidance from God.

Many times, if God speaks through a mature prophet in a sanctified atmosphere, you will not have a moments doubt that God has spoken. A truly directional prophetic word will contain sufficient pointers for you to have absolutely no doubt that you have heard from God.

7. DARK SPEECH : APPARENT ERRORS

It is important to understand that, nearly all the time, God speaks to all of us, including His prophets in what is referred to by some as "dark speech". Dark speech as I experience it is not an audible voice, it is something that wells up in my spirit and which I communicate in words. As best I can determine, most prophets hear God this way.

Thus while the words that flow out of a prophets mouth may come with power and authority, he is still responsible for framing those words. Consequently, his understanding can get in the way. As an example, I once prophesied over a young man of about twenty one years of age who was at University. However, in appearance, he did not look older than about sixteen and I mistakenly assumed that he was still at school. As a consequence, throughout the prophecy, I referred to "school" not university. I think that I also adjusted some of what I said in order to conform to my incorrect assessment that I was speaking to a school pupil. The nett effect was that I later heard that most of the prophecy had been rejected as being incorrect. I was at fault for not checking at the start but sometimes these errors do occur. Consequently, I appeal to you to give careful consideration to any prophecy that you receive that contains this sort of error. It does not mean that God has not spoken to you, it simply means that the vessel through which He spoke, slipped up and applied inappropriate words to certain contexts.

8. CHOICE OF WORDS

As indicated in the previous section, the prophet speaks using the words that he knows. In other words, a prophet who is an engineer, such as I am, will speak using a vocabulary that is consistent with his knowledge and experience. A prophet who is a farm labourer will deliver the same word in a vocabulary consistent with his occupation. A prophet who only reads the King James Version will tend to prophesy in Elizabethan English. Do not be offended or misled, it is the heart of the message that is important, the choice of phrases and words should not be a stumbling block. At the same time, I believe that God will seek to be as precise as possible within the constraints of the vocabulary of the prophet.

9. LIMITATIONS OF THE PROPHET'S AND YOUR PARADIGM

As an extension of the thoughts in the two preceding sections on dark speech and choice of words, it is also important to understand that a prophet can only hear God within the limits of what He can believe God can say. Likewise, YOU can only hear God and the prophet through your paradigm.

As a simple example. God rested on the seventh day of the week and declared it to be the Sabbath. We all know that Sunday is the first day of the week. If we stop and think about it we will all realize that the Sabbath is really Saturday and NOT Sunday. Accordingly if, in church on a Sunday morning, the Lord tells you through a prophet that He requires you to start observing the Sabbath, he will first have to find a prophet who knows that the true Sabbath is Saturday otherwise the prophet will almost certainly fail to deliver the word correctly because his paradigm will tell him that you are already observing the Sabbath, after all you are in church on Sunday! For the same reason, you will have a problem receiving that word.

This principle applies to many other things that God may say through His prophets. Another example, a man who has not satisfied God's requirements for divorce but is divorced in the eyes of the world is told to make right with his wife otherwise Satan will continue to attack his finances. According to his paradigm, the man is not married, therefore, he rejects the word. Beware of paradigm paralysis, as God draws His church to ALL truth, MANY paradigms and doctrines are about to be challenged. His apostles and prophets are the people who will be at the cutting edge.

10. LIMITATIONS OF PROPHETIC ACCURACY

As you will see from the above, it is a rare prophet who will be 100% accurate with every word that he delivers. Accordingly, you are faced with the challenge of sifting the wheat from the chaff in every prophecy you receive. While the prophet is accountable to God for delivering the word as accurately as he is able, YOU are accountable for discerning the will of God and acting on it.

11. SEEKING CONFIRMATION OF PROPHETIC WORDS

If unsure about the accuracy of a prophetic word, pray about it and ask God to confirm His word.

If you had previously been sloppy with the words of your mouth, now is the time to get serious about harnessing your tongue. The Epistle of James is a good place to start, particularly chapter 3 verses 1 to 12. I suggest you read the entire Epistle several times and pray over it. It is strong medicine but strong medicine is called for if you truly desire God's guidance in your life.

Do not discuss the prophecy with ANYONE, particularly do not discuss your concerns, until you have prayed about it and studied the Word of God insofar as it applies to the situation. For as long as you keep your MOUTH SHUT, Satan cannot gain any information with which to attack you and further confuse you. As long as you pray silently in your heart to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ His Son, you have the assurance that only He can hear you.

As you commune with God on the prophecy that you have received, you will either gain assurance of that word in your spirit or you will begin to increasingly reject it. At the same time, IN YOUR HEART, not out loud, you can ask God to confirm His word to you by way of scripture verses, actions and words spoken through other people, etc. As long as your sincere desire is to do God's will in the situation and NOT your own and as long as the questions that you ask Him are asked in faith without doubting and are sincere, my experience has been that He always answers. In my experience, the only time He does not answer is when He knows that you already know the answer and are trying to "play it safe". At that point, He requires you to stand on your own feet.

I have found that God has met me with all sorts of signs. Words spoken by people at next meeting. Happenings which most people would call coincidences but which, by virtue of my silent prayer of faith, I have been looking out for and know could not have come from any other source and which I have not been striving to see fulfilled, all have been powerful confirmations of God's hand in my life. If you do not know what sign to ask for, pray and ask Him what sign He wants you to request. but DO NOT pray out loud!!!

12. THE GUIDANCE OF PEACE

Many people place reliance on "having peace about it". Several years ago, God anointed me to administer His peace, the peace that passes all understanding. This is a supernatural peace that cannot be compared to anything else. Frequently I perceive that the peace that people refer to is a degree of comfort with what has been said. In my own experience, God frequently denies me that sort of peace (that is own comfort) when He speaks to me. In many cases, He will require us to do things which are extremely uncomfortable, like making amends to someone we have badly harmed. In such cases, most people have anything BUT peace, they feel uncomfortable, threatened and unsure. Carnal peace in a case like this will lead to inaction and disobedience to the will and word of God. In such circumstances, Satan will do everything possible to give you disquiet when faced with that action and will give you a carnal selfish "peace" when you decide that you are in the will of God. Beware of basing difficult decisions on "peace" unless you are absolutely certain that you have prayed the thing through to a point where you have "the peace of God". In a case such as those referred to, the peace of God will

come when you have settled it in your heart that you WILL DO what God has told you to do, no matter how difficult and how painful it will be and that you will not count the cost. Then peace may be a guide but, the rest of the time, I do not understand the word of God to indicate that you can be lead around by "feeling peace".

13. THE GUIDANCE OF OTHERS

If you are still unsure, discuss it with your pastor or some other mature believer. They may be able to immediately confirm that what you were given is something that God had already shown them but which they had realized you needed to hear directly for yourself.

Be aware, however, that other people are just that, people, like you they are imperfect vessels who do not always hear God clearly. They also have a tendency to "lean to their own understanding", in other words, if they think that you should do something contrary to the prophecy that you have received, they will counsel you that was not of God. Remember, throughout the Bible, God has made a point of doing things that the majority of the people did not think was God. He has also made a point of constantly doing new things, there was only one Ark, only one occasion that He led people with a cloud by day and fire by night, only one occasion that He sent His Son to be crucified, etc. He is quite likely to lead you in ways others do not understand and to require you to do things others do not agree with.

You must realize that you are ultimately accountable to God for what you do with your life and what you do with every word that He speaks to you in person. NO ONE ELSE is accountable. You will eventually stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ entirely on your own, you will have to account for your obedience or disobedience to the word that God gave you.

In certain cases, you can go back to the prophet who gave you the original word. In that case, DO NOT TELL HIM ANYTHING, simply request that he pray for you again and seek clarification. The less you tell a prophet about yourself and the more you avoid making friends with him, the longer he will be able to speak into your life effectively. Don't feel bad about it, God requires His prophets to be lonely, that is the way He gets them to spend time with Him. In reality, they are not alone at all, they have a level of fellowship with the Most High God that most people cannot comprehend, do not allow soulish pity to interfere with your relationship with the prophets God sends across your path.

14. WHAT TO DO ONCE YOU HAVE HEARD FROM GOD

Having satisfied yourself that at the very least, the core of the prophecy that you received, is from God, what do you do?

In the first instance, you are faced with a challenge in terms of understanding and applying the word that you have received. Prophecy frequently comes in the form of metaphors and parables. Prophets may see visions of forks in roads, mountains, walls and any other picture that God chooses to use in order to communicate to him and to you quickly, effectively and accurately the message that God has for you. In other cases, God may speak through the prophet as though the prophet were taking dictation, he has no prior knowledge of the words that will issue from his mouth and will in many cases almost immediately forget most of them. In the highest form of prophetic anointing which I have ever experienced, and that only twice, God spoke through me for a total of about an hour where I had absolutely no idea what would happen next.

Having received these words, metaphors and pictures, you are now faced with discerning God's will and His direction in your life and then taking action according to what you understand God to have said.

15. PROPHECY DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU HAVE ARRIVED

At this point, it is important to stress that the fact that you have received a personal prophecy does not mean that you have "arrived" in the kingdom of God or, in fact, that you are any more special in His sight than any other believer. Perhaps the worst thing that you can do after receiving personal prophecy is to become puffed up. Be blessed, be grateful and stand in awe of the God who created the heavens and the earth taking the trouble to send a prophet to speak to you personally. Do not become proud. God resists the proud!

In my own experience, once you become aware that God will speak to you through His prophets, one becomes very conscious of this gift and tends to seek it constantly. A point may come where God declines to speak to you further through His prophets because He now wants you to concentrate on hearing Him. At one point, after I had cried out for further guidance, I received a gentle rebuke to the effect that I knew the answer and should concentrate on hearing God myself.

You may find it interesting and, I hope salutary, to realize that even prophets seek to hear direction from God through other prophets! It seems to me that any prophet who becomes overconfident of his gifting will rapidly open the door for attack by spirits of pride and vanity (the demonic spirit of the false prophet).

16. PROPHETS ARE HUMAN TOO

As noted elsewhere, prophets are human too. This means that they are not gods and should not be treated as such. It also means that they should not be expected to act as gods. Because of the power of prophecy, prophets are subject to a high level of attack by Satan and his demons and fallen angels, second only to the attack on apostles. Consequently, expect to find that there are areas in the life of a prophet which are not necessarily the way you think they should be! Equally, indications are that God permits prophets to fall from time to time in order to keep them humble, do not be duped into rejecting your prophecy because the prophet is a man of clay like you are.

Remember always that Jesus told you NOT to judge others. Accordingly, judge not His prophets and do NOT speak against them. The only issue for you is whether God spoke through the man in question or not. If God chooses to speak through an imperfect vessel, be thankful, there are very few perfect vessels around.

17. INTERPRETING YOUR PROPHECY

The steps necessary to understand your prophecy can include all those set out in section, discerning the voice of God, section, seeking confirmation of prophetic words, section, the guidance of peace and section, the guidance of others. The same cautions apply.

In some cases, the interpretation may be instantly obvious to you, in other cases, it may seem very unclear. Because it is unclear, do not reject it. God sees things very differently to us and, as you seek to understand His word to you, you may come to see yourself and your current situation differently.

Also be wary of jumping to conclusions. I am aware of cases where the immediate understanding of the person receiving the prophecy, sometimes coloured by partial recollection, led them to interpret part of a prophecy incorrectly and thereafter to take incorrect action.

If you have a copy of the prophecy on tape, listen to it several times until you have heard all the finer nuances. God places great emphasis on words, accordingly, do not ignore words lightly. As with reading the Bible where you may have to read a verse and pray over it repeatedly before you have a revelation of its meaning, so with prophecy.

18. PARTIAL PICTURES

It is not uncommon for God to unfold a picture gradually. Sometimes there is insufficient time, other times, if you were given the whole prophecy in one go you would be overwhelmed and could not receive it.

In one instance in my own life, I received something like fifteen personal prophecies in the space of about six months after I specifically prayed and asked God to speak to me through His prophets. In some cases I received short words but I also received several prophecies of over an hour duration at private meetings arranged specifically because God had shown a prophet that He required to speak to me in that detail.

Accordingly, do not be disappointed because a particular prophetic word does not answer all your questions. God may unfold the picture gradually or, having perhaps reassured you about your direction, He may then require you to seek Him personally in prayer and His word. There can be no hard and fast rules. God leads each one of us personally and individually according to our personalities and His plan for us.

19. TIMING OF FULFILMENT PERSONAL PROPHECY

As with prophecy in the Bible, one prophecy can have more than one interpretation. It can apply to an immediate situation, "tomorrow" and also to a situation years ahead. Within one prophecy, some parts can be fulfilled immediately or within days or weeks, other parts may not come to pass for years.

I have heard a number of cases of personal prophecy that has taken years to be fulfilled. Because God spoke to you today, do not make the mistake of expecting it all to happen tomorrow.

In particular, recognize that long term prophecy will assist you to position yourself within God's calling on your life and to better understand apparently inexplicable events in the years between the receipt of the prophecy and its fulfilment.

20. CONDITIONS OF PERSONAL PROPHECY

While most personal prophecies do not contain an explicit IF clause, please realize that almost without exception they are all subject to certain conditions.

There is an unfortunate tendency in the Church today to believe that God will bless His children "at any cost" and irrespective of their behaviour, this does not accord with my experience.

All the blessings in the Bible are associated with conditions, do not judge, obey the commandments of God, love one another as I have loved you, etc, etc. If, at the time that you receive a prophecy, you are in a particular place of obedience to God, the fulfilment of the prophecy is, at the very least, almost certainly dependent on your maintaining that level of obedience and sanctification. If you have been diligently reading the Bible and praying for several hours a day and you then receive a personal prophecy and stop, Satan will come in and do everything possible to prevent the prophecy being fulfilled.

For a detailed analysis on the footholds that Satan can use to attack your life and prevent you walking in the blessings of God, please read the "Discourse on Poverty" by the same author. From this you will gain an insight into how your actions grant Satan footholds whereby he can attack you, your finances, your family, your health, etc.

God requires us to walk in obedience, accordingly, seek to draw closer to Him after receiving a personal prophecy, do NOT rest on your laurels.

21. SATAN IS NOT EXCITED BY YOUR PROPHECY

Recognize throughout that Satan will do everything possible to prevent you receiving what God has promised you. Very few prophecies are delivered in a truly sanctified atmosphere, accordingly it is almost certain that some of Satan's demons or fallen angels will have been in the vicinity when the prophecy was delivered. Be certain that Satan will do everything he can to prevent that prophecy coming to fulfillment. Accordingly, if you are excited by your prophecy because it opens up new vistas of your Christian walk or career, expect Satan to be "as mad as a snake". It is quite likely that "all hell" will break loose immediately after you have received a major prophecy and that the onslaught will be directed at causing you to sin, to stumble, to backslide, or any other action that Satan assesses will prevent you from moving forward with God.

Receipt of a personal prophecy is time to press in to God as never before.

22. PRAY PROPHECY INTO EXISTENCE

All authority on earth was handed over to Satan by Adam and recovered for true believers by Jesus. It is up to us to exercise that authority. God has chosen to restrict His actions on earth to those which are mandated by His believers taking authority and praying to the Father in the name of Jesus.

In many cases, you will be expected by God to pray that which He has revealed to you prophetically into existence. This does not involve strident or petulant demands of the "God YOU promised" variety, but thankful, authoritative prayers, prayed in faith and led by the Holy Spirit as far as you are able to submit to Him.

23. STRIVING

In the same way, whatever you do, do not go out to make the prophecy happen in your own strength. I once received a very specific prophecy about a situation that was very dear to my heart and which involved a situation which had major import for my two small children. Based on that prophecy, I went out and presumptuously took certain action that under normal conditions I would never have taken. My justification at all times was that God had told me that He was going to give me victory in the situation and I was now doing what He had said He would do. The net effect was that I proceeded to do a string of extremely foolish things which caused me to lose the battle, not because God was unwilling or unable but because I got in His way and, instead of resting in Him and trusting Him, I tried to do what He had said He would do, on His behalf.

Increasingly, it seems to me, God gives us personal prophecy, as much to show us how immature and disobedient we are as to physically grant us things. The lesson that we HAVE to learn, if we are to grow is that God can only operate in our lives to the extent that we permit Him to move, are obedient to Him and do not get in His way. There is a period in our Christian walk where I think we get in His way more than anything else. It is a period of many disappointments but also a period of dramatic growth and development of maturity, provided we "press in" and seek to overcome.

24. ACTION REQUIRED

In many cases prophecy received may require action. This could include, resign from your job and go into full time ministry, the decision that you are about to take is correct or is incorrect. You are not coming under attack from Satan, your flesh is rising up, deal with it. You are at a cross roads, the path that seems attractive is the wrong path and will take you out of the will of God, etc. Once you have satisfied yourself that God has, indeed, spoken to you. Do whatever He has told you to do as expeditiously as possible, unless you are certain that it is something for a later date.

If, as in the case of the two examples in the introduction, you do not take the necessary action or take contrary or conflicting action, you will get out of the will of God. In some cases, you may lose very little, in other cases you could lose everything. In the case of striving referred to in section, I lost my business, my children and virtually all that I owned. Personal prophecy is NOT to be taken lightly or carelessly. If God takes the trouble to speak to you through His prophets, accept that Satan will consider that you warrant his attention. Broadly speaking, the more attention God gives you, the more attention Satan will give you. Do NOT be discouraged, rejoice that your name is written in the Lambs Book of Life! Seek the Joy of the Lord which will truly be your strength.

25. INACTION REQUIRED

Conversely, there are some prophecies which will not require any immediate action on your part other than prayerful observation. Such prophecies may unfold according to God's timing over months or years. All that God requires of you is a settled assurance that He is guiding you and a quiet obedience which causes you to evaluate anything that happens in the light of the prophecy and to seek His guidance on resultant decisions which may, at first glance, have little to do with the prophecy.

26. DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROPHECY

There appear to be a number of distinct classes of prophecy that we may receive:

a. ETERNAL PROPHECY

Eternal prophecy is the category into which the Revelation of Jesus Christ and other prophecies in the Bible of similar import, fall. This relates to prophecy regarding things which SHALL come to pass. These things are part of God's time table and plan for His creation. Nothing that man or Satan does will prevent these things from coming to pass.

b. CAREER PROPHECY

Career prophecy is that prophecy which relates to the direction of a man, a church or a nation. It outlines God's intended direction. In some cases, this prophecy may have elements of eternal prophecy, in other words, God is intent on that direction whether men obey Him or not. Be assured that if you ever get a word like this over your life that you should stand in reverent fear of God over it. If God says He WILL bring it to pass, rest assured that anyone who gets in His way will have a very uncomfortable ride.

I recently was required to deliver a word to a man whom God had equipped throughout his life and career to perform a very specific function in this age. God reminded that man, through me, that he was the only man on the earth with that particular knowledge and gifting and informed him that His purpose for that individual would be fulfilled in him whether he liked it or not. The Lord then went on to inform the person concerned that He would "break pride and selfishness" in that man's life and that God would preserve his life but take everything else from him if he did not repent. I even saw a vision of the man (a former millionaire) begging bread. I was left in no doubt that if that man did not repent and turn around very rapidly, he was in for a VERY rough ride.

As far as I am able to discern, there are very few people who find themselves in such a privileged position, Jeremiah was one, John the Baptist another. Accordingly, I conclude that, in most cases, what I have called career prophecy will be subject to the obedience of the individual, nation or body receiving the prophecy. In general, God will call someone else if the first person is disobedient.

c. OPERATIONAL PROPHECY

Operational prophecy is that prophecy that is given for the day to day conduct of the believers' life. It can be of great short term import and can give rise to major changes in direction or it may merely confirm or encourage the believer in certain understanding. In my experience, most personal prophecy falls into this category.

As such, the fulfilment of this prophecy is largely dependent on the conduct of the believer, as set out elsewhere in this document.

27. ROBUST PROPHECY

I have made reference in passing in previous sections to words of correction and rebuke. It is vital that you understand that God the Father loves you. His love is a robust, no nonsense love. He wants you to be prepared as a "spotless bride" for His Son Jesus. He wants you to wage war effectively against Satan on His behalf in this life, He wants you to reach out and touch the lives of billions of hurting people by being His hands and feet on the earth. Accordingly, as you mature and accept greater responsibility from Him, expect Him to correct you robustly if you get out of line. In the "Discourse on Poverty", I present a military analogy, when you reach a level of maturity where you are being trained up to become a front line soldier for Christ, expect Him to exercise the sort of discipline over you that you would expect a soldier in training to receive.

Accordingly, rejoice when you receive words of robust correction, as long as they are given prophetically and not in the flesh. The fact that God now deems you mature enough for Him to treat you fully as a maturing son and not a whimpering baby is cause to rejoice. Only when you reach that level can you truly begin to become effective in His service.

One of the reasons, as I understand it, that God refers to David as "a man after My Own heart", was because David was quick to repent when rebuked. God is looking for that attribute in each one of us. Accordingly, if you receive a prophetic word of rebuke, I appeal to you to be quick to repent and turn around.

For as long as you are so self willed, selfish and immature that you cannot receive rebuke and correction from God, please recognize that the label "Christian" is not of much significance. Jesus went to the Cross on the express will of His Father, why should His Father treat you as a baby in nappies for your entire Christian walk?

28. CONCLUSION

I pray that I have covered enough ground for you to have a better understanding of the context in which you have received your prophecy, how to satisfy yourself that God has indeed spoken to you and, more importantly, how you go about receiving what He has promised and avoid inadvertently sabotaging the blessings that you have been promised.

If you have suggestions for improving this document, please do not hesitate to contact us. If you have queries regarding your prophesy and have prayed about it and truly feel that you need assistance from

us, please write, we will respond as the Holy Spirit leads us, in other words, we do not guarantee to reply -- we will seek to reply only if and when He leads us to, you may be on your own with GOD! (not a bad place to be).

God bless you,

JAMES ROBERTSON

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Note: Please refer to the **Caveat on page xii** and the section on **Vocabulary on page xv** for cautions regarding doctrine and word usage in the older eBooks that is inaccurate. Apart from these errors these eBooks contain much valuable information.

eBook 2:
Poverty in the Church of Jesus Christ -
Published in 1998

This eBook presents a detailed discussion of why many highly committed believers are in financial lack.

POVERTY
IN THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST:

A DISCOURSE
ON CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

(BASED ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE)

*(Towards Holiness and Sanctification /
Circumcision of the Heart /
Growth IN CHRIST)*

AN END TIME ISSUES PUBLICATION

***"Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem:
Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be
established;
believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."***

***...."Praise the Lord,
For His mercy endures forever."
2 Chronicles 20:20,21***

PREFACE

*This, however, will be true **only if** you obey the word of God your Lord, carefully keeping this entire mandate that I {Moses} am prescribing to you today. God your Lord **will then bless you** as He promised you, so that you will extend credit to many nations, but you will not need any credit for yourselves. You will thus dominate many nations, but none will dominate you.*

(Deuteronomy 15:5-6 The Living Torah)

During my quiet time on 5 March 1998, The Lord laid it on my heart to prepare a series of "discourses" on a number of topics. These documents will be prepared for discussion purposes and are not intended to be a source of conflict although I expect that they will address some issues over time about which there may be different opinions.

Since I started preparing this document, I have been listening to a series of teachings by Kenneth Copeland on "**Hesed**" (Hebrew) / "**Agape**" (Greek); the Covenant made by Blood. Through this teaching I have come to realise that much of what is written here relates directly to what I am increasingly coming to understand as the process of "circumcision of the heart" which is the journey that the Lord leads us through in order to make us more like Jesus. This is a vast subject and certainly not one that I can hope to canvas comprehensively in this document. I am only seeking to address one aspect of which poverty is a useful diagnostic. I have also found many of these issues addressed in Rick Joyner's book "The Final Quest" which is an immensely sobering revelation of what the church is facing right now. I hope that this 'discourse' will assist those seeking to 'climb the mountain of God'.

While I am persuaded that what I am about to write is of God, I do not claim that this document is prophetic as such, only that, as best I can discern, that it sums up what God has been showing me. I accept the possibility that this document may be incomplete in places or may not entirely accurately reflect what God is in fact saying. I welcome the opportunity to discuss these notes with any sincere believer who is committed to discerning the true will of God with regard to the issues that are canvassed in the pages that follow.

FOLLOWING GOD'S WAY

Deuteronomy 10:12-21 : The Living Torah

And now, Israel, what does God want of you? Only that you remain in awe of God your Lord, so that you will follow all His paths and love Him, serving God your Lord with all your heart and with all your soul. You must keep God's commandments and decrees that I {Moses} am prescribing for you today, so that good will be yours.

The heaven, the heaven of heaven, the earth and everything in it. all belong to God! Still, it was only with your ancestors that God developed a closeness. He loved them and therefore chose you, their descendants, from among all nations, just as the situation is today.

Remove the barriers from your heart and do not remain so stubborn any more!

God your Lord is the ultimate Supreme Being and the highest possible Authority. He is the great, mighty and awesome God, who does not give special consideration or take bribes. He brings justice to

the orphan and widow, and loves the foreigner, granting him food and clothing. You must also show love toward the foreigner, since you were foreigners in the land of Egypt {the world}.

Remain in awe of God, serve Him, cling to Him, and swear by His name. He is your praise and your God, the One who did for you these great and awesome deeds that you saw with your very eyes."

God is the same, yesterday, today and forever!

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document is not intended to be an authoritative reference work. It is intended to be, in a sense, a *conversation* with the reader, sharing thoughts and experiences as they come to mind rather than presenting some form of structured problem solving methodology or formal teaching.

For this reason, thoughts have been recorded largely as they occur. It is almost certain that what was important in my life is not necessarily important in yours and vice versa and that the order of importance will also differ.

It is also not presented as a teaching with copious scripture references. Were I to have done that, this document would be many times longer and would not provide, as I currently hope it does, a relatively concise report of an enormous number of diverse and sometimes seemingly unconnected thoughts all of which, I believe, have some bearing on assisting YOU to walk in the fullness of God's blessings, "***the blessings of obedience***" to God our Father, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

If you are currently under financial attack, I suggest that you pray the prayer on the following page and then either dip in as the Spirit leads you or, first time round, read from beginning to end so that you provide the Holy Spirit with seed from which He can begin to teach you.

By virtue of the objectives set out above, there will never be enough information in this document to answer all your questions, that is not the intention. Jesus, through His Holy Spirit is the only teacher that you can truly rely on. As you identify passages that awaken your interest or are quickened to your attention, pray about them.

In faith, trust God to reveal to you what YOU need to know through His Word, through books, teaching tapes, videos, TV and Radio Programmes, teaching at churches that he may lead you to, prophets, teachers and other believers that He may bring across your path. Be diligent to seek the truth. Be constantly in His Word and in fellowship with other believers. Be always alert for His leading to buy a book or tape, listen to a radio programme, visit a church, help or talk to a stranger or do anything else contrary to your routine that will lead you to a source of knowledge.

Remember that only God knows your thoughts so don't keep talking about what He is showing you and as far as possible NEVER tell anyone your questions. Satan's cohorts (demons and angels) infest the atmosphere and those around you and are constantly listening for useful information to use against you. Pray silently within your heart, believing in Faith that He hears you and that He will answer your questions. If the answer rattles your paradigm and does not seem as though it could possibly be of God, ask Him in faith for confirmation. He loves you and He wants to set you free. He has great

patience and He recognizes our difficulty in hearing and believing Him. If you walk in faith without doubting HE WILL LEAD YOU TO THE TRUTH YOU NEED TO SET YOU FREE.

Be prepared for a challenging and exciting ride! Recognize that God is no respecter of persons and no respecter of our traditions and doctrines. Expect Him to show you things that you will have great difficulty accepting. Expect Him to require you to do things and deal with things which are sometimes VERY challenging and uncomfortable.

If you truly want to serve HIM and you truly want to walk in His will and His blessings, then I encourage you to take up the challenge. By faith, hold onto your hat and enjoy the ride and His blessings!

God Bless You

James Robertson

A PRAYER TO START WITH

This document is not intended to be a rigorous teaching, it is intended to open up a treasure chest of topics for you to PRAY and SEEK GOD about in order to determine what is applicable to your life TODAY in order to get the breakthrough that God currently has planned for you. Different parts will apply at different times. Some may never apply. Some you may revisit again and again. Others may not be covered in this document. As you learn to trust God to lead you into the truth you need day by day, you will find that the walk becomes spiritually easier although it may become more demanding in terms of what you can see in the natural. Ultimately, it is all part of learning to be Spirit Led that you may one day justly claim to be a true Son of God.

The following prayer is offered to assist you get started, trust God to lead you in prayer day by day. Pray it IN FAITH WITHOUT DOUBTING AND HE WILL ANSWER YOU:

Father God, I come to you in the name of Jesus. I thank you that you know the parts of this document that apply to me and that are correct for me. I thank you that, as I start to read, you will quicken to my spirit that which is immediately relevant and that you will conceal from me that which is chaff or of no relevance right now.

I thank you that, as you open this document to me, you will teach me what to pray and you will give me utterance in my spirit in order that I may pray your will over my life.

I thank you that, as I bring sections, paragraphs, concepts and thoughts before you and lay my questions at your Holy throne, you will answer me.

I ask you, in the name of Jesus, to speak to me through Your Word, to lead me to the passages that apply to me and that will answer my questions. I thank you that Your Word contains all the answers that I will ever need to live my life according to your will and to achieve the breakthrough that you have purposed for me at this time.

I thank you that you will speak to me through books, teaching tapes and videos, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and preachers, teachers and other people whom you will bring

across my path. I thank you that you will lead me wherever I need to go to receive the answers to my questions and that your Holy Spirit is with me always to lead me into ALL TRUTH.

Help me Father to hear your voice clearly and close my ears and eyes to all that is not of you.

Satan, I bind you and your cohorts from blinding or confusing me in receiving anything that God has provided for me in this document. In Jesus Name.

I thank you Father that your Angels are encamped around me to protect me and to keep the enemy from interfering in my studies and I ask you to cover me, my family and all that I own, with the Blood of Jesus from the top of our heads to the soles of our feet.

I thank you Father that Your Word states that as a born again believer, I have the Mind of Christ. I thank you for leading me to victory.

In Jesus Name

CHAPTER 1 - BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTS

1. INTRODUCTION

At the time of writing, almost every Christian that I know is under financial attack of a level that many consider to be unprecedented. Rick Joyner in his book "The Final Quest" which I read for the first time after producing the first draft of this document presents a graphic account, based on a series of five visions, as to why this is the case. I would suggest that "The Final Quest" is a must read for anyone seeking to better understand the current spiritual age.

This document seeks to contribute something to equipping the saints with a better understanding of the practical spiritual issues that are currently confronting most of the church.

2. CONTEXT

I am a Civil Engineer and Analyst by training with strong grounding in Mathematics, Science and applied problem solving. God has blessed me with a mind that constantly seeks to understand the underlying fundamentals of any situation whether physical or spiritual. I have learnt to use the gifts that I have developed in dealing with physical problems to dealing with spiritual issues as well.

Having served the Lord in the Anglican Church in my youth, turned away because of religion and other factors in my early twenties and been radically saved from the very brink of death (literally) in my late thirties, I found myself faced with a major intellectual problem in accepting that the Bible was the "Living Word of God". Having heard the voice of God and having experienced the presence and power of God enough to have complete certainty that He was real, by faith I chose to accept the Bible as the Word of God and embarked on a voyage of discovery, sometimes into uncharted or little known Spiritual waters.

As I sought to serve God and experience the fullness of His blessings in my life, certain of the scripture that says that 'God is not a man that He should lie', I repeatedly found that the Bible did not seem to work in many areas of my life. For example, while I experienced an Acts 2 encounter with the Holy Spirit and walked in divine health, my finances continued to deteriorate and other areas of my life

were under constant attack. Without a thought, I started to apply the Engineering and Military Analysis and Problem Solving techniques that I apply in my professional career as a Management Consultant and Strategist to my spiritual walk and progressively found myself seeking God for answers to more and more obscure questions. As I did so, The Lord started to present me with answers which increasingly caused me to evaluate the current teachings of the church in a variety of areas. Some of these issues rattled my paradigm despite the fact that, in secular terms, my personality is one that thrives on paradigm shifting and certainly rattled the paradigms of people around me. Sometimes this was a consequence of my only seeing part of the picture or not hearing God clearly, other times, The Holy Spirit forced me to confront truths, some of which have apparently been lost to the church since the first Synod in Rome in about 315 AD.

I do not present any of what I have written above as a boast. My intention is simply to position and contextualize what I am about to write with a view to appealing to you, THE READER, to consider the possibility that there may be a paradigm in your spiritual walk that is outside the realms of what you have previously considered to be the only valid understanding and interpretation. In doing this, I will endeavour to avoid criticising what others believe, my hope is that I will build on truths that others have in order to draw out more of the truth as we all sincerely seek to draw closer to God, to be more like Jesus and to seek ALL TRUTH.

3. THE HORDES OF HELL RELEASED

Joyner, in "The Final Quest" (published in 1996) at the end of his description of his fourth vision in which he was caught up into the third heaven and experienced the Judgement of Christ, reports Jesus as saying "*..... Obey Me and hasten the day of My coming.*"

He further reports, that as he was escorted away from the presence of Jesus by a Company of Angels, the leader of the Angels stated "*Now that He has stood He will not sit again until the last battle is over. He has been seated until the time when His enemies are to be put under His feet. The time has now come. The legions of angels that have been standing ready since the night of His passion have now been released upon the earth. The hordes of hell have also been released. This is the time for which all of creation has been waiting. The great mystery of God will soon be finished. We will now fight until the end. We will fight with you and with your brethren.*"

It is vital that readers recognize that a dramatic change in the spiritual state of the world took place some time around 1995 or 1996. Your paradigm of Christianity over your life time before this is no longer necessarily as relevant as it was before. The level of the spiritual onslaught on all dedicated believers has intensified greatly. This document is based on experience gained largely in the period from 1994 to 1998, during the period that this dramatic change was taking place. Accordingly, the interpretation offered in the pages that follow should be evaluated on this basis.

4. DISCLAIMER

If I offend you, I ask you to forgive me, that is not my intention, I fully realize that, if you are offended you will have difficulty changing your paradigm and my objective is to lay a foundation that I believe will assist the reader to reassess certain issues that may be having a profound influence in their lives. Please set aside anything that offends you and pray over it as you seek to extract what may be wheat and not chaff for you in this document.

This second draft of this document, has been produced specifically to be read by people with whom I am in personal contact although it is my expectation that, in time, it will be published more widely and more formally, under the heading of "End Time Issues". At this stage, in particular, I hope to obtain

comment, insight and testimonies from as many readers as possible with a view to presenting as comprehensive a picture as possible as I have no doubt that there are others whose experience differs drastically from my own who will place different emphasis on various aspects and will have revelation in different areas. Having said this, I must stress that this document in no way claims to be comprehensive, you may have unique issues and challenges in your life that no person other than the Holy Spirit of the Living God can assist you with, in all things LOOK TO JESUS NOT to men.

At this stage, I do not intend to present endless scripture references, I have many notes and could add many scriptures and other references if required to back up much of what I have to write. In other cases I have anecdotal evidence based on personal experience. Right now I am not seeking to hard sell you anything, I am seeking to raise some issues for consideration and hopefully discussion leading to prayerful action in the expectation that where something applies to your particular situation, The Holy Spirit will quicken this to your attention and show you how to respond.

I look forward to receiving your comments and to discussing what follows with you.

5. A PRESSING QUESTION : WHY IS THERE SO MUCH LACK AND FINANCIAL ATTACK IN THE BODY OF CHRIST?

The Word of God tells us that it is the will of God for us to prosper and be in health. Numerous other scriptures tell us of the blessings of God and yet, looking around, we constantly see a large proportion of the church limping from one financial crisis to another. I have been there myself, I have stood on the promises of God as my business, started with the blessing of the Holy Spirit, named by God, with a cross in the logo, put there by Him, with a vision to be a vehicle for evangelism to the business community around the World slipped into total insolvency and closed it's doors while at the same time I lost virtually everything material that I possessed and lost a custody battle for my children despite prophecies to the contrary. Repeatedly my cry has been *WHY Lord, show me what is wrong in my life, show me what to pray, show me what has to change, reveal the root cause of the problem, send prophets and teachings across my path.* God has been faithful and has given me numerous answers. On several occasions, we have seen major breakthroughs turn around again and proceeded to learn more. Each time, however, there has been an increasing assurance that God is in control and that He will not allow us to be tested more than we can endure. It has, in fact, become comforting to know that He loves us so much that He wants to get the dross out of our lives before He really blesses us in order that we can serve Him fully, effectively and faithfully in abundance and will not be like a camel trying to pass through the eye of a needle and thus be found wanting on the Day of Judgement.

In the sections that follow, I will seek to discuss the various aspects that I have had to deal with over a period of about five years. I present them more or less in the order that I had to confront them and as they came to mind while writing, not because I think there is anything special about that order but because at this time no other order readily presents itself. I have a strong sense that in every case the order is likely to be different and that trying to create a structure that seems right to me will start to give pride a point of entry. As you read this, please constantly ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you that which applies to you now and do not concern yourself with things that may apply in the future. At the same time, many of these issues are items that your flesh may really not wish to respond to so I would counsel you not to bypass issues lightly.

6. LAW AND GRACE : HOW I UNDERSTAND IT

I fully expect that, as you read what follows, you will be inclined to accuse me of legalism and say "what about Grace?". I would like to offer you, very briefly, my understanding of how Law and Grace affect what follows.

Firstly, let me say categorically that I do not believe that Grace in any way constitutes a licence for sloppy, undisciplined, disobedient and sinful behaviour, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ knew no sin and was obedient to the death of the Cross. I do not think that He took our sins upon Him in order that we might adopt a casual attitude to sin, I also do not think that it is a coincidence that "discipline" and "disciple" have the same root.

Insofar as we are ignorant of the Word of God, I am firmly persuaded that God extends Grace to us so that we may not carry a burden that exceeds our spiritual and physical maturity. The Word says that we will not be tested beyond our capacity to endure. However, in the same way that a newly born baby cannot endure much environmental deprivation but a battle hardened, supremely fit soldier can survive under the most arduous conditions, Grace is extended to us as newly born creatures in Christ but, over time, we are expected to mature to become battle hardened Christian Soldiers able to look after ourselves. By implication, it seems that, in a sense, Grace is less comprehensive as we mature and much of what I have to write below reflects what I perceive to have been, in my own life, a progressive requirement from the Lord that I accept increasing responsibility for the consequences of my own actions. Whether this is, in fact, a 'reduction in Grace' or whether there is some other spiritual principle or term that applies, I am currently uncertain but I do believe that the basic concept is spiritually valid as we 'grow in Grace'. At the same time, always remember that God's Grace is always sufficient for us, whether we are in the furnace or at the well.

At the same time Satan, "the accuser of the brethren" who is before the throne of God day and night (Revelation) is the 'ultimate legalist'. As I understand it, Satan works according to a clearly defined set of rules which are made visible to us throughout the Bible in the form of commandments, principles and guidelines as well as through parables and metaphors. Through religion and legalism, Satan has very effectively clouded our understanding of much of how he works. To me, the first few books of Job, together with the verse in Ephesians 4 that cautions us to "give no foothold to the devil", summarizes what we are dealing with. As I understand it, Satan and his cohorts constantly scan the earth seeking believers whom they can accuse before the throne of God. Since there are twice as many Holy angels as fallen angels, it appears that Satan concentrates his efforts on those Christians who are on fire and making a difference rather than those who are luke warm or discouraged and showing no signs of resistance. Where he identifies any form of sin or foothold in the life of a believer or group of believers, he then goes before the throne of God and demands his legal right to attack the individual, congregation or family concerned. It appears that on occasion, by the Grace of God, in recognition of our frailty and limitations God refuses Satan's requests (I am not sure of this). On other occasions, where God, in His mercy considers the proposed trial to be within the ability of the believer to endure, He permits the trial to take place in order to test us, mature us, strengthen us and draw us closer to Him so that He can demonstrate His love and His power. This process can result in believers stumbling and falling away and not completing 'the race'.

Thus we see that, as we mature in Christ, we are tested with regard to sins and footholds, etc that were covered by Grace when we were less mature in Christ. In this process we either fall away, backslide and in extreme cases, forsake the faith or we press in closer to the Holy Spirit, seek the face of Jesus and cry out to enter into the Throne Room of God. As we do this, we find ourselves examining ourselves in the 'mirror of The Word' and become increasingly aware of aspects of our lives which are displeasing to God and which give Satan footholds in our lives. If we understand that this is the process that we are undergoing we can pray appropriately and act appropriately with the result that we may hope to press through the trials more rapidly and thus press on to the next trial with greater spiritual growth than is the case if every time we spend days, weeks, months or years being offended with God,

railing against Him, demanding that He honours His Word and the many other pitfalls that Christians fall into while in the process of losing many of the blessings that we already have.

An image of this process that I received recently was of a baby Christian in a thick cotton wool cocoon with God slowly peeling away the layers and exposing them to the world as they grew. Eventually, God intends that they stand fully exposed to the onslaught of the enemy as mature, fully equipped believers. Many do not seem to ever reach that point.

7. A MILITARY METAPHOR

As Christians, we talk regularly about "spiritual warfare" and make numerous other references to "warfare", "the battle", being "soldiers for Christ", etc. I wonder how many Christians actually consider what we are saying? As a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the South African Citizen Force, I would like to elaborate on my understanding of how this applies to the preceding section on Law and Grace:

a. PREGNANCY

When an unborn child is in it's mother's womb, it is totally protected from the outside world. All the knocks and tribulations of the world affect the mother not the child. The father is hardly involved, other than by protecting the mother.

b. INFANCY

Immediately after birth, the child is forced to deal with possible diseases and infection, climatic factors and the like, to the extent that the mother cannot totally shield it.

c. TODDLER

As a toddler, the mother has to stand back and watch the child fall, as it learns to walk and learns other lessons. The mother still shields the child as much as possible.

d. PRE-SCHOOL

In pre-school years, the child becomes increasingly adventurous and starts to take more risks. It is exposed to more danger but the parents together seek to limit it's exposure to what they perceive is reasonable based on their own life experience. Here we begin to see divergent views in different cultures. The child is still largely protected from the world. Even in all out war, the parents and particularly the mother will make enormous sacrifices to protect the child.

e. PRIMARY SCHOOL

In primary school, the child is still largely naive and has great confidence in it's parents to supply all it's needs. It takes very little responsibility for the consequences of it's actions and the parents are obliged to rescue it from these consequences on occasion. Sometimes from situations that they would never have dreamed that their children would get into. While the child is a minor the parents are legally liable for certain actions of the child. As the child, particularly if it is a boy, begins to participate in sport, the parents must stand on the side lines and watch, even if the child faces quite serious danger of injury. Boy's tend to go out and take physical risks which can sometimes be life threatening. The parents increasingly have to pray rather than intervene physically.

f. SECONDARY SCHOOL

At secondary school, the process continues. Boys start increasingly to participate in relatively dangerous activities and sports. Occasionally a boy in the school or a nearby school may be critically, even permanently injured as a result of a rugby injury or other activity.

g. BASIC MILITARY TRAINING

If the son is called up for military service, his parents are obliged to stand back almost entirely. There is almost nothing that they can do to safeguard their son, other than to pray and to hope that the lessons and principles that he has learnt as a child will be effectively applied. They may not see their son for weeks or months at a time and may hear from him infrequently. He is now in the hands of his instructors and leaders and is heavily dependent on their competence. Nevertheless, he is still supervised to a large extent and is taught to obey orders without thinking, is taught discipline, develops physical fitness and other skills that he did not really have before. He is being developed into a fighting man who is capable of killing or being killed.

h. ACTIVE SERVICE

If the son goes on to be called to active service, he faces a situation where the slightest lack of discipline, failure to instantly obey orders or to follow laid down drills, either by himself or his fellows, can cause him to be wounded, taken prisoner or killed. His parents do not know where he is and can only pray. They cannot even observe from a distance and give guidance. He is an adult, largely dependent on his training in order to survive. Nonetheless, his senior officers and non-commissioned officers still monitor him closely, take responsibility for many decisions and give him clear cut orders within the limitations of his training. Generally, he will not be deployed in situations for which his training has not equipped him.

i. SPECIAL SERVICE

If the son goes on to volunteer for the Reconnaissance Commandos, he is taught to kill with his bare hands, to survive off the land for weeks at a time and is generally trained to be almost entirely responsible for his own survival and the success of his missions. Once fully trained, he can be parachute dropped behind enemy lines, often in the most arduous terrain. One false move may cost him his freedom or his life. He is at risk of being exposed or betrayed on every side, he does not know who he can trust or what the next minute will bring. If he does not scrupulously adhere to his drills, is not rigorous in his navigation and does not make his rendezvous precisely on time, he is unlikely to return from his mission. At best he will be taken prisoner with the chance to escape one day, at worst, he will be tortured and brutally murdered. In this situation, his superior officers can do very little to help him unless he is able to radio for aerial support and his parents will quite likely not know whether he is on a mission or not. He is totally dependent on his God (if he knows Him) and his own ability and discipline.

j. REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

If the son succeeds in his military career, he will eventually be promoted through the ranks to command first a section or platoon, then a troop, a squadron and a regiment. As a regimental commander, he will be increasingly removed from the battle. He will be more concerned with the overall deployment and command and control of the troops under his command and less involved in the battle. But he will take his orders on major issues from his superiors and his regiment will nearly always be deployed as part of a multi-disciplinary combat team to attack and hold a particular objective. He will generally have no say in the setting of objectives although he may be involved in the command councils that set those objectives. His focus is primarily tactical, in terms of achieving the objectives set for his regiment. By the time he achieves the rank of regimental commander, he is likely to be at the very least in his late twenties or early thirties with significant experience under his belt. He will be in command of about 500 to 700 men and millions of rands of equipment and machinery depending on the nature of the regiment that he commands. On the

ground he will have considerable autonomy of action and will be evaluated on the results that he delivers.

In a full scale war situation, the officer who demonstrates proven ability to motivate and lead his men, to correctly assess the enemy and respond accordingly, to take calculated risks which pay off without unnecessary loss of life and generally effective leadership in every sense, will rise rapidly through the ranks. Typically he will be a man who pays scant regard to the privileges of rank, will spend time on the ground with every soldier from time to time, will know his subordinates by name and something about them and will NEVER send them into a situation that he is not prepared to go himself. Where ever possible he will be on the ground with his troops, leading them into battle. While accepting the inevitability of casualties, he will constantly evaluate his conduct to determine whether he should have acted differently and will personally make every effort to visit wounded soldiers or contact their next of kin. He understand that if his soldiers trust him he can move mountains.

Such an officer will very rapidly rise above "old guard" officers who rest on their laurels, rely on the doctrines of previous wars or insist in following the procedures taught on the officers course with no regard to the changes in the enemies doctrine and conduct. A man who allows his troops to sustain unnecessary casualties or defeats will, if not killed in battle, be rapidly removed from his command.

k. GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING

If he continues to succeed, he will progressively be promoted to command a brigade, a division and finally an army corps and possible even an entire army. With each promotion, he will become responsible for more and more men and will become increasingly involved in taking critical strategic decisions. His ability to read the overall theatre of war, the current mood of the troops and the enemy, the weather and every other item of intelligence that he receives in order to take decisions which will give rise to victory with minimum casualties, will become increasingly critical. He becomes increasingly responsible for identifying particular military intelligence needs. His margin for error will progressively decrease as the size of the forces that he is required to deploy in battle increases. Incompetence or foolish error will be tolerated less and less by his superiors and subordinates. His is a very lonely position as a general officer commanding. At all times, his ability to motivate all around him and to carry them with him and his ability to delegate and build and maintain a team under the most arduous conditions will determine his success or failure. This ability can mean the difference between whole countries being swallowed up by the enemy and spectacular victory.

I. UNIVERSITY / STAFF COURSE

In most cases, shortly before or after promotion to the level of Regimental Commander, the man will either attend University or a Military Academy to obtain the equivalent of a three year Bachelors Degree. In the case of a full time war situation where there is no time for this, he will nevertheless attend a short "staff course" to develop his understanding of strategic issues and certain other critical Military expertise. In some cases, a three year civilian university degree may be accepted as an alternative to the course at the Military Academy. The object of the course is as much to develop intellectual problem solving and analytical skills as it is to offer in depth training in Military Strategy and other academic aspects of Military life which have more bearing in a peace time army than in the rigours of all out war.

If we consider this outline of personal growth in a combat soldier, I hope that you will see that there is a parallel with the process that I outlined previously. As soldiers in God's army, if we are truly "sold out to Christ", we have, whether we realize it or not, volunteered for service at the very least in the heat of the conventional battle, if not as reconnaissance commandos. We cannot hide behind our pastors and teachers and cry out to God every five minutes to dry our eyes. We must "fight the good fight" making full use of the weapons and armour at our disposal. Crying out to God for aerial rescue if the situation get's totally out of hand.

As we mature, we must accept our responsibility to lead regiments and armies. In particular, we must accept our calling to lead from the front, to constantly gather intelligence about what the enemy is doing, read the signs of the times and motivate and deploy the forces under our direction effectively. Unnecessary casualties cannot be tolerated. The level of falling away and the level of injury that can be found in seemingly every church around the world, could not be tolerated in any army. The heads of the leaders would roll! Until the church realizes that even one casualty within a congregation is an indictment of the leadership of that congregation, Satan will continue to hold the church in financial and physical bondage and backsliding.

I truly believe that God is training many of those who will read this document, to be deployed as reconnaissance commandos in these last days. He is training them to place their trust in God and His Word alone and not to look to their own understanding. He is requiring that they stop depending on others and stand alone in their total dependence on Him. He is looking to them to be instantly obedient and never to question orders given by the Holy Spirit. To apply the drills laid down in the Bible. To understand every nuance of the enemies movements in order to anticipate attack from where-ever it may come. To wield the "sword of the Spirit" with effectively and precisely in every situation, sharpening the sword morning, noon and night and after every encounter with the enemy. If he drops his guard, even for a moment, or allows disobedience or other sin to enter his life for even an instant, the enemy will be there to take him prisoner, torture him or kill him.

The process set out in the previous section is, as best I currently understand it, the process of "military training" that God is using. He progressively permits us to engage the enemy in more and more direct combat with less and less direct support and protection. Those who miss it will find themselves wounded by demons, taken prisoner in false doctrines and deception or, in extreme cases falling away and losing their salvation.

Soldiers in such situations know that they must be able to trust every single fellow combatant with his life. No soldier can cover his back as well as his front. He is totally reliant on the other men in his team to protect him. If one gets dropped by the enemy, he is totally reliant on his fellows to save him. If one is ill disciplined or disobedient, the whole team is at risk. All know that they dare not fight amongst themselves, no matter how much they may dislike one another or disagree while relaxing back at base, they cannot allow even the slightest amount of division, if they do, it may well cause them all to die. Christian soldiers, for the most part, have yet to learn this lesson.

The role of the Apostle is, in a sense, comparable to that of the general officer, as outlined in section . Many years of refining, taking the lead in battle, identifying intelligence needs, giving direction to hundreds of thousands through prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Delivering rebuke and correction to any soldier of any other rank that God wants corrected. Pastors and teachers service is more directly associated with a small group of solders on the

ground, as such, their role and functions are probably more comparable to that of non-commissioned officers, that is, primarily a tactical utilization.

If, after many successful missions and numerous medals and commendations, the commando becomes proud, self confident, careless, ill disciplined or rebellious, he is likely to be taken captive or killed. The same applies to the Christian. No matter how much God has used you, no matter what mighty works have been done through you, the moment you fail to sharpen the sword of the Spirit, allow your armour to slip, disobey or question the Holy Spirit, start sinning or rebelling in other ways, the enemy will immediately pounce to kill, steal and destroy. The visions reported by Joyner graphically illustrate how mature believers allow pride, self confidence and other sins to cause them to fall and be taken captive or killed. Fortunately, we serve a merciful God and many are saved by Him from spiritual death by His intervention, even sometimes to the extent of premature death.

8. SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU

In reading this document, recognize that financial and material prosperity is not a primary benefit of being a Christian. Jesus said to seek first the Kingdom of God. In other words, seek to know His will, to do His will, to know Him, to please Him and to serve Him. In doing this, you will set yourself free from bondages and footholds and material and physical blessings will, IN DUE COURSE, be added unto you. Therefore, financial and material lack is a useful indicator and a means whereby God can correct us and direct us. If you are reading this document primarily because you are seeking financial and material well being but are not seeking God as your first priority, then you are unlikely to find much of value in this document.

9. A WORD OF CAUTION : SEEING FOOHOLDS IN OTHERS

As you read this document, you are quite likely to find that you see that much of what is written here is relevant to people you know. Firstly, don't become proud, God resists the proud. Secondly, don't feel self justified. Thirdly, don't condemn them or judge them lest you are also judged. Pray for them and, IF you can truly speak to them with love and compassion AND God has clearly told you to speak to them, speak to them. Generally God shows us weaknesses and sin in others so that we will examine ourselves more closely and so that we can pray for them. The more I learn of the ways of God, the more I realize that He seldom needs my help to point out others sin to them. Even in my capacity as a Prophet of God, He only sends me to others to point out their sin as a last resort and then, in very specific ways. I am increasingly realizing that there is a particular gifting required to communicate to someone on a sensitive issue like sin in a way that does not cause them to stumble but, in fact, assists them to see their sin and turn around.

10. IS SATAN REALLY STUPID?

I have heard it said by several preachers that Satan is stupid and does not learn. Does that verse exist in the Bible? Any army that underestimates it's foe is asking to be defeated. Has the church underestimated theirs? The level of falling away, financial bondage, lack of health, strife, etc would suggest that, currently Satan is anything but defeated. He is infinitely weaker than God and yet he is keeping millions, if not billions out of the kingdom and keeping the rest in bondage and survival. The nearly empty throne room of God seen by Joyner in his vision, graphically portrays the extent to which Satan is currently victorious!

It seems reasonable to assume that, when God created Adam, Satan knew as little or less about Adam, and the rules of warfare, as Adam did. I doubt that God made a point of educating Satan. In this case, we must assume that, as much as the people of Israel and the church have been learning what is

required to truly serve God with all our hearts, all our minds and all our strength, so Satan has been learning how to cause us to fail.

Based on the depiction of Satan coming before God's throne given in Job and the reference to Satan as the "accuser of the brethren" in Revelation, Satan has been coming before the throne of God a least since the time of Adam and probably a lot longer. At the very least, Satan has been before the throne of God accusing the brethren for about 6,000 years. That is a lot of time to learn and an even longer time if he has learnt nothing. It seems reasonable to conclude that Satan has at least observed that there are certain accusations that he is able to bring against certain classes of believer that are regularly successful and that there are others which meet with less success. Likewise, he has probably observed that there are certain accusations that he cannot bring against someone who has just made a commitment but others, such as pride(?), that will be almost universally successful if brought against a believer of some years standing. After all, God resists the proud so is hardly likely to block Satan from using pride as a foothold.

If this is the case we should, for our own good, conclude that Satan knows a lot more than we do about the subject under discussion and that he is probably learning more rapidly than most of us!

11. SANCTIFICATION AND HOLINESS

The process that I have outlined in section above could also be termed a journey towards sanctification and holiness where the journey is well demonstrated by the book "A Pilgrim's Progress" (also available on video).

As I understand it, sanctification is a process of making clean, of removing those aspects in our lives that are not pleasing to God, that cause us to sin, that put a distance between ourselves and God. I say this not in a judgemental way but simply from a deep personal recognition that I am not the person that God wants me to be, that I do not have the depth of relationship with Him that others have, which the Bible shows me is possible and, that as I write this, I know that I have been closer to Him in the past.

In a similar vein, Holiness is a separation from the things of this world (as ruled by the god of this world - Satan) allied with a cleaving unto God who is the ultimate expression of Holiness. I am not sure exactly what the distinction is but I am certain that as we sanctify ourselves and set ourselves apart for His service, we draw closer to His Holiness. In saying this, I must stress that I am not talking of a 'works' program but I AM referring to a Spirit Led process which progressively draws us closer to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Jesus said that we would do the 'same and greater works' that He did. Not many are even close to doing the same works, let alone greater works. If the name 'Christian', means 'little Christ-like ones' which was 'first given to the believers at Antioch' indeed means this, then few of those who claim the 'title' Christian in fact demonstrate Christ-likeness. The journey towards sanctification and holiness therefore is also a journey towards Christ-likeness which is a comprehensive expression of meekness, gentleness, humility, compassion, lack of self, intimacy with The Holy Spirit, deep-rooted implantation of The Word of God and assurance of the Covenant rights of the believer to a point where the person concerned indeed performs the same works that Jesus did (and greater works) : the lame walk, the blind see, the dead are raised, etc.

12. BLOOD COVENANT

We have a covenant cut with the Blood of Jesus Christ as He hung on the Cross at Calvary. As I have understood the teaching on *Hesed* referred to previously, the old Covenant was cut with Abram when God walked in the Blood of the animals in Genesis 15 and with Abraham in Genesis 17 when Abraham circumcised himself and all the males in his family and service. Recognizing that Abram and the men with him were mature adults, there is a certain type here of those of us who come to know the Lord Jesus Christ after we have grown up in the world.

13. CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

If we understand that circumcision involves the cutting off of flesh from probably the most sensitive organ of the male anatomy, we begin to understand that it was very painful. If we understand that Abraham and the men with him circumcised themselves without anaesthetic using flint knives and not surgical steel scalpels, we begin to consider the magnitude of the pain that they probably experienced. If we take account of the fact that healing of the wound must have taken at least a week or two and that the formation of a scab on the organ concerned is likely to be extremely uncomfortable, if not downright painful, we gain an understanding that circumcision is not something to be undertaken lightly and that, once undertaken, leaves a lasting impression. If we then recognize that circumcision is the cutting away of something that is not necessary nor useful, then, I suggest that the 'circumcision of the heart' referred to under the New Covenant should take on a whole new meaning. In a sense, much of what is written about here relates to that circumcision of the heart. Accordingly, we should not be surprised that this cutting away is at times painful and requires a determination to proceed that is not adequately presented to those who make a first-time confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

If we recognize the extreme agony that Jesus endured on the Cross for us VOLUNTARILY and with complete foreknowledge, we should find this progressive, non-physical process of circumcision much less difficult to accept.

14. THE CUP THAT JESUS DRANK

Many of us read the reference in the Gospel of John and elsewhere to the 'cup that Jesus drank' and gratefully profess that 'He has taken all our sins' and that 'He who knew no sin became sin for us' but few have any comprehension of the enormity of what Jesus did for us.

It can be presented as follows:

1. Consider the worst possible sin that you know of, something that you could not begin to consider yourself committing.
2. Consider how repelled you are by the thought of anyone committing such a sin.
3. Weigh that repulsion up against all the sins that you have, in fact, committed in your life and consider how much more repulsive that sin must have been for Jesus who knew no sin.
4. Finally, consider that Jesus not only took that sin on himself at Calvary but that he took on himself the unmentionable atrocities of the concentration camps of the second world war, the abominations of the dark ages, the acts of Satanic worship and witchcraft which are perpetrated even today and every other sin that has ever been committed and will ever be committed!

It makes you think, doesn't it? I truly believe that, as we gain an increasing revelation of the magnitude of what Jesus has done for us we will increasingly desire to become like Him and will also find it far easier to 'count it all joy when we fall into various trials'. With such a revelation, it becomes far easier to desire to understand what is written below and to determine how it applies in our own lives. The pain of circumcision of our hearts also becomes easier to bear with joy.

15. THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CONTAIN ALL TRUTH

I have already stated that I do not claim to have all truth. I feel a need to stress this point as follows: In our daily life we seldom encounter somebody who obtains 100% for tests and exams, I have certainly never encountered somebody who has obtained 100% in every single test and exam that they have ever written. Not one of us have 100% (ALL) truth, only The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit are ALL TRUTH.

In fact, Gaussian statistics indicate that on any subject we will have a so-called Gaussian distribution of knowledge. In other words, there will be some who know absolutely nothing (0%) and there might be some who know all there is to know (but I think that is unlikely) the rest of the people will be distributed between these two extremes, with levels of knowledge that follow some sort of bell-shaped curve. Simply put, we all have gaps and errors in our knowledge. In other terms, an expert can be viewed as someone who is right more often than they are wrong and someone who is right 80% of the time is probably a genius. In other terms, most of us would be well satisfied if our child obtained a 60% aggregate for matric and would be thrilled if they obtained 75%. It is highly unlikely that we would send them back to school until they obtained 100%. After all, what they do learn at school is a minute fraction of all the knowledge in the world and no one will ever know it all.

What this translates to in the context of this document, as well as our Christian Walk, is that no man knows everything. Undoubtedly you will find aspects of this document that you disagree with and it is quite possible that you will be correct, either because I have missed something, because I have over simplified or for many other reasons. The challenge to you is to find the truth that this document contains that you lack and to ignore anything that may be incorrect. The challenge for me is to hear you when you offer me corrections and suggestions for improvement and to pray over them and modify the document as appropriate.

However, if you are offended by something that I write or that you know to be incorrect and reject the entire document, you may lose out on some revelation that is vital to you. Conversely, if you blindly accept this document as being 100% correct, you may let go of a truth that you already have. I stress that it is my understanding that each one of us is accountable for dividing the Word of God correctly and that we should seek the truth from whatever source God, in His wisdom, makes available to us.

16. TRUST NO MAN BUT GOD

All too often, we become 'disciples' of one or other preacher, teacher or pastor or we attach ourselves to a particular congregation and agree to 'submit' to their leadership. In the process, if we are not very careful, we come to rely on the counsel of men in preference to the counsel of the Holy Spirit and The Word of God.

Each one of us is accountable to God for our actions and, if He speaks to us through His Word or by His Spirit, it is up to us to discern that this is truly God speaking to us and to act on what He says to us, even if men do not agree. In my journey thus far, I have encountered a number of situations where I was told by pastors and others that I was missing it and in error. In one case I had to revisit the same issue year after year for three years, each time crying out to God for guidance, each time receiving the

same answer, each time being told by pastors and elders that it was my flesh or the devil and could not possibly be God. Eventually, I obeyed the Holy Spirit instead of man and saw immediate breakthrough.

Remember that the Word says "submit to God, resist the Devil". The Bible is full of reports of men of God who refused to submit to man in order to obey God and yet, today, many pastors demand that we submit to them in areas where there is no basis for them to set themselves up as rulers. Remember that if you are in a position of 'leadership' that the Word tells you not to 'Lord' it over your flock.

If you chose to obey men rather than God, that is rebellion (which the Bible says is as the sin of witchcraft), refer to Saul (1 Samuel 15) and others in scripture. Rebellion against the Word of God, either in His Word (the Bible), through His Spirit directly to you or through His Apostles and Prophets when they are anointed as vessels through which God speaks, can, if habitual, lead to your rejection by God. Hebrews 6:6 warns us against 'Crucifying Jesus again'. We are in an age where God is rejecting those who submit to men instead of to Him.

17. ONCE SAVED ALWAYS SAVED versus WORK OUT YOUR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING

There is a widely held doctrine that once you have confessed with your mouth and believed with your heart that Jesus Christ is Lord, it does not matter what you do thereafter you will 'sit with Christ on His throne for eternity'. This teaching ignores numerous scriptures that warn you to 'work out your salvation with fear and trembling', exhort you to run the race to the end, caution that your name can be 'blotted out of the book of life' and encourage you to 'overcome to the end'. The book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ alone contains numerous warnings, Hebrews 6:6 contains another. The Bible is full of words of caution.

There is no doubt in my mind that only a select remnant will, in fact, 'rule and reign for a thousand years with Jesus'. If this is the case, then much of what this document contains takes on a much greater significance. If you doubt this interpretation, I encourage you to pray sincerely about it and study your Bible with this specific topic in mind. As a point of departure, consider whether Jesus would have endured what He did on the Cross in order to permit us to adopt an approach to our Christian walk in which we appropriate promises while ignoring commandments with regard to obedience, etc. Please carefully consider all that follows in this light.

18. "READ THE END OF THE BOOK" : "WE WIN" ??

A statement which one hears from the pulpit and elsewhere from time to time is along the lines of "read the back of the book : we win", referring to the final victory described in the Book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ. Keep in mind that the "back of the book" also refers to names being 'blotted out from the book of life' and those 'who endure to the end' amongst other warnings. While our desire should be to be amongst those who rule and reign with Christ, we should take careful note of the conditions of obedience and other constraints that are set out clearly throughout the Bible. If Paul was concerned that he might not finish the race, how much more should each of us be concerned. Complacency is certainly one of the footholds that Satan is seeking to use to destroy the children of God.

19. POVERTY IS AN INDICATOR NOT A MEASURE

Before I write further, I must clearly position my thinking with regard to 'poverty' and why I believe that the Lord led me to use poverty as the pivotal focus of this document as well as why I believe that there is currently so the following year.

It is important to recognize that Jesus did not guarantee that we would all be abundantly materially rich in this life. He commanded us to 'store up treasures in Heaven' not on earth. He also stated that 'it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God'. He also told the rich young ruler to 'sell all that he had and give to the poor'. We read throughout the scriptures of anointed men of God who spent much of their lives in apparent lack, John the Baptist would certainly seem to be one. It depends on whether locusts and wild honey are your favourite meal or not; and how we measure contentment with Godliness against, for example, the madman of the Gadarenes. God surely supplied all of John's needs.

These scriptures indicate to me that while God desires us to prosper and be in health, He does not desire this at the expense of our immortal souls. I am persuaded that the tests and trials with regard to finances are designed to bring us to a point where we are able to handle material prosperity without it affecting our relationship with God and our fellow men. Part of this process involves reaching a point where we recognize that all that we have belongs to God and that we are merely custodians of it with a responsibility to give as He directs us. In particular, this requires that those who have their own businesses realize that it is actually God's business and that it is their responsibility to take care of the business on His behalf. As with Paul, we are required to learn how to 'be abased' as well as to live in abundance.

The prosperity that God chooses to give us on this earth may be more a function of His calling on our lives than it is a function of our 'wants' and perceived 'needs'. In other words, if we are called to pastor congregations in areas of great poverty, what those of us who come from relatively affluent backgrounds consider to be poverty may constitute great abundance and blessing in such a community. The measure of prosperity that God considers appropriate to each of our lives MAY be directly related to the level of prosperity that He considers appropriate to the mission that He has given us. Accordingly, I want to stress that, no matter what you may find written elsewhere in this document, you should not categorically interpret a situation that you consider to be poverty as necessarily indicating that any of what is written here applies to you. Do not, however, lightly disregard it either. These principles also apply to health and overall spiritual condition.

Conversely there are many who claim to be Christians who are prospering and yet there are clearly areas of their lives that are not right. Again it appears that, in some cases, God's Grace covers this situation while in others the person concerned is not doing material damage to the forces of darkness and, accordingly, Satan leaves them alone. Thus, I make the assertion that financial and material prosperity is no more an indication that you are fully in the will of God than poverty is an indication that you are entirely out of the will of God.

If these last statements appear contradictory, it is simply a reflection of my observation that people seem to develop 'backward' arguments to support preconceived spiritual conclusions. There are numerous scientific, mathematic, engineering and other sources on problem solving, logic, etc which, according to my recollection, will more clearly demonstrate the futility of facile argument in order to deduce the standing of any individual with God. He 'looks on our hearts' and we are told not to judge.

Where the contents of this document are intended to apply, is in cases where you have a sure conviction that God has promised you a level of prosperity in which you know you are not walking. This appears to be much of the 'Body of Christ' today. Equally, many of the points set out in this document probably apply to other areas where the promises of God do not appear to be effective.

Ultimately, each of us will stand before His throne and be called to account for our lives totally on our own. If I am in error, I will be called to account for my error and it's impact on you and others. If you have accepted my error, you will be called to account for your decision to accept it! In the meanwhile, only you can assess where you stand with God, that is not for me or any other human being to judge. If He speaks to you through one of His apostles or prophets, that is a different matter.

20. FAITH

Nothing in this document should be taken as in any way seeking to deny the importance of faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please God and **"everything that does not come from faith is sin"** Romans 14:23. This entire document assumes that the reader is aware of the importance of faith. There are excellent numerous teachings on faith by Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin and numerous others. This document is not intended to duplicate these teachings and any reader who is not informed of the principles of faith and walking by faith is encouraged to seek such teachings as a priority. This document is intended to assist people who have found that their faith does not appear to be working.

21. THE NAME OF JESUS

The Name of Jesus Christ is the Name above ALL Names. At the name of Jesus Christ, every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord. There is immense power in the name of Jesus. Never forget this and never use the name of Jesus lightly, vainly or as a common word. It is the Holiest name of ALL names. I have experienced angels catching my car as it hurtled sideways over an embankment and gently setting the car down at the foot of the embankment, just by crying out "Jesus" as I lost control. Many others have had similar experiences. Never forget the power of the name of Jesus and never cease to confess the name of Jesus over your life and circumstances. But confess it with respect and reverence for who He is!

22. CONCLUSION

I have set out in the sections above to more clearly explain my thinking behind what follows. This discussion is predicated on the assumption that, in order to develop a rational argument it is necessary to make certain assumptions and principles explicit. I hope that I have, to a point, accomplished this.

Since I am certain that there are passages that will prove not to be clear or open to misinterpretation or that there are assumptions that I have made that I have not made explicit, I welcome all comments and suggestions for improvement or correction.

CHAPTER 2 - BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous section, I set out some introductory concepts which I hope have assisted you to better position what follows and to understand my approach to what is set out below. Further thoughts are set out in subsequent sections.

As previously indicated, the sections that follow more or less follow the sequence in which, as I recall, God first revealed them to me as I sought to grow in Christ and to lay hold of the promises of God. I wish to stress again, THIS IS NOT A RECIPE BOOK, it is based on my own experience and I am quite certain that there will be different things in the lives of others and different priorities. Only God The

Holy Spirit, through His Word and assisted by His Holy Apostles and Prophets can lead you to address the issues that apply to your life right now. Remember also that you are engaged in a long distance race or journey. Some things below you may have dealt with years ago, others you may only confront in days to come. Sift these notes and seek what is wheat to you today, in Jesus Name.

In the first part of this section I will probably revisit many issues which are fundamental to your existing life style in Christ. However, I have found in my own life that these issues sometimes get overlooked and have to be revisited so I have taken the liberty of mentioning them here for the sake of completeness.

2. READ THE WORD DAILY

The first major revelation that I obtained after receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour was that the Bible is His Word and that my Spirit is fed by reading and hearing the Word.

I have repeatedly found that when I am less than diligent in reading the Word, things start to go wrong.

Based on wise counsel that I received at an early stage, I made a real effort to read Psalms and especially Proverbs on a regular basis and to read both Old and New Testaments from beginning to end on a continuous basis getting through the Old Testament about once a year and the New Testament about three or four times a year. As mentioned previously, I also made a decision to accept the Bible as the Living Word of God and asked Him by faith to answer all my questions which He has. I imagine that this has played a pivotal role in bringing me to the point of writing this document.

If you are not reading your Bible at least morning and evening virtually every day, I would encourage you to start immediately, God can speak to you through the Bible and also train up your spirit more than you can possibly imagine if you have never read your Bible regularly. If you have let your daily Bible reading slip, you should not be surprised if Satan is having a field day with your finances or other areas of your life.

3. TRANSLATION ISSUES

Many people find that they have difficulty with the Bible. It is important to realize that the Word of God is the original Hebrew / Aramaic / Greek text and that, in cases, there are errors in translation that cancel, distort or in extreme cases pervert the Word of God.

In recent months (early 1998), the Lord has increasingly shown me that there are aspects of the NIV (New International Version) which are suspect, in fact I have heard one preacher, saved from the New Age movement refer to the NIV as the New Age Version. Other translations also contain editorial licence. One school of thought holds that the original King James Version (KJV) is the only reliable translation, many recommend the New King James Version (NKJV). I have found that God has spoken to me on many issues through the Amplified Version (AMP). Others recommend other translations. I have found the Living Torah series (a Jewish translation) to be a highly anointed and very informative translation of much of the Old Testament.

I mention this here firstly in order that readers should take note of it, secondly in order that, if there are statements or interpretations that I make in this document that you do not agree with, you consider the possibility that you have been influenced by an inaccurate translation and therefore investigate other translations.

It seems to me that, in extreme cases, by quoting a translation that is significantly inaccurate, one could be giving Satan a foothold in one's life.

4. DISCREPANCIES IN THE BIBLE

Some people have difficulty with the fact that there are minor inconsistencies between historical accounts, particularly between Kings and Chronicles and the four Gospels. It is important to realize that certain of the books of the Bible have been given by direct "dictation" if you will of the Holy Spirit through God's Prophets. Other books are historical accounts, written after the event, of situations in which God moved. Kings and Chronicles and the Gospels together with certain other books fall into this category. As best I know, the discrepancies referred to occur almost exclusively in these books. This does not, in any way influence the integrity of the Bible as a whole but wisdom is required to recognize this reality. It is foolishness to argue with someone that the entire Bible, every word of all 66 books is inerrant when 2 Samuel 24:1 and 1 Chronicles 21:1 both seem to describe the same incident differently. While it is possible that this may be influenced by translation, there are certainly grounds to admit the possibility that the scribes who recorded these two historical records may have relied at this point on verbal accounts which had become slightly distorted. To the best of my knowledge, none of these discrepancies has any material impact on any aspect of the Christian and Jewish faiths which is of any material consequence to us.

5. APPLY THE WORD

Again a very basic principle. If you do not apply what you read in the Bible in your own life then there is little point in reading it. Continuous prayerful consideration of the Word and it's application is vital.

6. CALL NO MAN TEACHER

Jesus said to 'call no man teacher' and said that He was sending the Holy Spirit to be our teacher. Rely on Him to show you how to interpret and apply His Word. Regard teachings as a means of gaining further insight and access to other people's revelation but understand always your accountability to ensure that what is taught is of God and NOT of man and keep in mind the remarks above about all works of man containing some error.

7. ERROR CONCEALED AMONGST TRUTH

On several occasions, I have heard speakers deliver a powerful and anointed message but deviate into their own understanding, and sometime serious error, at some point. In several cases this deviation has been into areas of false doctrine and modern folk lore which a deeper investigation of scripture reveals to be incorrect. In some cases, these small amounts of error, amongst large amounts of truth are potentially spiritually life threatening. Constantly seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

There is also a risk that, because there has been so much truth in a message that the entire message is trustingly accepted as truth. Only Jesus has all the truth. Constantly remember the example of the pupil getting 75% for matric.

8. NOT ONE JOT OR TITTLE SHALL PASS AWAY

There is a tendency to disregard the Old Testament as well as the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ as being "too difficult". We must trust the Holy Spirit to reveal that which He requires us to know from ALL books of the Bible. If we do not read all books of the Bible regularly, He cannot speak to us through them. My own experience indicates that it is possible to read a particular book, such as Job, half a dozen times before you begin to receive from it and then suddenly you cannot understand why it never spoke to you before. This is a particularly important statement in the context of this

discourse, with Job being an example of a book that contains much wisdom applicable to the subject matter of this document but which is frequently referred to as being difficult to understand.

This observation is critically important in terms of this discourse. The Word of God is incredibly multi-faceted, I recently read a Jewish source which refers to the "'seventy facets' of the Torah's jewelled words" suggesting a richness which very few Christian readers have begun to understand. If we begin to appreciate this, we will begin to understand the extent to which every verse of the Bible can potentially contain an answer to a problem that we are experiencing that no one else we know has ever noticed. The Word of God truly is "New Every Morning".

Keep slogging through the entire Bible by faith and keep asking God to open it to you. If you chose not to read the entire Bible, that is your prerogative but you must accept responsibility for any consequences that may result.

9. FEED YOUR SPIRIT CONSTANTLY

In addition to reading your Bible daily, feed your spirit at every possible opportunity with audio tapes of teachings, praise and worship, etc in your car and at home. Read books, watch videos of teachings, crusades, etc, at home and listen to praise and worship at every opportunity.

Until you have consistently fed your spirit abundantly over a sustained period of time it is impossible to comprehend the difference that it will make to you. God is the source of all wisdom and understanding, He knows all that you need to know and, as difficult as it may be to grasp, the more time you spend with God, the more He will reveal of what you need to know.

One of the highlights of my spiritual life to date was an occasion when I was physically exhausted to the point that I seriously considered cancelling a one day management workshop for my most important client at the time. I had not done any preparation and felt that I was too tired to concentrate effectively for eight hours with a senior level management audience. In the event, I prayed in tongues while listening to praise tapes all the way to the client (approximately a 45 minute drive) and to undertake what I still consider to be the best facilitation that I have ever delivered and, in the process, completely redefined the workshop procedure in a fashion that has laid the foundation for many major opportunities subsequently. I truly believe that, if I had not fed my spirit in preference to adopting the ways of the world, the workshop would have been a failure and I would not have developed the technique referred to. We serve an awesome God who is far greater than our limited understanding allows us to grasp. I could share numerous other instances where by supernatural revelation I have found myself able to contribute constructively in meetings on subjects where, in the natural, I had no basis to say anything. The wisdom and understanding of God, obtained through prayer and feeding our spirit's on the Word of God is far beyond anything that we can gain through the worlds ways and teachings.

In the past five years I have not watched secular television or read newspapers other than briefly on isolated occasions and I have hardly read any secular technical books yet I can say with complete confidence that, my level of understanding in my chosen area of expertise and my acceptance as an expert in my field have grown more in that period than in all the previous years when I diligently watched the news, read the papers and read text books, etc. Yet, my name is scheduled to be listed in "Who's Who in the World" in 1999 and was listed in 1998 in "Who's Who in Science and Engineering". I have to give all the glory to God for this.

10. PRAYER

Spend as much time as possible in prayer, quiet time, etc with God. In the appendix I include some things that I have found helpful to pray. Recognize that God is "I am". He knows all things, He knows what you are going through and why and He knows what needs to happen in order for things to change, ask Him all you need to know.

At the same time, prayer is vital, all authority on earth has been given to man and God can do nothing unless we exercise our authority and pray things through. Adam gave all authority on the earth to Satan and, while Jesus has given His authority to His body, we have to wield that authority because Satan still controls a large proportion of the people on the earth and his demons and fallen angels are constantly seeking to "kill, steal and destroy".

I have found over the years that asking God to explain passages of scripture that I did not understand has always produced results. Asking for signs to guide me, provided the signs were consistent with His Word and He had not already spoken to me in depth has also been fruitful. A word of caution, pray for such signs SILENTLY in your heart NOT aloud. Asking that He bring the right people into your life and remove the wrong people from your life can produce some unpleasant surprises but is, in my own experience, a vital ongoing prayer.

At the same time, God is not amenable to demands, bribes, etc. He is the source of ALL wisdom and understanding and accordingly, you can enter into any discussion with Him that you might enter into with the most reputable professional advisor that you could consider retaining. Do not be afraid to ask Him what to pray but DO NOT berate Him and lecture Him, that will not get you anywhere. You could also be getting into witchcraft.

When you are unsure what to pray, pray in tongues. Wherever possible, formulate your question on the matter in hand in your own language and then pray in tongues until you feel that you have prayed all you can. Some people call this "praying through" referring to a sense of completeness or fulfilment that accompanies a prayer that has been prayed through to completion.

11. GOD'S PEOPLE PERISH FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

The Word of God says that His people "perish for lack of knowledge".

Much of what this document seeks to achieve is to make readers aware, on a headline basis, of aspects of spiritual life where they may lack knowledge that is causing them to perish. I strongly recommend that, where things in this document do not seem to apply to you on first reading, should you subsequently find yourself under attack, read through these notes again. My own experience is that we periodically have to revisit issues which we thought we had dealt with. Other things which at the time we thought did not apply to us suddenly have vital relevance months or years later.

12. THE SMALL THINGS : HONOURING GOD WITH YOUR TIME

At a very early stage, I was strongly impressed by a message in which the congregation were challenged to honour God with their time by being on time for Church meetings. That has been with me ever since and I truly believe that this is a small way in which we can show our reverence and respect for God. He has done so much for us.

13. RENEWING YOUR MIND

The principle of renewing our minds with the Word cannot be over stressed. There are many teachings on the subject so I do not want to belabour the point. My own experience indicates that if you are

constantly renewing your mind with the Word of God, constantly spending time in His presence and praying in the Spirit at every opportunity, He will take care of the information you need for your daily task far more than our understanding will permit us to grasp.

This may depend on your calling and gifting but I certainly recommend that you consider it carefully. The more you feed your spirit with secular TV, secular radio, newspapers and magazines, the more worldly minded you will be. The more you feed your spirit with The Word of God, anointed teachings, praise and worship and the like, the more God minded you will be and the more you will be led by the Holy Spirit in all that you do.

I urge you to pray about this and earnestly consider it. I have found that I can relax far more in the presence of God than at any secular event. I fully expect that, should you persevere down the path alluded to here, you will find that it is the same for you.

14. THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH

Eventually, if you constantly press in, you can expect to reach the situation where you can truly claim that "the joy of the Lord is my strength". As I write this, in the natural I am facing financial ruin but I do not think that I have ever had such settled assurance that "Jesus is mine" and that I am His and that He shall supply all my needs according to His riches in glory. It is an incredible experience which cannot be properly described unless you have been there yourself. Truly I can say "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil", it is a wonderful relief to experience that peace and joy that passes all understanding.

15. BE YE SEPARATE

We are called on to be separate while at the same time going into all the World to preach the Gospel. I have referred above to limiting exposure to the world through TV, Video, Newspapers, etc, the same applies to the people that you keep company with.

Great care is needed in discussing this subject since different people are called by God to have different types of interaction with different sectors of the world community. The fundamental principle that applies is to direct discretionary time to building ourselves up in the Holy Spirit and not exposing ourselves to the world system where it is not necessary.

This topic has the potential to become a religious dogma and so prayerful consideration is called for bearing in mind that, in order to complete the race and achieve the prize, certain sacrifices are likely to be called for. The question each of us has to address is how we will account for our time when we finally stand before the throne of God.

16. FORSAKE NOT THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE BRETHREN

My most significant spiritual progress has occurred during periods when I have been attending church twice on Sundays and attending at least one mid-week meeting. All evidence that I have encountered supports the view that the more time one spends in fellowship with other believers, particularly corporate praise and worship (not drinking tea and discussing the rugby). The more one is built up, the more opportunity there is for God to speak to you through His Word and His prophets and teachers.

If you are facing serious challenges I would encourage you to make every effort to spend as much time as possible in the company of anointed, spirit filled believers at meetings where God is moving.

17. MAKING THE HOLY SPIRIT WELCOME IN YOUR HOME, YOUR CAR, ETC

Recognizing that the Holy Spirit is as much a person as you or I and that He wants to spend time with you probably more than most of us want to spend time with Him. Make your home and car places where He feels welcome. Remove all ungodly artifacts, pictures, music, etc from your home and, if appropriate (see later) destroy it. For years now, I have played praise and worship music on low volume on the CD player in the house day and night and have prayed that Jesus should feel free to rest in my home whether I am there or not. My desire is that He should feel welcome at all times. As one realizes what He has done for us, it is only right that we should do all we can to ensure that our dwellings, cars, etc are places where He can spend time without being troubled by the iniquity of the world.

The more Jesus is welcome in your home, the less Satan will feel welcome.

18. THE FLESH

There are many teachings on 'putting the flesh under'. We all are tripped up by our emotions, our intellect, our habits and other factors associated with our bodies. We are enjoined to 'bring our bodies into submission'. Part of this involves willingness to endure discomfort, lack of sleep and other unpleasant things in order to serve God at times. Please note that I am not advocating some form of monastic existence but it there are times when we have to 'press in' no matter how tired we are. There are many testimonies of how people who have pressed in have found that their tiredness has subsided as they have drawn closer to God.

19. GOD DESTROYS THE FLESH, IDOLS AND OTHER THINGS

There are certain things in our lives that God, Himself will seek to destroy. Not all discomfort comes from Satan, although God may use Satan. Sometimes, God initiates things in order to bring us to where He wants us. Be careful that you do not find yourself rebuking Satan or condemning another person when God is in fact behind the apparent attack. He loves you so much that He does not want you to continue in certain things. Sometimes, we also pray for things we do not understand the consequences of and then do not like the outcome. I started praying for God to take the wrong people out of my life and then found the next few years rather uncomfortable as God systematically removed all the people that He did not want in my life. If you have prayed for Him to give you His Fire, do not be surprised if the heat is painful.

20. WATER BAPTISM

As I understand it, water baptism is something that we should undertake as soon as possible after we have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. I also do not find that it is an option. The washing away of sin and cleansing, etc associated with water baptism are a vital step towards sanctification and an effective Christian walk. Incidental, study of Jewish translations of the Torah reveal that water baptism (immersion in a Mikvah) was a fundamental and routine principle of cleansing of ANY uncleanness given to Moses at Mount Sinai. In other words, the Jews clearly understood what John the Baptist was doing!

21. PRAY IN THE SPIRIT WITHOUT CEASING

The gift of tongues / the ability to pray "in the Spirit" is vital and often underestimated. It is possible to pray under your breath in tongues in a meeting, on a plane or train or in diverse other situations. It builds up your spirit and refreshes you and allows you to pray the perfect will of God. If you are not constantly praying in the Spirit there is a strong likelihood that you will come under attack.

22. FOOLISH AND EMPTY WORDS

The Word is very specific about empty / vain words. Many so-called jokes and practical jokes are, when push comes to shove, lies, all lies are from Satan (he is the father of lies) and Revelation 21:8 and other scriptures clearly indicate that God hates lies. Jokes and practical jokes and particularly those that include distortions of the truth must surely open the door to the enemy.

23. NEGATIVE CONFESSION

The power of life and death are in the tongue. If you confess your faith and the Word of God, you will energise the Angels of heaven and all around you will know who you are serving. If you constantly confess defeat and make statements which are contrary to the Word of God, you are likely to energize Satan's cohorts, fallen angels and demons. Satan will only know if he is getting through to you by your words or your actions. Only God knows your thoughts and your heart. If you cannot confess your faith, keep quiet. There is, however, a distinction between making a positive confession and a presumptuous confession. Confessing carnal, natural, worldly things which God has not expressly promised is not faith, it is presumption at best, foolishness and deceit at worst. Faith is also not confessing things to audiences which God never intended to hear them.

24. RESTITUTION

Restitution is not a concept the church talks about much. We prefer to believe that, when we are born again, old things pass away, not just in terms of salvation, but also in terms of a much broader spectrum of issues. I find no scripture to substantiate this and my own experience has proved conclusively to me that claiming salvation, pleading the Blood of Christ and repenting to God does not relieve us of our responsibility to make right with people whom we have wronged, whether before or after making a decision to accept Jesus Christ as our personal saviour.

Restitution, as I have encountered it, has included amongst other things:

1. Face to face and telephonic repentance of wrong actions and words, including a man who at one stage had threatened to kill me because of the wrong that I had done him (he would have been scripturally justified in doing so by the way, the sin that I had committed before receiving Christ carries the penalty of death in scripture). I even had to contact him three times before he would speak to me and each time he declared that he never wanted to hear my name again. Yet the Holy Spirit would not let me go, eventually much anger, bitterness and hurt was released. God was not interested in my comfort, He was interested in the well being of the person I had wronged.
2. Written repentance and asking for forgiveness of people who would not speak to me.
3. Returning items that I had "borrowed" or removed from an institution which was not using them and probably did not want them, in fact they would probably have given them to me if I had asked but I did not. God left me in no doubt that even though the incidents had happened nearly twenty years ago He still wanted me to make right (and not anonymously either) but in His mercy He made a way!
4. He showed me that He could not protect my house against thieves for as long as I had stolen goods in my house, no matter how small the value of the items.
5. Offering financial recompense to a person that I had grievously wronged in order to make good a long term and ongoing financial loss that had resulted from major sin in my life before

receiving Christ. The offer was rejected and the first cheques returned so I did not have to pay but I had reached the point where I was prepared to trust God and make the sacrifice because I was so convicted.

For as long as we have not made right and restored what we have caused others to lose or have taken from them, in other words made restitution, no matter how small or how great the restitution required, Satan can go before the throne of God and claim his legal right to attack us. While the Grace and Mercy of God may extend to those issues that we truly can do nothing about and perhaps those that God does not bring to our attention, He expects a much more sincere effort from us to identify these issues and deal with them head-on and with integrity than many Christians seem willing to make.

25. WE ONLY HEAR GOD WITHIN THE LIMITATIONS OF OUR PARADIGM

It has been my own experience and my observation that, if we cannot conceive that God could say a particular thing, we have great difficulty hearing Him and others tend to label what we hear as being from the devil. Once you start praying to God to show you the reasons why you are having the problems you are experiencing, expect the unexpected. Expect him to open up passages of scripture that you have never heard taught on or which contradict teachings you have heard. Be prepared to ask for signs in confirmation and be prepared to have Him lead you to buy books, tapes and other materials in out of the way places. Be prepared to have unlikely characters sent across your path not all of whom are necessarily Christians and some of whom may be quite unsavoury, He did it throughout scripture so do not be surprised if He does it in your life.

Recognize that if you have been told that restitution is "Old Testament" and God tells you to make restitution that you will have difficulty believing that God is speaking to you. Those around you will probably have even greater difficulty. By way of example, if you have been raised to know the colour white as being called "black" and God tells you that this colour is actually white you will have great difficulty recognizing that God is speaking to you or that a prophet is hearing God. This example more clearly demonstrates the paradigm problem that the church has with doctrine. There are far more cases in our current understanding than we realize, of things that we consider to be white that are actually black. Recognize that you alone are accountable for your walk and ask Him to break your preconceived ideas in order to receive what He is saying to you. If it does not make sense, ask for signs that will clearly show you that God is speaking to you. And, above all, be prepared for surprises and rejection by those who are not as flexible as you! If God gives you a revelation, do not rush out and share it prematurely, others may not be as excited as you are!

There is a saying in the world **"if you do things the way you have always done them you will get the result you have always obtained"**. If you ask God for advice or help, over and above telling you to do things you have not done previously, He may well tell you to do things you do not believe He could tell you to do. Consider the life of David as a good example. Throughout history, God has done things He has never done before and may never do again, for example the virgin birth, the ark, the slaying of Goliath, etc.

Remember, we are at war and therefore, part of the advantage is for God to constantly change the ways He does things in order to outwit Satan and catch him by surprise. Guerilla fighters rely heavily on surprise and doing the unexpected and outrageous to outwit heavier enemies. Since Satan has occupation of the earth and we are therefore in a very real way "behind enemy lines" this is the way God often operates.

26. OBEY GOD AND NOT MAN

In my own experience of restitution and other matters, I reached a point where I knew with complete certainty that my heart was right before God on the issue concerned and that He wanted me to take certain action. When I was unsure of the way to go about it and when I consulted friends and pastors on more than one occasion, I found myself subject not just to criticism but intense verbal abuse. On one matter, I waited over two years. As a result I had reached such a desperate financial situation that I had no alternative but to make restitution by faith and saw an immediate turnaround.

The Bible is full of people who paid a heavy price (in the natural) for listening to men and not obeying God rather than man.

27. OBEDIENCE IN FINANCES

Obedience with the small things for me was an important point at a fairly early stage. If we ignore the Holy Spirit when He speaks to us to help a beggar, a down and outer, a hitch hiker or others of His children who have fallen on hard times, how can we reasonably expect Him to help us avoid a similar fate?

My experience of obedience, or more accurately "disobedience", ranges from suffering serious financial loss because I did not listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit, to having to walk several kilometres because the taxi I had ordered did not arrive instead of taking the taxi that God had already sent, to having to drive a distance of about 50 kilometres round trip on several occasions in order to try and meet someone that God had told me to give a prophetic word to when I first met him.

Kenneth Hagin and others report instances where God told them to give small sums of money to others when that was all the money they had and subsequently having God use them mightily and tell them that He could not have used them if they had not been obedient in this area. Kenneth Hagin's booklet "Obedience in Finances" is, as far as I am concerned a MUST READ.

In my own experience, I had my most dramatic encounter with the Holy Spirit after God had repeatedly tested me in areas of obedience in giving between R10 and R100 to beggars on the side of the road and then tested me in giving a word of encouragement to a pastor in a church where I was unknown. Scripturally, total obedience is a prerequisite for walking fully in the blessings of God.

28. OBEDIENCE TO HIS WORD AND HIS SPIRIT

I have touched on the question of obedience in various aspects. I cannot stress enough that disobedience in any area opens the gate wide for Satan to attack us and that no price in terms of condemnation by men should be sufficient to dissuade us from doing God's will. He requires obedience, even unto death. The Bible is full of martyrs and it ends with martyrs. Are you prepared to follow your saviour even unto the death of the cross?

29. SEEK THE PRESENCE OF GOD

There is a distinct difference between prayer and even "quiet times" and actively seeking to come into the presence of God. This is not necessarily a prerequisite for prosperity but I think that unless you are very conscious of the need to be constantly in the presence of God, prosperity may destroy you.

In the age in which we now find ourselves, financial blessings may be limited if we are not actively seeking to be in His presence and to do His will at all times.

30. ADULTERY / FORNICATION

The Bible is full of injunctions against adultery and fornication and yet, the church as a whole has lost an understanding of what adultery and fornication actually are. This is a complex subject and a minefield of religious dogma as most current teachings in this regard are, at best, incomplete if not seriously inaccurate. I hope, God willing, to produce a separate discourse on adultery and all the related issues but I will seek to address the basics here.

Firstly it is important to understand that Deuteronomy lays down very specific tests to determine virginity and ordains death for any woman who is found not be a virgin on her marriage night. The marriage covenant is a blood covenant cut in the flesh (hymen) of the virgin bride. While physical death may be unlikely in these days, the spiritual death that ultimately accompanies unrepented adultery and fornication remains very clear in Revelation 21:8. Note that repentance means that you do not return to your sin, not that you keep sinning and keep repenting.

The scriptural states of women as I understand it are approximately as follows:

1. **A maiden** = a girl under marriageable age.
2. **A virgin** = a girl of marriageable age (most authorities agree that this is twelve and a half years in scriptural terms) who has not had sexual intercourse.
3. **A wife** = a woman who has been legitimately betrothed and married to a man and engaged in sexual intercourse with him. Marriage is the process of cleaving in Genesis 2:24 which includes the cutting of a blood covenant. There is no such thing as sex before marriage.
4. **A widow** = a wife whose husband has died.

Scriptural references to widows seem to include divorcees but ONLY those who have been divorced in accordance with the scriptural grounds set out by Jesus which effectively amount to spiritual betrayal. Ideally, in the case of a divorced woman, all spiritual ties with the former spouse should be broken so that the spiritual state is the same as that of a widow. A divorced woman who has not been divorced on scriptural grounds becomes an adulteress if she has intercourse with another man.

5. **An adulteress** = a wife who has had sexual intercourse with a man or men other than her husband, adultery brings spiritual death to both participants unless repented of. If she is legitimately married to another man, she must refrain from intercourse with any man other than that legitimate husband, failing which she will commit adultery repeatedly and her sin then becomes wilful. If she had effectively been put away by her previous husband for scripturally sound reasons, she would appear to be free to remarry once she has truly repented. If not, she is currently in limbo unless God clearly speaks in her situation since there are certain aspects of doctrine in the modern church surrounding various scriptures to do with Exodus 21:10 and others. This will be addressed in detail, God willing, in a future document.
6. **A harlot** = any woman who has had sexual intercourse with more than one man with the exception of a widow who has remarried and a divorced woman who was divorced on a scriptural basis. Given that secular statistics suggest that only about 5% of women in the world are virgins on their legal wedding night, the indications are that there are many women who have inadvertently become harlots.

It is important to understand that virginity and sexual intercourse are the criteria for determining harlotry and adultery NOT a piece of paper issued by the state or the church. Ecclesiastical marriage (marriage by the church) has only been an institution for about 500 years.

Any woman who is reading this who has at any time had sexual intercourse with more than one man and any man who has had intercourse with such a woman, should take particular account of the sections that follow.

Any man who takes the virginity of a 'virgin of the house of Israel' should pay particular attention to his responsibilities in terms of scripture and, if he has abandoned such a woman, should take note of his responsibilities and the possible impacts that this may have in terms of giving Satan footholds in his life. Note also what Paul says in Corinthians about joining the temple of the Holy Spirit to a harlot.

I would urge any man or woman who has joined themselves to more than one member of the opposite sex to prayerfully consider their situation, seek counsel and seek guidance from the Holy Spirit. From my own experience, you are wide open to attack! Pray and ask God to bring you into contact with a person who can effectively advise you and minister to you. There is great ignorance on this topic and many will dismiss what is written here as not being of God. I assure you that the core principles are from God.

31. THE ONE FLESH BOND

An examination of Genesis 2:24 which relates to the formation of the "one flesh" bond between husband and wife and reference to the scriptures which reference this passage, reveal that the "one flesh" bond is an unbreakable spiritual bond granted by God in order to bind husband and wife together. As the bond intensifies through repeated sexual encounters, so will love also intensify if both parties give themselves to one another in accordance with scripture. Corinthians and other passages clearly reveal that multiple one flesh bonds can coexist. The Gospels clearly indicate that the one flesh bond cannot be broken by man.

My own experience indicates that the one flesh bond can only be broken in cases where the bond is illegitimate in the sight of God, where the party concerned comes to the Throne of Grace in true repentance and truly desires to have the bond broken and where there is prayer in agreement. Just praying any old prayer DOES NOT WORK.

For as long as you have one flesh bonds with past sexual partners (whether heterosexual or male-male) you are caught up in a spiritual spiders web which causes confusion, conflict and torment and which opens the door wide for Satan to attack you. Paul says that fornication is a sin against your own body and, as you gain an appreciation for the strength of the one-flesh bond you will understand why.

As noted above, I hope to produce a further discourse on this subject. In the interim, my advice to you is, if this applies to you in any way, seek counsel from someone who really knows the subject. In my experience there are not many. Again pray for God to bring you into contact with someone who can help you and seek clear confirmation that the person concerned has been sent by God.

32. LUST IN THE HEART

Jesus warned that if a man looked on a woman and lusted, he was committing adultery with her in his heart. The world would have you believe that "fantasy" is O.K., it is not. Indications are that spiritual interaction can occur and that this can impair the level of intimacy with your wife resulting in a breakdown in agreement.

33. AGREEMENT BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

Scripture states that a house divided against itself cannot stand. There is also a passage of scripture that states that if husband and wife are not in agreement, your prayers will be hindered. From my own experience, this scripture applies to all one flesh unions. Consider, therefore, the situation in which you as a man have one flesh bonds with several women who in turn each have one flesh bonds with several men and you will realize that you have one flesh bonds with other men. An abomination in the sight of God but also a spiritual spiders web that will cause your prayers to be hindered indefinitely. It is highly unlikely that if you have one flesh bonds with people you have long since lost contact with that they will be in agreement with you regarding anything of significance in your life.

From personal experience, until these one flesh bonds are severed by the Grace and Mercy of God through prayer in agreement in the name of Jesus, your prayers on diverse fronts will be seriously hindered other than to the extent that God, in His Wisdom and Mercy extends Grace to you during your spiritual infancy.

34. THE JEZEBEL FACTOR

Disagreement between husband and wife often results from what is best termed the Jezebel factor. The Jezebel spirit is a particular demon that oppresses many. It is one of the spirit's behind "women's liberation" and other aspects of women seeking to dominate men contrary to scripture. Because it attacks the very model of the church submitted as a bride to her Lord Jesus Christ, it is a fertile area for Satan's attacks. A manipulative Christian wife can control her husband by disagreeing with him, behind his back or in prayer and causing business to fail. When he comes into agreement with her or she wants to create the impression that she is behind him, things suddenly turn around. Much of the church have compromised to the point where God fearing husbands are counselled that it is their responsibility to come into agreement with their rebellious wives rather than wives being counselled that they have a scriptural responsibility to submit to their husbands. Husbands are even prevented from ministering when their wives refuse to come into agreement with them.

Clearly I am not referring here to husbands who are continuously in rebellion and out of the will of God, those who turn to Satanism and those who are unsaved.

35. DIVORCE

As with marriage, true divorce is not as it is widely considered to be. As indicated in the previous sections, marriage / sexual union gives rise to an unbreakable "one-flesh" bond. Jesus indicates quite clearly in Matthew and elsewhere that divorce for any reason other than "fornication" or "unfaithfulness" gives rise to adultery. It is important to understand that the word used in Matthew 5 is "Porneia" which relates not only to sexual immorality but to spiritual unfaithfulness, as in betrayal. From personal experience in my own life and in the lives of several other Christians that I know, God only sanctions divorce when all Grace to the sinning party has been exhausted or when the party who has been betrayed is at the absolute limit of their physical and emotional resources and cannot continue.

Again, this is a complex subject that I hope to address in more detail in a subsequent document. It is especially important to understand that you stand alone on this matter. Your decision to divorce is a decision that must be taken between you and God. You cannot stand on the counsel of any human being although they can assist you to understand the scriptural considerations. The scriptural penalty of being declared an adulterer/ess before the throne of God on the day of Judgement is too great for any person other than yourself to take responsibility for the decision.

Likewise, any decision that you may take to marry a man or woman who claims to be divorced is of such eternal import that you must take that decision between you and God. Only He can reveal to you whether He has truly released the other party to marry again.

If you find yourself already in a remarriage situation when you read this, it is up to you to discern the will of God. I am unable to express a categorical opinion other than to state that I believe that there are certain circumstances where God may require a woman to return to her original husband and that I am aware of other circumstances, including my own, where God has blessed the divorce and remarriage of both parties.

Note that a number of Jesus' comments on divorce apply to casual "putting away" of a wife because she is not pleasing to her husband or he desires another wife in her stead. I believe that this is the divorce that "God Hates". Not divorce where one partner has totally betrayed the other and shows no signs of coming to repentance, evaluated by God, NOT man. This also seemingly applies where one partner has repeatedly refused salvation and is attacking the other spouse to a point that is threatening their wellbeing or their own salvation or spiritual growth or preventing them from fulfilling their calling. That is between each person and God, no third party dare judge.

36. PRIDE versus HUMILITY

The Bible is full of warnings and injunctions against pride. Certainly in my own experience, it has been the most pernicious sin, constantly creeping in in various forms.

I would almost go so far as to suggest that, if you have been experiencing the blessings of God and suddenly things start to go wrong, check pride first. Pride in my experience manifests in diverse ways, starting with worldly pride and arrogance, graduating on to spiritual and religious pride, vanity (the spirit of vanity is the spirit of the false prophet), etc. Each attack seems to adopt a new nuance and creep up on one unawares.

Certainly in my own experience, one cannot afford to disregard a comment from any quarter that you are proud, there is likely to be some truth in it.

I have seen pride manifest in a great diversity of ways. There is a form of pride that creeps up on people who are very meek and humble in many ways but who start to manifest pride in very obscure areas of their lives.

The moment that we start looking down on others, believing that we are God's gift to humanity, pronouncing opinions on King David or otherwise setting ourselves up as 'god' and judging others, pride can take hold very rapidly.

Almost certainly Satan jumps on pride and since God hates pride so much He probably gives Satan a pretty generous leeway to take us apart if we start to become proud.

37. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN CAN TAKE TIME TO MANIFEST

As with things in the natural, cause and effect can be some way apart. If things start to go wrong, this can sometimes be attributed to sin committed several months previously. It would appear that, mostly, God extends a 'period of Grace' in which we can repent or else it is simply a case that the previous blessings take time to attenuate because of their momentum.

In these circumstances, a few new trials may be added in order to encourage us to deal not only with recurrent and old sin but also to deal with issues that had previously been covered by Grace.

For this reason, we should be constantly praying to God to help us to stay on track and to show us areas of sin in our lives.

38. THE BLESSINGS OF OBEDIENCE ALSO CAN TAKE TIME TO MANIFEST

In the same vein, once one starts repenting and dealing with the sin, the consequences of sin seem to have gathered momentum and it generally takes time for the situation to turn around. Sin is a luxury that we cannot afford. Sustained sin is something that will cause immeasurable harm in our lives and to those around us. Yet so many of us seem to keep being lured into the same traps, time after time.

39. DEMONS IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD AND DELIVERANCE

One of the more controversial discoveries of the journey that I am, after a fashion, chronicling here, was the discovery that I was seriously demonized. Most Christians have some demons that have not been dealt with. Over the years, the Lord has brought me into contact with a variety of books and tapes on the subject and more recently into contact with a number of prophetic deliverance ministers. In my case, after serving listening to Satan in a big way on and off for a substantial part of 40 years different demons were still being identified and cast out four years after I first became aware of deliverance.

If you are not aware that Christians can be oppressed (NOT possessed) by demons, I recommend the book "In the name of Satan" by Bob Larson for a series of first hand encounters with demons on Christians. Remember that Jesus ministry was almost entirely to the people of Israel, the believers of His day. There are scriptures which clearly indicate that believers can receive a 'different spirit'. Teachings by Benny Hinn, Mary Garrison and many others address this subject.

Personal experience and experience of many that I know has confirmed that demonization of believers is a reality. Pride, lust, perversion, whoredom, lying, religion, poverty, control, jealousy and competition, heaviness (including depression) and a great diversity of other factors can be demonic. More extreme spirits such as Pharaoh, Jezebel and similar spirits may also be associated with principalities and powers.

It appears that the physical idols in the Old Testament are a type and shadow of demons in the New Testament. Given that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, the progressive introduction of idols into the Temple in Jerusalem, culminating in their introduction into the Holy of Holies, indicates the manner in which demons can impregnate a believer.

Demonic oppression may give rise to persistent sin resulting in strongholds in the believers life which are impossible to eliminate without deliverance. Deliverance, in turn requires adequate knowledge, assurance of the believers authority in Christ, knowledge of the effective application of the Blood of Jesus and the ministering of deliverance. Prophetic gifting is almost essential in dealing with demonic oppression in order to obtain guidance from the Holy Spirit in terms of the sequence of deliverance, strong men, gate keepers and other demons that do not necessarily manifest directly as well as to identify curses and other factors that have given the demons a legal right to enter and remain. It is not my intention to write a detailed explanation of demons and deliverance in this discourse, only to raise your awareness to the possibility that you might be demonized to a point and therefore to sensitize you to the possibility of seeking deliverance ministry as a means of speedily and effectively dealing with certain aspects of your life which may be oppressed.

It is my impression that virtually every person who calls themselves a Christian will have at least some demonic presence in their lives unless they have been ministered to in this area at some time or have

been raised in a very sanctified environment and never committed any sin that could have given a demon a foothold.

While many Christians are offended at the suggestion that they might be demonized, it is important to recognize that Satan or Beelzebub is "the Lord of the flies" and demons are, in a spiritual sense, little different to flies, mosquitoes, ticks and other insects and parasites that can harass us or be picked up in certain environments. In the same way that a mosquito alighting on your skin and sucking blood does not indicate anything wrong with you, a demon alighting on your flesh and triggering certain behaviour does not necessarily indicate anything spiritually wrong with you. Demons are opportunistic, they will alight on you and make suggestions to your spirit which, if you act on them could cause you to sin thus giving them a legal right to remain and establish a stronger foothold on you. Over time, using similar tactics, demons can bring in more and stronger demons until, in extreme cases rebellion against God occurs to a point where no salvation is possible. In most cases, from what I can establish, demonization gives rise to sins in limited areas which results in oppression and defeat in certain aspects of the believers life. This is a critical aspect of the spiritual warfare that we are engaged in that is very little understood, even by those who have considerable knowledge and experience. God is now revealing much of the knowledge that has been lost over the generations.

My experience suggests, that if a person does not believe that they could have a demon or demons or if they do not genuinely and seriously wish to be set free, deliverance is unlikely to be effected. Testimonies of those who can see in the spirit realm indicate that demons may only move a few feet away from the person on whom they have been resident and may return almost immediately if there is doubt, unbelief, uncertainty or if the person instructing them to leave is unsure of their authority or has, themselves, certain sin that weakens the anointing on their own lives. In some cases, demons do not move at all.

If the legal basis on which a demon has gained a right to enter a body has not been dealt with at its roots and entirely removed by confession and repentance, restitution, cutting off, etc there is no legal right for the person ministering deliverance to command the demon to leave. As such, it can be expected that, when ministering deliverance prophetically, God will only reveal those demons for which there is a legal right to demand removal at that time. The fact that deliverance has been ministered prophetically does not guarantee that a person is entirely free. There may be core issues to be dealt with beyond the scope of knowledge and experience of the person ministering deliverance to counsel on or beyond the level of spiritual maturity of the person being ministered to in order to enforce the victory and prevent reinfestation, which will be seven times worse.

It would seem that reckless ministry of deliverance in which demons are bound and instructed to leave when they have a legal right to remain, could result in the person ministering granting the enemy a legal right to attack them.

In most cases, deliverance is a process, it has been likened to the peeling off of onion skins. There is a limit to what one person can stand in a single session of deliverance ministry and spiritual, physical and emotional healing may be required before the next session of ministry in order that the person is not left excessively vulnerable to reinfestation. Jesus warned us that demons will return and seek to introduce a much greater infestation. We must guard against this through reading the Word, time spent in prayer, praying in the Spirit, time in fellowship, sanctifying our homes, keeping from sin, etc.

If you have been struggling for years to 'put your flesh under' on a particular issue without success, deliverance may well be the answer and you should consult an experienced deliverance minister as

soon as possible. If you do not know of such a person, ask God to bring you into contact with the person of His choosing and expect Him to lead you. This may take time.

Prophetic deliverance may also address issues such as curses, spiritual shackles, damaged spiritual armour and a variety of other aspects which will not be discerned in any other way. Jesus has not left us ill-equipped to deal with demonic infestation but Satan has very effectively undermined the churches ability to deal with these issues through religion and widespread lies that are propagated in the church.

40. ACCURSED THINGS IN YOUR POSSESSION

Allied to demonic oppression of the bodies, minds and emotions of believers is demonic infestation of our homes, places of work, etc. Experience suggests that demons can take up residence in a house or other physical location as a consequence of sin committed in that location, accordingly, a second hand-house or even a plot of land may have demons on it which need to be cast out.

In addition to this, any artefact which has demonic significance can give demons a right to enter your house, or attack you personally. I once ministered to a Christian family whose house had been burgled and was informed by God that their daughter had been given a satanic symbol (an Ankh) six months previously and that God could not protect the daughter or her possessions while this was in her possession. Books on idols or mythology, art books with photographs of Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek, Roman, Indian and other gods, pagan temples, etc can all give demons right of legal access. Certain Persian carpets, African wood carvings, voodoo masks, amulets, etc also give rights. Emblems of the Freemasons and other secret societies and items containing marks of demonic or satanic significance all give Satan the right to attack you. Many modern children's toys, games, etc contain satanic emblems. Troll's have demonic significance. I have ministered deliverance to a strong believer who backslid for five years into alcohol, strong drugs and other sin after he was given a fire screen with the face of a gargoyle (demonic figure) on it.

It is important to realize that demons gain access to our lives, not on the basis of conscious sin but on a strictly legal basis. Thus a child who has absolutely no knowledge of what is going on can be demonized by transgressing a spiritual law that gives a particular demon a right to enter. Likewise, a strong Christian can become heavily oppressed by demons that are given a legal right by ownership of an artefact given innocently as a gift. Particular care should be taken concerning the purchase of many artifacts and toys that are being sold over the counter in all sorts of shops.

41. PHYSICAL IDOLS

A word of caution, if you are facing financial ruin and you are striving to keep your house, your car or other possessions, it could well be that they have become idols and things may not turn around until you let them go. In such circumstances, shouting at God and lecturing Him on what His word says and demanding that He let you keep your house or car is tantamount to witchcraft and total rebellion. He may well require that, at the very least you place the item "on the altar" of sacrifice and consent to His will being done. If you have gone too far, you may well have to lose everything and start again. Remember, the issue is to "store up treasure in heaven" NOT on earth. God is not interested in assisting you to store up treasure on earth at the expense of your immortal soul.

Much has been preached about houses and cars and similar items becoming idols in our lives. At one time, I reached a point where certain things in my life were sub-consciously becoming more important in my life than God and I was looking to them as my source instead of to God. At a point, God had to remove those things from my life. Material things which become idols in the lives of believers will give

rise to attack. Anything which causes you to disobey God or to take your eyes off God is an idol. It is also possible for people to become idols, a spouse or pastor who demands obedience contrary to the Word of God or the leading of the Holy Spirit are two of the most prevalent in my experience. The Word of God says "submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you". Submission to a spouse or pastor who is in rebellion causes you to become yoked to them and to set them up as an idol over your complete submission to Almighty God.

42. SPIRIT OF STUPOR : EYES THAT DO NOT SEE, EARS THAT DO NOT HEAR

Romans 11:8 refers to a 'spirit of stupor, eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear'. This came upon the children of Israel as a result of their disobedience and appears to be widespread in the church. This is a very specific demon but I mention it because in my own experience it causes people not to obtain revelation when reading the word of God and also confuses what they see and hear in the spirit realm. If you are having difficulty receiving from the Word of God or find that you seem not to be hearing the same things when messages are preached in church or reading the same things in books that are recommended to you on spiritual matters, I suggest that you take authority over a spirit of stupor, but not before you have dealt with any areas of known disobedience in your life.

43. CHRISTIAN OWNERSHIP OF A BUSINESS

The business will be affected by it's owners spiritual state. My experience indicates that if the owner or owners of a business are Christian and they will be the principal individuals to benefit if the business prospers, this will give Satan a legal right to attack the entire business. It does appear that believers working for the company who do not give Satan any basis to attack them will be taken care of. However, in certain cases in my experience, this can lead to unequal yoking and God may then take you out of the business in order to bless you. Staying in a business just because the owner is a Christian is carnal and not necessarily God's will. If you remain in the business, it is unlikely that you will prosper since you are unequally yoked. Please take what I have written here as something to be prayed over with care. I am not telling you to resign from your job, I am suggesting that you should pray over the business and be attentive to the possibility of God telling you to move.

44. UNEQUAL YOKING

The Bible tells us not to be unequally yoked. This applies not only to business but can also apply to friendships, marriage and in some cases to churches. Unequal yoking can give rise to a situation where Satan has a legal right to attack you because you are "in-spanned" with a person that Satan has a legal right to attack. I do not have great experience with this but have encountered a number of associations where God has taken business partners and staff out of my life for this reason. This does not mean that they are bad and you are good or vice versa, it simply means that God has decided at that point in time that the yoke is too heavy on one party and should be removed. Never judge another Christian because God took you out of their business, their company, their church or their fellowship! Never lose sight of the possibility that God took you out because you were the problem!

45. WHAT IS A YOKE?

A yoke is something that transfers the strength of an ox to the plough or cart that it is dragging. A spiritual yoke can transfer the spiritual load of bondage from one person to another. An example would be a case where a person has entered into a financial partnership with someone who has footholds in their lives. In such a case, where one person is living a righteous life and the other not but both will benefit from any business income or profit, the legal right that Satan has to attack the one person's finances means that either both people are blessed or none. In my experience, neither person will be blessed through that partnership until BOTH have dealt with the footholds in their lives or the

one with sin in their life has left the business. The same applies to covenant partnerships in ministries and even regular giving to a ministry that is out of the will of God.

46. UNWISE TALK / BOASTING

Contrary to the 'name it, claim it, frame it' school of thought, it has been my experience that, while involved in the sort of spiritual warfare that we are engaged in loose talk can open the door for Satan to attack in areas where he would not otherwise have had the opportunity. I once had a situation in which I had obtained agreement with a third party, miraculously and by the hand of God. Before the final manifestation of the agreement was achieved and before it was committed to writing, I made the mistake of boasting to my unsaved lawyer that God was about to give me victory contrary to the lawyers expectation in the mistaken belief that this would provide a testimony for their salvation. Weeks later I learnt that within minutes of me making that statement, a person kilometres away who had no cause to contact the third party phoned them and talked them into reneging on the agreement. I believe that a demon or fallen angel was following me, overheard the conversation and notified the relevant principality. The phone call was then initiated through a demonized third party.

We are in a war situation. Particularly in certain areas of spiritual warfare, do not discuss what is going on with anyone other than your closest confidantes and then, only as the Holy Spirit gives you release and as far as is necessary for intercessory prayer coverage or similar aspects in support of your warfare. In such cases, only disclose the bare essentials so that they are better able to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in their prayers. After the victory will be time enough to share your testimony.

Realize also that while the natural person may be entirely on your side, they may be carrying demons that are opposed to you. On one occasion I received a prophetic word that Satan was obtaining information to use against us through someone we trusted who was confiding in his wife, whom he trusted. We stopped sharing with the person concerned and almost immediately saw a change in spiritual circumstances. I do not believe that the wife was actively betraying us, although she may have been praying against us, but she was oppressed by demons who were picking up all that was said. Those demons were, I believe, communicating what they overheard to other agents of Satan who took action against us.

47. SATAN CANNOT READ MINDS

While Satan very effectively plants thoughts in our minds by way of demons 'whispering in our spiritual ears' he cannot read our minds or hearts. Various scriptures clearly confirm that only God knows the secrets of our hearts and our thoughts. Accordingly, it is important that you do not discuss certain things in atmospheres where demons, fallen Angels or other Satanic cohorts may be present. Where possible, discuss such things directly with your Heavenly Father by talking to the Holy Spirit silently in your heart. Where it is necessary to discuss such things with others or you have a need to pray out loud in agreement, first apply the Blood of Jesus to yourselves from the top of your heads to the soles of your feet and then to the room and building where you are. In addition, bind all demons, fallen angels and other cohorts and command them to leave the room and the building. Thank God for His angels and request that He send angels to encamp around you to prevent any agent of the enemy listening in.

As mentioned previously, limit your discussion to those whom you can trust not to discuss what you have revealed in confidence and then only discuss what is necessary in order to obtain guidance, counsel, prayer support or whatever need has occasioned the meeting.

48. FORGIVENESS = CANCELLATION OF DEBT

It is widely recognized that unforgiveness will "blight your seed". If you are harbouring any unforgiveness toward anyone, this is fertile ground for Satan to attack you. Forgiveness is not just an act of the will it is also an act of faith. You have to chose to forgive and then ask God in the name of Jesus to assist you to forgive and forget. If you find that you have not forgotten, then you have not forgiven. If you keep thinking or talking about it and telling others or "warning" them, then you have not forgiven. There are a number of good teachings on forgiveness. If this applies to you, pray and ask God to bring you into contact with a person who can help you or to bring books, tapes or other materials across your path from which you can obtain guidance.

Refer to section "The Cup That Jesus Drank" to gain a better understanding of how to forgive. If Jesus could forgive those who crucified Him and drink the cup of all our sins, it is a small thing to forgive those who have harmed us. No matter how terrible their action appears to us. Judgement is God's NOT yours, by holding unforgiveness, you put yourself in God's place and therefore stand in the way of His judgement of the person involved, should He deem it necessary. Remember also that the person concerned has given Satan a significant foothold in their life. Therefore "love your enemies and pray for those who spitefully use you".

Forgiveness is therefore a "cancellation" of the debt. You remember it NO MORE!

49. THE STRAIGHT PATH AND THE NARROW GATE

We regularly make reference colloquially to the "straight and narrow" referring to the passage in scripture where Jesus warns that the way is straight and the gate is narrow and few are they that enter thereby. View the straight path as being just that, in dense jungle, if you are not concentrating on your directions and attacks are coming from both sides, it is easy to wander off the path. Anything that looks like a short cut or an easier route is not, a straight line is ALWAYS the shortest distance between two points. The video on "A Pilgrim's Progress" demonstrates this graphically. In a prophetic word delivered recently to an apostle, God described this path as a knife edge where the slightest slip would lead to disaster. As we mature and are used on more dangerous missions, our spiritual balance becomes more and more critical.

Likewise the gate is narrow. Only one person can pass through it at a time. Should you enter, you will stand on your own at the Judgement Seat of Christ and be called to account for your entire life. At that point, only YOU can give account. You cannot turn to your pastor, an elder, counsellor, friend or spouse to advise you or assist you. You will be judged according to the decisions that YOU made in your life, including the advise from others that you chose to accept that was against the Word or the will of God. Where God spoke to you, the excuse that your pastor told you that "could not possibly be God" will not hold water, certainly not after you have been serving God for a while. As an example, the argument that God has not spoken to you about observing the Sabbath will not wash, His Word is quite explicit. Remember that God's Sabbath is Saturday and NOT Sunday, He has never changed that.

50. DISCERN THE LORD'S BODY CORRECTLY

Paul warns that many are sick and some have died because they have failed to discern the Body of the Lord in the communion elements. Do not treat the Lord's supper lightly or frivolously. Seek to understand the full meaning of the blood covenant and the significance of the bread and wine as types of His Body and Blood.

51. TITHING

Obedience in finances is an absolutely critical component of receiving God's financial blessings. If you are robbing God in tithes and offerings, He cannot bless you, not only in finances but He cannot "rebuke the devourer (Satan) for your sake". If you are not tithing a full 10% OFF THE TOP before tax, then you might as well not read any further, it is highly unlikely that you will be blessed financially. If there is no seed, there can be no harvest. There are numerous good teachings on this subject.

If you are late tithing, you are required to bring an additional 20%.

There are no expenses that are permissible deductions against the tithe in terms of your personal income. It appears that business expenses are a legitimate cost before determining the tithe if you have your own business but I do not find explicit scripture to confirm this.

God has certainly challenged me to give Him the first 10% off the top of my business income, before salaries, etc. The only exception is VAT (Value Added Tax) which is money you collect on behalf of the Government and which accordingly, never belongs to you. You are simply the agent of the Government.

Careful reading of scripture indicates that there is a "second tithe" so tithing on gross business revenue AND personal drawings from your own business may well be scriptural as may a double tithe on your salary. I am not advancing this as a doctrine but I would suggest that you pray about it and act as the Lord leads.

52. INFERTILE SOIL

Please recognize that the parable of the sower clearly illustrates that there is barren ground and fertile ground into which you can sow. There are plenty of teachings which indicate that, if you are not being fed by a pastor, the ground is probably not fertile and God may lead you elsewhere. If God has revealed doctrinal error in a congregation, the soil may well be barren for your seed. Only move as God leads but recognize that He kept the children of Israel moving regularly during their sojourn in the wilderness and do not be intimidated. He may also tell you to remain in the congregation for a while and observe but to tithe elsewhere.

53. BEATING THE SHEEP

There is an almost universal tendency in the church today to beat the sheep. That is to have someone stand up and deliver a message on giving and then send round the offering baskets. In Jesus day the money was discreetly placed in the "treasury" a large chest in the temple. There is no indication that Jesus ever said that tithes and offerings should be collected in any other way. Do not be intimidated to give because it is demanded of you. Give as God leads you and if that is NOT in the offering basket, that is His prerogative, after all it is HIS money. There are many prophetic ministers and others who do not have big congregations but who are busy ministering day in and day out to people who come to them and never give them even the smallest offering. Some are destitute because the people who come to them for ministry do not consider the possibility that God might want them to give some of their tithes to the minister concerned (who never asks for money) as opposed to the church where they fellowship every Sunday which demands their money on a regular basis but has not been able to offer the ministry that the itinerant prophet, as an example, has provided.

The current church building is NOT the temple in Jerusalem!

54. TITHING AS THE LORD LEADS : A TITHING PORTFOLIO?

According to my understanding and experience, tithing involves giving God's money where God wants it. While it appears that God will often want His tithes brought to the congregation where you are a member, increasingly this is not always the case. We have been led by God to give tithes to pastors in poor communities, to evangelists, prophets and apostles, even sometimes to individuals in need. This should not be taken as a licence to give where YOU want, but it is an injunction to caution you that God may instruct you to give your tithes somewhere other than where religion and tradition would have you give it. In some cases, where elders of a congregation have not been allocating God's funds as He wanted them allocated, we have been led to give directly to the pastor. In other cases, we have been led to purchase specific items in order to avoid the church elders misallocating the funds. Wisdom and prayerful seeking of the Lord is necessary on this point.

From the above, you will note that I am firmly persuaded that God does not necessarily require that you bring all your tithes and offerings to one congregation. For years I did this and, in the space of about two years brought about R40,000 to one congregation which I eventually learned had been counselling me from several false doctrines for the entire period while my marriage and my business went steadily downhill. By the time I realized this my marriage had broken down irrevocably and I subsequently lost my business.

Today, we tithe as the Lord leads, taking care only to make commitments for periods of time that the Lord clearly leads us. Thus we avoid becoming financially yoked to unfruitful ground. Over the past year, we have even been led to develop what I, as a former investment consultant, would call a tithing portfolio. We have become covenant partners with a number of major international ministries and allocate a fixed or variable portion of our tithes to these ministries. By doing this, I believe that we assist God to give greater direction to His servants.

A congregation which is assured of regular income because their congregants feel morally compelled to bring all their tithes and offerings, is financially secure in a way that a congregation which trusts God to speak to the individual congregants on a weekly basis to meet the needs of the ministry, is not. But the latter congregation is in a much safer position for God to gently nudge them back onto the straight way than one that has beaten their congregants into giving to them alone.

I believe that God is currently challenging all those in full time ministry and all leaders of congregations to place an offering chest near the door, stop beating the sheep and start believing God to meet their needs. By all means, teach on tithing from time to time and expect prophetic word if God wants to reinforce it, but cease to preach five or ten minutes at every main meeting to get people to give. Apart from anything else, if you are not assisting congregants to deal with the other issues set out in this document, they are going to continue to battle financially. In the world they call that FRAUD!

55. BEGGING

The reverse of giving is receiving. Many people claim to live by faith but make a point of telling people that they are living by faith and then mention their financial difficulties. That is not living by faith, that is begging or manipulation. If God is your provider, He knows ALL your needs and there is therefore no need to tell people of them. If your needs are not being met as a consequence of one or more of the factors discussed in this document, telling people will not assist you, unless you are willing to have them point out spiritual problems that they may be able to see. Tell God of your need and He will tell others. There is a fine line between being honest with people who have come to know about your situation and telling them because you want them to assist you financially. Only the Holy Spirit can guide you. If you are truly living by faith, rejoice, God knows your needs and He will provide exactly

what you need. You may have to make certain adjustments if He does not regard your needs as being in line with His will but He will provide all you NEED.

Any person in ministry who produces any document inviting people to give into their ministry, should be aware that God is able to instruct any person to give into their ministry. It is almost axiomatic that every ministry needs finance, therefore, you do not have to tell people. Any form of inviting people to give has a high risk of becoming begging, particularly if there is something in your ministry that is giving Satan a foothold to attack your finances. In this case, you may be causing others to become yoked to your foothold by inviting them to give or to become covenant partners with your ministry.

56. SOWING AND REAPING : NAMING YOUR SEED

Again there are many teachings that indicate that you should "name your seed" when you bring your tithe's and offerings to any place that God has instructed you. Name the seed whether it be for financial deliverance, a specific blessing or whatever. I refer you to these teachings if you need more guidance. Jerry Savelle has a particularly challenging and stimulating testimony about "aeroplane seed".

57. NO PRIVATE INTERPRETATION

The Word of God is not subject to any private interpretation. If you get what to you is a new revelation, seek the face of God and, in faith, request confirmation through prophets, teachings, etc until you are absolutely certain that you are hearing God.

Recognize that Church history over the past 2000 years has been characterized by apostasy and false doctrine and there are still numerous errors of doctrine in the church. If this was not so there would not be hundreds of denominations, all claiming they have the truth.

At the same time, recognize that just because, as I was once told "15,000 men of God around the world would all agree" on a particular interpretation, does not mean that they are correct. For centuries, tithing, tongues, healing, water baptism, etc, etc, etc, etc were corrupted or discarded. The entire church around the world barring a few stalwarts agreed that these things had passed away. That does not mean they were right, just that Satan was and is having a field day with gullible believers who were not prepared to turn to their bibles and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit as to the truth. Others, when the truth is revealed to them are not prepared to stand up for the truth. The days of persecution and martyrdom have not passed, the church will still "crucify" many prophets who hear God and turn away from the private interpretation of God's word. Those prophets should take comfort that they are storing up treasure in heaven if they submit to God and resist the devil instead of submitting to God. Remember, the "church" of the day crucified Jesus and stoned Stephen to death.

If you accept and believe a false doctrine, even if it is together with 15,000 pastors, that does not mean that in some strange democratic way that Satan is not going to claim his legal right to attack you.

58. DYING TO SELF : REFINERS FIRE

Self discipline is an unpopular concept in the world and in the church today. As you progress in the walk that is touched on in this document, sooner or later, God is going to start crucifying your flesh in a serious way. A way that you are likely to find extremely uncomfortable and painful. As someone has said, a living sacrifice can feel every cut of the knife, every lick of the flames.

In this hour, God is starting to refine His church in an unprecedented way. Many are crying out to God to "send the fire" unaware that the fire that they are likely to receive will burn the dross out of them.

Until you reach a point where, like Jesus, you can be flagellated, tortured and crucified and then, as you breathe your last, say "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do", until someone can abuse you to your face or betray you and you can instantly forgive them and be more concerned about their spiritual welfare than about your loss, you are NOT dead to self. I have little doubt that this is a life-long battle. Crucify yourself daily. If you do not, your flesh will constantly come between you and the Holy Spirit and you will never walk in the fullness of God's blessings.

59. UNKEPT AND BROKEN VOWS AND PROMISES

In our current age, people have completely lost sight of the power of words. "Life and death are in the power of the tongue". Promises and vows that you have not kept or have broken provide fruitful ground for Satan to attack you. As I understand it, where you can still fulfil the promise or vow and it is not against the Word of God, you should fulfil it. If you cannot, you should make restitution. If you can do neither, you should repent in brokenness and humility and ask God to forgive you for rash promises and then renounce those vows or promises.

If you have made ungodly vows or promises, particularly before you accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, you must renounce them and cut them off. You may need prophetic help to identify them and cut them off. In any event, you should ask the Lord to show you all vows and promises which should be cut off.

60. SOUL FORCE PRAYERS

Words have power. Prayers prayed against you in the name of Jesus by well meaning believers who think that you are in error when you are not, can still have a force and can afford Satan a legal right to attack you as well as the person praying the prayer. Some churches have intercession meetings and it is common to hear people praying about peoples' situations with their understanding. Often these prayers are totally contrary to God's will in the situation. While God does not act on these prayers, the spiritual force of a number of people praying or agreeing in that way is significant. If you are aware of any situation in your life that has been misinterpreted by certain believers, possibly as a result of false witness or false doctrine, it is advisable to cut off such soul force prayers from time to time.

61. PRAYER AGAINST GOD'S WILL

Be aware that if you pray according to your understanding and contrary to God's will Satan will almost certainly know that you are praying against the will of God and could easily use that situation to claim a legal right to attack you. Thus by praying out of God's will, particularly where a third party is concerned and even more so where that third party is an apostle, prophet or other person strongly anointed of God, you may be opening yourself to serious attack. If you truly fear God and want to serve Him with ALL your heart, mind, soul and strength, you should refrain from praying against others in your own understanding. Pray for others ONLY what you would truly have them pray for you in similar circumstances. Remember, what you sow is what you reap.

62. BLOOD-LINE CURSES

A little understood subject in much of the church today is blood-line curses. There appear to be a relatively small number of believers and even fewer congregations who are aware of this aspect. In all likelihood, virtually every person in the world today will have curses on their blood line. These curses can be relatively minor or can be major. One account that I have read related to a woman who, as best I recall, had her life dedicated to Satan to be taken on her twenty first birthday by way of a witchcraft rite entered into by her ancestors who dedicated the first female of the eleventh (I think) generation to Satan. As her birthday approached, she tried to throw herself off a suspension bridge. Fortunately,

she was taken to a believer with an exorcism ministry and, during the exorcism, the demon that had been detailed to follow the blood line and kill her disclosed where his legal right had come from!

If your blood line has been involved in Free Masonry or any other secret society or cult there will almost certainly be curses on your blood line. You can cut these off by prayer to the Father in the name of Jesus. There are a few books on the subject and there are deliverance ministries around. Pray and ask God to bring you into contact with the teachings and people who can help you.

When dealing with curses of secret societies, I believe that God recently showed me that certain societies, particularly the Free Masons, Knights Templar and others keep registers of members whose families have left the cult and regularly curse them. Recently I was led while praying prophetically for an individual to command those curses to return one thousand fold on the agents of Satan praying them! I am not advocating this as routine practise but it has relevance when you are quite certain, by which I mean prophetically, that such curses are being renewed from time to time. In such cases I have also asked God in the name of Jesus to cover the entries in the registers with the blood of Jesus and thus obliterate them, I have further asked Him to close up the lines on the page so that the name of the blood line concerned is forever removed.

63. MODERN CURSES

Curses are still very much a way of life. Only today, we do not realize that curses are real. Cursing and swearing are common on television (another reason not to watch), but anything negative spoken over you by a third party whom you have provoked in any way can affect you. A curse without cause cannot alight but, be careful not to too readily assume that you have not done anything to cause someone to legitimately (in Satan's terms) curse you.

While blood line curses can be cut off once and for all, modern curses, like curses spoken over registers of secret societies, keep coming. Clearly, if by your current actions, you are giving people legitimate reason to curse you, you must examine yourself in the mirror of The Word of God and choose to change your behaviour.

If you are being cursed by agents of Satan, including believers who are demonized, you will have to cut off those curses by praying in the name of Jesus.

If you have really become active for the kingdom of God, indications are that witches covens around the world obtain the names of people such as you from various sources and regularly pray Satanic prayers cursing the people that they have identified. Remember, Satan copies and perverts everything that God does. So as much as you can pray blessings over people, Satan's servants can pray curses. It is advisable to cut curses off regularly should the Holy Spirit give you an unction to do so. In certain cases you can command curses to return but you should be extremely careful about this and only do it if you have clear guidance from God to do it. It appears that certain agents of Satan, once they realize that their curses are returning on their own heads will cease cursing you.

By way of example, that you may understand that these are issues that are not to be trifled with or to be taken lightly. Some time ago, we were advised prophetically that certain specific individuals were cursing us on a regular basis. The prophet ministering to us commanded the curses to return threefold. Within weeks, two individuals were in hospital, one was in intensive care for several weeks and recovered, a changed man, the other died several months later having had dreams of snakes and all sorts of abominations. That is the measure of the power of the curses that they had spoken over us. It is also a measure of the power that was returned against them by prophetic prayer in agreement in

the will of God in the name of Jesus. This power is NOT to be used unwisely or irresponsibly in our own understanding. In this case, you are likely to open yourself wide open to attack.

64. WITCHES COVENS AND OTHER SATANIC GROUPS

We generally have an impression of witches in black pointed hats with black cats and riding broom sticks. Today most people do not believe that witches exist. They do and there are plenty around. Those that have been revealed to me by the Holy Spirit have generally often been extremely well dressed, and often very attractive young women with nothing that can be seen with the natural eye to disclose their true identity. All those that the Lord has shown me have been IN churches! In all cases, they have been sent there to pray against the congregation, or it's leaders or a particular person or to introduce particular demonic spirits.

In once case, the week after the Lord showed me three witches in a congregation, the senior pastor fell in a dramatic way. In another case, as best I could discern, a witch came into a congregation having obtained a legal right of entry by the direct rebellion of certain leaders and certain members of the congregation against a prophetic word from God. As best I could discern, the witch brought with her a demon, probably a spirit of divination, spirit of vanity or a familiar spirit which then caused one of the leaders who was in rebellion to call (supposedly at the leading of the Holy Spirit) the witch out to pray for a member of the congregation who was desperately ill. Having performed a weird dance around the person concerned, the witch left. Three days later the person concerned wound up in intensive care! We dare not ignore these things and we dare not grant Satan legal right to infiltrate our meetings. The need for holiness and sanctification has never been greater.

At the same time there is a real need for each of us to pray protection over ourselves and our congregations, particularly that God will keep agents of Satan out of our meetings and out of our lives. However, it is no good praying such prayers if, by our actions, we are granting Satan all the legal right that he requires.

65. THE FLESH : AGAIN!

Why AGAIN? In my own experience, having been very conscious of the need to "put my flesh under" and "crucify it daily", I became so engrossed in all the other issues, that I ceased doing it. I was looking for spiritual answers to every problem and seeing demons where only the flesh was at work. As a consequence, I went off track in the opposite direction and allowed my flesh to rise up seriously.

In this way, the flesh weakens our prayer life, weakens our resolve to read the Word of God and thus weakens our faith and our ability to resist the devil. In this way, Satan gains new avenues to attack us in areas where we were previously strong. Never lose sight of your flesh as an "enemy" of the Spirit!

66. WRONG AND RIGHT ACTIONS AND RIGHT AND WRONG MOTIVES

The visions reported by Rick Joyner make it abundantly clear that often, we do the wrong things for the right motives and the right things for the wrong motives. Unless we are dead to self and totally sold out to being led by the Spirit, this is likely to persist. Probably few people can truly claim to be doing only the right things for the right motives.

Recently, I have increasingly begun to see how things that I previously thought were right were wrong but for reasons that had not even occurred to me previously and vice versa.

So we see that Jesus can, with all humility and integrity declare that He is the Son of God and that His witness is true, yet if He were have to have said the same words with an overbearing arrogant manner,

the message would have been totally different. He did it simply to answer the question, not to impress and not to humiliate. His motives were pure.

67. WRONG THOUGHTS

Thinking the wrong thoughts, while, as best I understand, it is not known to Satan, the actions that result, even from eye movement and facial expression can give Satan's agents and, particularly his demons, an indication of what is going on, particularly if they are planting the thoughts.

Thoughts can originate from Satan's demons and should be resisted and rebuked in the name of Jesus.

Thoughts of the flesh also result in ungodly behaviour and can also be in conflict with our confession. If our hearts are hard or corrupt or in other ways out of line with the Word of God or the Will of God, He knows that we are not being obedient and this must surely affect our walk.

CHAPTER 3 - OTHER CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

1. INTRODUCTION

In the preceding section, attention has been devoted primarily to actions and spiritual principles which, in my experience, have directly contributed to Satan being able to attack finances and hinder blessings. In this section, I will seek to set out some general principles which seem relevant to the topic at hand.

2. WHY DO I SEE THINGS THE WAY THAT I DO?

While preparing this document and recording the steady stream of thoughts that have come my way, extending into another discourse on being led by the spirit, a discourse on marriage and divorce, a discussion of the challenge associated with certain passages, particularly Isaiah 4:1 together with Exodus 21:10 and a discourse on church "governance", I have found myself repeatedly faced with the question of why I think the way I do and why I would seek to prepare these documents, all of which seemingly address spiritual issues from a perspective that I have not encountered to any real extent in material that I have been able to obtain and much of which seem to be a catalogue of aspects of church doctrine which, to a greater or lesser extent, do not seem quite correct. This is not to say that I have more truth than others nor that all that is presented here is 100% correct, simply that I seem to look at things in what many seem to view as an 'unusual' way and a way that many seem to find strange and threatening.

It is incumbent on me to state that I face the same challenge in my business as a management consultant. I seem to see things differently to most. This has led to me publishing widely on "The Reasons why 70% of Major Corporations are Dissatisfied with their Information Technology Investment : The Real Issues in Information Technology". From this base, I have delivered presentations in Britain, Europe and the Middle East to various conferences and seminars including the British Strategic Planning Society and the British Computer Society. This in turn, has resulted in my being listed in 1998 in the Marquis "Who's Who in Science and Engineering" and approached for listing in their "Who's Who in the World" for 1999, a publication containing the names of 40,000 people from all walks of life around the life. Apart from being a testimony to the goodness and greatness of the God we serve since I truly do not think that I did anything to warrant this recognition and the recognition came with absolutely no effort on my part, it does seem to suggest that the analytical

processes and knowledge and experience base which God has developed in me throughout my life have equipped me to think differently about intractable problems.

In a sense, I suppose that this aside suggests that this discourse could alternatively be titled "The Reasons Why 70% of Believers are Not Walking in Divine Prosperity : The Real Issues in Christian Financial Blessing" with the only real question being whether it is 70%, 90% or some other quantum that reflects the correct proportion of believers to which this statement applies.

I will try and answer the question by way of a 'parable':

A man was stricken with polio during his youth so that his foot was slightly deformed. When a great war came upon the world, he was determined to fight evil so he sort to sign up with the army. Because of his deformity he could never become an officer.

As a sergeant in the transport corps he repeatedly criticised his superior officers for their lack of discipline and failure to provide the necessary leadership. History eventually confirmed that officers were so bound by their traditions that his criticism was justified. Eventually, in a great battle, he and hundreds of thousands of others were taken prisoner.

After many months of hardship, he and some friends escaped and were on the run for several months. Eventually, while running from enemy soldiers one of the party fell and injured himself. Rather than desert his friend, the man and his colleagues returned and allowed themselves to be taken prisoner once more.

Later, the war turned against the enemy and the victorious allies were advancing. The man and thousands of others were being marched away from the advancing front. He escaped and was one of the first to reach freedom.

Some years later, the man had a son and, as the son grew up, his father shared his war stories with him. The son became an avid reader of history concerning the war in which his father fought and read repeatedly how the incompetence of the generals and their failure to understand the enemy had caused millions of casualties which could have been avoided.

Eventually the son grew up and was conscripted into the army. His father's advice to him was "son, if you are going to be killed, make sure it is as a result of your own orders". Despite repeated rejection because of his tribe the son eventually became the commander of a regiment.

In that position, he systematically reexamined the way of doing things and led his unit in his own way. This culminated in his regiment being commended as one of the two best to serve in a certain theatre of operations in one year and setting a new international record for night assault river crossing the following year.

The man in the story is my father. As a consequence of this background, I have always looked at things differently and, particularly when things are not working as well as they should, I have always gone back to basics and not been afraid to hold the current 'generals' accountable. I hope that this helps you to understand this document better?

3. PARADIGM FILTERS

A paradigm is "an example or pattern" (Concise Oxford Dictionary). In the 'parable' above, the paradigm of the generals at the start of the war led to defeat in most major battles and millions of

casualties on the battlefield. Eventually, on the brink of defeat, a new generation of generals, schooled in the new way of war, developed a new paradigm and turned defeat into victory.

A paradigm acts as a filter through which all information is passed. If it does not fit our paradigm we have great difficulty in understanding or receiving the information. For example, the Swiss watch industry was nearly wiped out because, when they were offered the first electronic watch, they could not see any use for it and it was developed by the Americans and Japanese.

In the same way, if your religious paradigm cannot conceive that God could say a certain thing, then you will never believe that God is speaking to you. You may well not hear Him and, if you do, you may well end up rebuking Satan. Currently the church has in place numerous paradigm (doctrinal) filters which prevent them hearing God on various issues. Many of those issues are amongst those contained in this document and those to follow.

As an example, scripture clearly states that "on the seventh day God rested" and repeatedly states that the Sabbath is the last day of the week. We all know that Sunday is the first day of the week but virtually all Christians have been raised to regard Sunday as the Sabbath. Until you learn that Sunday is the pagan day for worshipping the Sun and that Sunday worship was only introduced about 300 AD because the gentile church wanted to distance itself from its Jewish roots, you cannot conceive that God could be telling you to return to worshipping on His Sabbath.

4. THE DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE

New ideas typically originate with one or two people and are then disseminated more widely by way of publication, teaching, etc. Depending on the quality control applied to the distribution process, these thoughts can either be enhanced or they can be contaminated. If there is an agent particularly committed to contaminating them (in this case Satan), it is relatively easy to contaminate knowledge.

At the time of Moses, God communicated to Moses, Moses recorded some of what God told him and communicated verbally to the people many other things. Initially the diffusion of knowledge was in one direction and was precise. As time wore on, the knowledge was being passed backwards and forwards and the first hand account was lost. Over the centuries the people of Israel descended into apostasy and then exile. The truth was retained on parchment and the rest passed down by word of mouth and other documents. By Jesus time, there was no first hand knowledge and all was head knowledge rather than heart (Holy Spirit inspired) knowledge other than a few prophets. In all likelihood, religious and other demons were prevalent. Hence the Chief Priests, the scribes and the Pharisees could not recognize Jesus for who He was.

In the same way, Jesus initial communication was direct, to the Apostles and through them to the church. The authority of the initial Apostles and therefore the elders in Jerusalem was beyond question. As the knowledge spread more widely, as the original apostles died and as persecution and assimilation diluted the quality of the information, apostasy and dispersion followed. Today, with the second coming of Jesus imminent we again have a situation where much of the understanding of scripture has been lost and where paradigm filters of the accepted way of doing things corrupt our understanding of scripture. People rationalize and explain verses of scripture that do not fit their paradigm, turn this into a doctrine and then criticise and attack those who differ with them. Religious and other demons are prevalent. The question is, are the leaders (the elders) in the church today able to clearly distinguish what is of God and what is not. From own experience, I have to say, by no means all the time and regrettably when it comes to areas of doctrinal difference, they seem, as in Jesus time, unable to rationally consider the facts and go before God to seek the truth.

5. THE CRITICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TODAY AND AD 33 ??

In considering the question of the diffusion of knowledge and where we currently find ourselves with regard to church leadership, submission and other contentious issues, it is important that we recognize the following:

1. In Jesus and the Apostles day, most communication was word of mouth.
2. The copying of a document by a scribe was time consuming and therefore costly. There were not that many scribes who had the necessary training to accurately and reliably duplicate documents. Even the Torah was available only in limited quantities.
3. As the Apostles took the Gospel around the world, they relied heavily on their personal knowledge and experience, initially at least, the written Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were not written. The letters written by Paul and others also frequently went to one congregation although they were subsequently copied and distributed more widely.
4. In most congregations, at best, there was probably only one written record and in most cases only an oral account of Jesus life and teachings and the teachings of the Apostles and disciples.
5. People relied heavily on the Holy Spirit and, where there was disagreement, the obvious recourse was to the "elders", those who had the most knowledge and experience and, to the extent available, the written documents.

Today, every believer has effectively equal access to all the written record of significance together with innumerable study aids, etc. Jesus injunction to "call no man teacher" is far more realizable today than it was 1,950 years ago. All have equal access to the Holy Spirit and therefore the possibility of personal revelation.

In addition, since in the dark ages, the church fell into effectively total apostasy and even the most fundamental truths were hidden from view the church is still recovering from this. Regrettably most Christians in positions of authority have decided to take titles for themselves and to position themselves as rulers and judges. They are no longer required to be the custodians of knowledge, nor can they be. Now more than ever before they must become shepherds in the mould of the Great Shepherd. Their primary concern should be the care of the sheep and the recovery of the lost sheep!

6. OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MAN (ACTS 5:29)

Developing the previous thoughts, experience shows that there are an increasing number of people who are hearing God clearly on matters that bring them into conflict with the church. In particular, people are told to submit to elders who lord it over the flock despite scripture which clearly tells them not to. People insist on assigning the title pastor to men despite Jesus clear instruction to call no man "Rabbi" or "Teacher" or "Lord". Elders and leaders who are supposed to be shepherds of sheep (who are dumb animals) insist on demanding submission from prophets and others who claim to have heard God and in the process offer Satan massive footholds in their lives and congregations.

Regrettably, once more we find ourselves in the shoes of Peter who was forced to say to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem "we must obey God rather than man". This produces the same response today as it did then, only in a more subtle fashion. Again, we MUST do what God has told us to do, failing which Satan will be given a major foothold in our lives.

Please understand that I am not advocating rebellion, I am only stating that if you are certain that God has spoken to you, do not let any man convince you to submit to him rather than God.

7. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Somehow, it appears that the ten commandments have gone out of fashion. You hardly ever hear them quoted, certainly not in Charismatic circles and, even when they are quoted in other churches, they are read off pat and I wonder if anyone ever gives serious consideration to them or even really seriously considers what they mean. But, as best I understand it, those are most of the words that God spoke to a public audience at Mount Sinai and then PERSONALLY wrote on the stone tablets for Moses. Nothing else in the history of man has been directly audibly spoken by God with such a display of His power or written by Him in person. Dare we ignore them?

For the record, here they are, quoted from The Living Torah, a modern Jewish translation:

Deuteronomy 5

¹ *Moses summoned all Israel, and said to them:*

Listen, Israel, to the rules and laws that I am publicly declaring to you today. Learn them and safeguard them, so that you will be able to keep them.

² *God your Lord made a covenant with you*

³ *It was not with your ancestors that God made this covenant, but with **US***

The First Two Commandments

⁶ *I am God your Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, from the place of slavery.*

⁷ *Do not have any other gods before Me.*

⁸ *Do not represent [such gods] by a statue or picture of anything in the heaven above, on the earth below, or in the water below the land.*

⁹ *Do not bow down to [such gods] and do not worship them. I, God your Lord, am a god who demands exclusive worship. Where My enemies are concerned, I keep in mind the sin of the fathers for [their] descendants for three and four [generations].*

¹⁰ *But to those who love Me, and keep My commandments, I show love for thousands [of generations].*

The Third Commandment

¹¹ *Do not take the name of God your Lord in vain. God will not allow the person who takes His name in vain to go unpunished.*

The Fourth Commandment

¹² *Observe the Sabbath to keep it holy, as God your Lord commanded you.*

¹³ *You can work during the six weekdays, and do all your tasks,*

¹⁴ *but Saturday is the Sabbath to God your Lord, so do not do anything that constitutes work. [This includes] you, your son, your daughter, your male and female slave {servant}, your ox, your donkey, your [other] animals, and the foreigner who is in your gates. Your male and female slaves {servants} will then be able to rest just as you do.*

¹⁵ *You must remember that you were slaves in Egypt, when God your Lord brought you out with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. It is for this reason that God your Lord has commanded you to keep the Sabbath.*

The Fifth Commandment

¹⁶ *Honour your father and mother as God your Lord commanded you. You will then live long and have it well on the land that God your Lord is giving you.*

The Sixth Commandment

¹⁷ *Do not commit murder.*

The Seventh Commandment

Do not commit adultery.

The Eighth Commandment

Do not steal.

The Ninth Commandment {False Witness, Lying}

Do not testify as a perjurous witness against your neighbour.

The Tenth Commandment {Lust}

²⁰ *Do not desire your neighbour's wife. Do not desire your neighbour's house, his field, his male or female slave {servant}, his ox, his donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbour.*

God also gave Moses the following Creed:

Deuteronomy 6

⁴ *Listen, Israel, God is our Lord, God is One.*

⁵ *Love God your Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.*

⁶ *These words which I am commanding you today must remain on your heart.*

⁷ *Teach them to your children and speak of them when you are at home, when travelling on the road, when you lie down and when you get up.*

⁸ *Bind [these words] as a sign on your hand, and let them be an emblem in the center of your head*

⁹ *write them on [parchments affixed to] the doorposts of your houses and gates.*

The question that each one of us has to critically ask ourselves is "can I truly say that I am observing or conscientiously seeking to observe all the above?" At the very least, unless you belong to a very small minority, you are not observing the fourth commandment with regard to God's Sabbath on Saturday. God is withdrawing Grace on this sin and more and more Christians are hearing Him require of them that they honour and obey this commandment. We are starting to hold meetings at our house at 12 Juniper Street, Randpark Ridge, Randburg on Saturday mornings. Phone 011-791-2327 for details.

8. A NEW COMMANDMENT : LOVE ONE ANOTHER

In John 13 Jesus said "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, **if** you have love for one another." (NAS)

I am not sure that any of us really fully understand what this means. Jesus loved us so much that He forgave us even as He was tortured to death on the Cross. I do not think that there are many Christians who have reached this point yet. Without this love Satan will have a field day attacking us.

9. IF : PRECONDITIONS TO THE PROMISES OF GOD

Charismatic Christians in particular love to quote the promises of God, "my God shall supply all your (my) needs according to His riches in Glory through Christ Jesus" and many others. Most ignore the fact that all of God's promises of blessing are conditional on our obedience to His word. If you rebel against God you will reap destruction just as surely as if you obey God you will reap blessings. Until the church develops a healthy reverence (fear) of God and of the consequences of disobedience, men will continue to think that they can do things their way and have God bless them. I have yet to experience this, I have experienced that God has extended Grace to me and blessed me abundantly where there were certain things still wrong in my life. As set out in my explanation in section "law and grace, how I understand it" I think that this is entirely understandable. What I found to my cost was that, having been blessed and thus concluding that I was now A-O.K. with God and that He had finished dealing with me, I completely missed the point that it was now up to me to continue with the process and to prevent backsliding. On more than one occasion I presumptuously became "too busy" prospering to spend as much time in the Word, in prayer and in church as before. Inevitably, the wheels came off and I found myself worse off financially before God started blessing me, largely because it took me time to realize that the wheels had come off and even longer to turn myself around spiritually and start hearing God clearly enough to understand what to do.

As an example, these conditions are set out in what the Jews refer to as the "Yoke of the Commandments" as follows:

Deuteronomy 11

- ¹³ *If you are careful to pay heed to my commandments, which I am prescribing to you today, and if you love God your Lord with all your heart and soul, [then God has made this promise]:*
- ¹⁴ *I will grant the fall and spring rains in your land at their proper time, so that you will have an ample harvest of grain, oil and wine.*
- ¹⁵ *I will grant forage in your fields for your animals, and you will eat and be satisfied.*
- ¹⁶ *Be careful that your heart not be tempted to go astray and worship other gods, bowing down to them,*
- ¹⁷ *God's anger will then be directed against you, and He will lock up the skies so that there will not be any rain, The land will not give forth its crops, and you will rapidly vanish from the good land that God is giving you.*
- ¹⁸ *Place these words of mine on your heart and soul. Bind them as a sign on your arm, and let them be an insignia in the center of your head.*
- ¹⁹ *Teach your children to speak of them, when you are at home, when travelling on the road, when you lie down and when you get up.*
- ²⁰ *write them on [parchments affixed to] the doorposts of your houses and gates.*
- ²¹ *[If you do this,] you and your children will long endure on the land that God swore to your ancestors, [promising that] He would give it to them as long as the heavens are above the earth.*

Folks, it's easy to believe you have got it made when the blessings start to flow, it's another thing to really get right with God. It appears that not many people are anywhere near that point. It also appears that even really anointed men of God who have certain areas of doctrine wrong are still under a covering of Grace, it has to be that way, only Jesus has ALL the truth and I somehow doubt that there is anyone on earth today who is anywhere near to being as perfect as Jesus!

10. LOVE GOD AND OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS

The Bible also says that to Love God is to obey His Commandments and His Commandments are not onerous. It is important to understand that nothing that is written in this document is a legality, all are principles which, if you love God, you will seek to obey His Commandments because you LOVE Him. You will then find that His Spirit in you will make it much easier to obey His Commandments.

11. BUT WHAT ABOUT JESUS?

In considering all that has been written here thus far, surely you have said, this cannot be so, they crucified Jesus, did they not? Jesus himself said that he could have called legions of angels. Elsewhere it is said that Jesus prayed for the cup to pass Him by. We know that, despite temptation, Jesus never sinned and therefore never gave Satan a foothold. Accordingly we must conclude that Jesus was crucified only with the express consent of the Father and of Himself. We must also conclude that it is possible for Satan to attack us even if there is no foothold, presumably in certain specific instances where the Father wishes to teach us something? Whether any of us will ever get to a point where Satan has such a total lack of footholds that the Father has to permit the attack despite the absence of a legal right is something that does not seem worth speculating on.

12. GOD'S LOVE

God's love is robust, not namby pamby, not liberal, not permissive, not limp wristed. It is firm, directed at salvation after a long race. His love took Jesus to the cross. Until we recognize this, we will continue to deal gently with sin and seek to solve problems in our own strength through our carnal "compassion" and, in the process help our brethren to remain in bondage. Until we have learnt to walk in God and such lack of self awareness that we can communicate correction from God without any put down and without being offended when we are put down, we will not understand how God's love works. Recently I have begun to experience a new depth in this area, what it has shown me is simply that, since what I have recently experienced is so far beyond where I thought I had to go, it seems obvious that I have even further to go now than I thought I had.

13. GOD IS UNCOMPROMISINGLY RIGHTEOUS : HE EXPECTS US TO SEEK TO BE THE SAME

The modern church appears to conduct itself most of the time as though God winks at sin. If someone suggests that there may be an error of doctrine or an error of conduct, the first thing that happens more often than not is that the flesh rises up and the messenger is attacked. If we truly believed that God was uncompromisingly righteous and that He expects the same of us, we would be filled with reverent fear of God and His judgement and would eagerly seek to hear what the other party had to say in the hope that we could eliminate footholds in our lives and become more like Jesus.

Uncompromisingly righteous means that He is righteous and He does not even know how to entertain the thought of compromise. If He is that way, we must always be willing to change our position in order to come closer to His position. He will never change His!

14. GOD USES STRONG LANGUAGE TO DESCRIBE SIN

As much as the modern church likes to see God as a soft, lovey dovey sort of God, that description does not fit the passages in the Bible that talk about God's views on sin and rebellion. He talks of "spewing out of His mouth", His wrath being "kindled", etc, etc. It seems that He only expresses himself this way when he has afforded a person, congregation, city, nation, etc numerous opportunities to repent and has spoken to them gently and then firmly. But He does speak strongly against sin. Recently He told me to tell a congregation that He was "sick and tired" of them coming late to His meetings. I was subsequently corrected by the pastor who told me that God did not speak that way and that I had allowed my flesh to rise up. Maybe they were correct but as best I can discern,

God is still saying to me that He is "sick and tired" of people coming late to meetings and then expecting Him to work miracles on their behalf. If God is sick and tired I guess Satan is overjoyed at the number of footholds that are being created.

If you are not sure about the issue of strong language, look at Nahum 1 verses 2 and 3 for an example.

15. PLANKS IN EYES

Jesus warned us to remove the plank from our own eyes before attending to the speck in our brother's eyes. The more one lives with this scripture, the more difficult it becomes to apply. We seem to see so clearly the faults of others and to be so blind to our own faults. Many times God sends others across our paths and shows us their faults, not so that we can correct them but so that we can see ourselves in them. If we can get to a point where every time we see something apparently wrong with someone else, we go before God and ask Him to show us how that applies to us, we will all improve. Bear in mind that, as far as I can read the Word, there is very little that says that I have to go and correct someone else, unless they ask my help. There is a lot that tells me to examine myself.

Since Satan probably contributed substantially to putting the plank in our eyes and the speck in our brother's eyes, he is likely to use any hypocrisy on our part to good effect.

16. OFFENSE = CRIME

A criminal is also called an "offender" and an offense is a crime. We use the word "offended" so glibly and take "offence" so easily. The very word indicates that it is a sin to be offended and to cause offence. Thus someone who is offended by an action that is truly from God and offered in love, is sinning. Likewise a person who by their ugly behaviour and sin causes another to adopt the same behaviour or causes them to take offence is also sinning. Again, this gives rise to footholds for Satan.

17. PUT YOUR HAND TO WHAT YOU FIND TO DO

Many times believers stand on the Word of God for a miracle but do not do everything that they can to find a job, no matter how menial. They seem to assume that God is bound to give them the job they want rather than the job that He has chosen for them. Likewise, if God is moving you into a completely different career direction, He may have to move you there through some rather indirect channels. Subject to prayerful consideration, if you are seeking work and are unemployed or seeking to find new business opportunities, rather than striving you should put your hand to whatever you find to do. Praying constantly for God to show you if you are doing the wrong thing and to turn you back to the correct path if you are mistaken.

The more you "humble yourself" and pray, the more you will confess to God your abject inability to stay on His path for more than a few minutes in your own strength, the more you will rely on His guidance to keep you on track. As you learn to pray this way you can expect to become more spirit led and probably encounter much more opposition from Satan as he recognizes that you are finding your way truly into the will of God. Refer the prayers in section for more ideas.

18. DILIGENCE

Diligence is an extension of the "flesh" issue. We need to be diligent in our work, diligent in our reading of the Word, diligent in our prayers, diligent in our praise and worship and, ABOVE all, diligent in seeking the will of our Father. If you are not being diligent, you are opening yourself wide for attack.

19. GOOD STEWARDSHIP : PRUDENCE versus EXTRAVAGANCE

It is reasonable to assume that God will not bless you if you are extravagant and carnal with His money. Until you have a revelation that every cent belongs to God and that it is not yours to do with as you please, it is unlikely that He will bless you. If you have twenty outfits in the wardrobe and you are crying out for additional finance, He is unlikely to approve of you buying more clothes. On the contrary, He may require you to sell some clothes or give them to the poor. If you do that, you may, in fact, find that you can balance your budget without extra income. You can hardly claim to be a good steward until you are utilizing His money the way He wants you to, NOT the way you want to. Again, footholds would seem to flow from wasteful living.

Striving after wealth is futile (Ecclesiastes) strive for holiness and right standing with God.

20. SERVANTHOOD

Jesus made a point at the last supper of speaking about servanthood. If we are truly seeking to serve Him and serve His body, we should find it increasingly difficult to order others about? If we are truly His servants, then it is much easier for Him to protect us than if we are trying to be our own Lords and to Lord it after him.

21. TALE BEARING

Tale bearing is an issue that almost everyone I know is guilty of. We like to talk about what others have done. We like to talk about what we have done. In talking, we like to pass judgement on others and to make sure that others know what is wrong. That is a sin and sin is a foothold. Don't do it.

22. TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE

Previous reference has been made to reading the Word of God regularly. It is important to recognize that if you are not reading the New Testament in the original Greek and the Old Testament in Hebrew or Aramaic, you are reading a translation. As such, the translation is NOT what God said to His prophets it is what the translator says that the prophets wrote down. In some cases this is a critical distinction. In the King James Version it states that the "mark of the beast" will be "in the wrist or in the forehead", all other translations state that it is on. Taking account of reports of proposals to inject micro-chips under the skin of the wrist or forehead in the next few years, the question of in versus on becomes one of the most critical issues of translation facing the church today. There are numerous other issues, some of which have given rise to whole doctrines, which hinge on the translation or interpretation of the translation of one or two words.

It is therefore vital to be selective with regard to the translation that you read. There are strong reasons to believe that while the New International Version and certain other main-stream translations are easy to read, the King James Version and the Amplified Bible are suggested by many to be the two most accurate translations when it comes to matters of substance. Keep in mind that, the first time that the bible was translated there was limited scope for understanding to corrupt the translation. With more recent translations, there has been greater scope for the understanding of the translations to corrupt the translation. Pray and ask God to show you which translation He wants you to read. it will likely depend on where YOU are in your walk with Him. The Living Torah and Living Nach series, a modern Jewish translation of much of the Old Testament is, in my experience, by far the most lucid AND anointed translation of the Old Testament available. Again, particularly in the areas of Messianic prophecy, there are aspects of that translation that are questionable. The answer is to read different translations each time, or at least every few times, you read through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. That way you avoid becoming bound to one translation.

23. COMMENTARIES AND TEACHINGS

Many people seem to place great reliance on commentaries and teachings. While these are good for additional understanding and amplification great care must be exercised. Reference to the comments in section "error concealed amongst truth" will indicate the risk that this approach contains. Every work of man is imperfect. Some are more imperfect than others. There are books which have chapters which are quite possibly prophetic and other chapters which are the work of the flesh or even demonic in inspiration. There are some commentaries where certain passages may contain wonderful revelation but adjacent passages may be completely incorrect. This simply reflects the fallen and imperfect state of man and that none of us have truly yielded to the Holy Spirit to the point that we have "the mind of Christ" uppermost in our consciousness at all times. It is no reason to reject the author or his work. Simply, we must sift the wheat from the chaff and once complete, we should move on.

Never lose sight of the fact that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit of Prophecy. He wrote the Bible and He can explain it to you. Learn to pray and ask questions, do not be afraid to ask Him any question you would ask any human teacher or book and ask Him the questions that you would not even ask them. He wants to lead you into ALL TRUTH, it is your choice whether you will let him. The minute that you set your sights on a man or a book or any other human source instead of the Holy Spirit, you are entering into idolatry. Beware, that is a minefield of opportunity for Satan to find footholds in your life.

24. SATAN SEEKS YOUR PARTICULAR AREAS OF WEAKNESS

If you have a particular weakness, be it lust, greed, fear or anything else, Satan knows about it and, no matter how successfully you have overcome and been delivered from that weakness, he will keep attacking it and tempting you with a view to sucking you back into that particular pit. For this reason, no other man's testimony or experience will be precisely what you need. You must permit God to guide you to run your race the way that is right for you. If you place too much reliance on others they will help you to run their race and not yours or, at best to run your race their way. This may be better than not running at all but, at the end of the day, there is a good chance that they will teach you their footholds while failing to help you overcome yours.

25. SATAN CONCENTRATES HIS EFFORTS ON THOSE WHO ARE MOST EFFECTIVE FOR THE KINGDOM i.e. DOING SATAN MOST HARM

Many people seem to think that if Satan is not troubling them they are walking in victory. On the contrary, it seems that if you are not troubling Satan, he will not trouble you. But, if you are not troubling Satan then it is almost certain that you are not doing anything meaningful for the kingdom of God. Remember that the indications are that Satan only has one third of the angels, therefore his angels are outnumbered two to one. He has all the demons but we have the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God and God is omnipresent and omniscient, that is He is everywhere at the same time and He knows everything.

Satan and his demons can only be in one place at a time. They can move and communicate very rapidly but, nevertheless, they can only be in one place at one time. They are therefore seriously outnumbered and were it not for the fact that Satan, as god of this world, has legal authority on the earth, granted him by Adam, he could not win the day to day battles.

He is therefore vitally dependant on footholds to grant him his edge. Hence the emphasis of this document. At the same time, if he is going to really effectively attack anyone, he has to pick his targets carefully so that he can mobilize his forces effectively. If there are people out there really striking

blows for the kingdom of God, it does not make sense for Satan to go and harass some born again believer who never goes out of doors, never prays or reads the word and just watches secular television. That believer will fall soon enough with minimum effort, Satan must mobilize all his forces to tackle those who are really doing him damage. After all, he has read the back of the book and he knows the fate that is in store for him if he does not prevent certain things from happening. For example, the longer he can prevent the gospel being preached to ALL the world, the more time he gets.

To counter his attacks on us, it is vital that we become as holy and sanctified as possible while, at the same time, learning to use our armour and the weapons of our warfare, the gifts of the Spirit, etc as effectively as possible. From what I have written in this document, it is my sincere prayer that you will realize that, long term, it is far easier to eliminate the footholds in our lives and reach a place of holiness and sanctification IN CHRIST where Satan's ability to touch us is as restricted as possible. In this position we can be devastatingly effective for God. The challenge is to reach that position, NOT in our own strength but by the Spirit.

26. PERSEVERANCE

Sometimes it appears that Satan is permitted to keep up the attack to the very end, in order that God may teach us the most, strengthen our faith the most through the experience and prepare us better for the next round. Perseverance is a vital element of the Christian walk but should not be confused with a fatalistic "hanging in there" which denies our responsibility to examine ourselves, to work out our salvation, etc.

27. GOD NEVER CHANGES : HE IS THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER

So much has been said in the Christian church about things being different in the New Covenant than the old where there is no scriptural basis to say so. The question of the Saturday Sabbath is a case in point. There is absolutely no scriptural basis to assert that Jesus changed the day to Sunday, on the contrary, He observed the Saturday Sabbath throughout His life and so did His disciples. Paul would not have found many people in the Synagogue on Sunday when he debated on the Sabbath! Yet you will find in many commentaries cute little articles on why Christians are the only people who worship on Sunday. With respect, God is the same yesterday, today and forever, His Sabbath is the LAST day of the week, Saturday and He NEVER told us to worship on Sunday. It is the Christians who are confused and deluded NOT the Jews. We make Christianity foolish in the eyes of the Jews and we will be called to account for putting that stumbling block in the way of their salvation. A massive foothold in the church today.

28. OPPOSITION OF THE SAINTS IS OPPOSING GOD

The scripture, "touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm" is used from time to time in the church to justify why a member has been disciplined. Unfortunately, it is frequently applied against prophets and others whom God uses to speak correction to leaders who are in error or rebellion. Somehow they come to believe that they have the monopoly on anointing. It is important that we all recognize that this scripture is an injunction that applies in both directions and applies to taking action in the flesh, NOT to speaking a word of correction or rebuke prophetically.

I am amazed at the number of Christians who take it upon themselves to judge King David, in the process making critical statements about his character and their perceptions of his weaknesses. I really believe that, since the Lord says that David was "a man after God's own heart", we should be really careful about doing this. It appears to me that this opens the door wide for Satan to climb in and attack us, not to mention that it is probably indicative of spiritual pride. It is highly unlikely that there are

many, if any, men on this earth today who walk as closely and successfully as David did with God, particularly in a position of secular leadership.

29. TAX

Jesus said, render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. I have encountered churches whose elders have embarked on schemes to avoid tax which turn into evasion. Paying certain expenses on the pastors behalf and treating them as salary for salary determination but not declaring them for tax purposes is robbing Caesar, whether the pastor brings tithes on the full amount or not. Surely that must open the door for the devil? Likewise, any scheme that is tax evasion rather than tax avoidance is a sin.

30. IGNORANCE DOES NOT PREVENT LEGAL ENTRY BY SATAN

Ignorance of the law is no excuse is a maxim that applies particularly when dealing with Satan. While it does appear that God extends Grace to protect us in our infancy, there should be no doubt in your mind after reading this far that Satan will use every legal opportunity he has to attack you whether you are aware of that foothold or not. The whole object of this document is to alert you to possible footholds that could expose you to attack. Please realize that this document is by no means comprehensive. God willing, more issues will be touched on in subsequent volumes.

31. EXTREME TESTS BEFORE ABUNDANCE

From many testimonies that I have heard of modern day "great men of God" and from consideration of scripture, it appears that great tests and trials of considerable duration precede real abundance in Christ. We must be refined by the fire and matured and prepared before we can be blessed, otherwise the blessings will destroy us. I remain convinced that the financial blessings of God that any person can receive will be commensurate with their calling. Thus a person called to minister to business executives may require an up-market house and car and a million rand balance sheet, this would be entirely inappropriate for a small community pastor in an impoverished community. The size of the treasure on earth is no reflection of God's relative love and favour for the two individuals. It is much more difficult for the wealthy one to enter the kingdom than for the poor one. The refining process should therefore, be more stringent before financial blessings of great magnitude are poured out.

32. THE POWER OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS

Never lose sight of the power of the Blood of Jesus. Apply the Blood to yourself and your family from the top of their heads to the soles of their feet and to your house, walls, floors, roof, ceiling, doors, windows, doorposts and lintels and your entire property and all you own. Thank the Lord that His angels camp around you to protect you and give thanks at all times for your salvation. Keep the enemy out of your camp.

33. PRAISE AND WORSHIP

I have not really touched on praise and worship but continuous praise and worship in your life is essential. Enter His gates with thanksgiving, His courts with praise! You will only really grow close to God if you can praise Him and worship Him with every fibre of your being with absolutely no inhibitions, as long as you are led by the Spirit. If you love Him with all that you are, you will give Him all that you can in praise and worship.

34. WHAT IS HINDERING

Elsewhere reference has been made to hindering spirits. The work of hindering spirits in the financial realm is characterized, for example, by orders which constantly seem imminent but which are always delayed and eventually cancelled, awarded to others or downscaled. The existence of one flesh bonds

is, as far as I know the source of legal entry of hindering spirits and this originates either from one flesh bonds with sexual partners who are not the marriage partner or as a result of division and disagreement between marriage partners.

35. A POST SCRIPT : THE CURSE OF THE LAW : AND GRACE

Since writing the earlier drafts of this manuscript, I have spent much time in the scriptures, prayer and other reading. The challenge of trying to clearly enunciate what I understand remains with me. I am acutely aware of my inadequacies in communicating much in this document which many will find controversial and unpalatable. By implication, this document returns many Christians to a confrontation with many issues in their lives which they have been taught were miraculously dealt with at the Cross. Am I denying the resurrection power of the Cross? Certainly not!

On a recent eight day retreat, I made the following notes after reading in Deuteronomy 28 about the curses, Revelation 22:3 about there being no more curse (at the end of the age, NOT today) and other passages which clearly indicate to me that many of the curses of the Old Testament are still in force today, as indicated in this document.

If this is the case, then what about Jesus becoming a curse for us? A partial explanation is offered by the following interpretation of Galatians 2:17 to 21. The key seems to be verse 18 "if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor".

The implication is that if I continue in sin, I become a transgressor and the law regains a foothold in my life insofar as Satan gains a legal right to attack me BUT I have the Holy Spirit and Jesus' sacrifice to atone for that sin if I confess and repent. This is as opposed to animal sacrifices at a remote altar at a remote Temple that I could at best visit a few times a year or even less frequently under the Old Covenant. Thus, the Temple at Jerusalem could be destroyed, animal sacrifice ended and the officiation of the priests at the Temple ended as a consequence of Jesus' sacrifice, once and for all BECAUSE the Temple is now within me. Jesus was sacrificed ONCE AND FOR ALL and He is my High Priest, thus transforming the Law into Grace whereby God deals with me personally in the process of refining me towards Holiness and Sanctification. But, insofar as my sin transgresses the Grace that God has extended to me, I make myself a transgressor and therefore vulnerable to the curse of the Law!

Ephesians 4:18-32 lists much that is relevant to this discourse and it is on verse 27 "nor give place [foothold] to the devil" that the core thesis of this document is based. This passage warrants careful study at this time in your reading of this document.

I hope that this clarifies what I have endeavoured to communicate throughout this document. I fully appreciate that what I am addressing here is incredibly complex and that I do not have all the answers. I have sought to communicate as effectively as possible my understanding based on real life observations and experiences of what has worked and what has not together with a large amount of prayer, Bible study and other research. If my choice of Words to describe the scriptural basis of what I have presented is not entirely accurate, I would value your suggestions. However, please do not permit this to distract you from extracting what is of importance to you out of this document.

36. THE NEXT VOLUME? : BEING LED BY THE SPIRIT

There is still much that I can write. Increasingly, this relates to the challenge of becoming truly Spirit led. God willing, I hope to produce a further volume which addresses this subject in a similar format to this.

37. CONCLUSION

In this section, I have sought to set out some principles which, from my experience, seem important to the topic. My prayer is that, as you read through these points, the Holy Spirit will lead you to those factors that apply in your life right now. From there, it is up to you to work out your salvation (healing and deliverance) with fear and trembling. Pray and ask the Lord to lead you to relevant scriptures, teachings, books, tapes, etc. Ask Him to lead you to people who can help you and to speak to you through apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers and other believers. You are also welcome to contact me. I cannot guarantee that I can help you but, God willing, we will try.

In the final chapter of this book, I set out some prayers that I have found helpful in walking the road that I have touched on above.

CHAPTER 4 - SOME PRAYERS THAT HAVE WORKED FOR ME

1. INTRODUCTION

I hope that from comments made throughout this document as well as the guidelines for using the document provided at the beginning, you will realize that I truly believe that the only way that you will be delivered from bondage is through what I would call "diagnostic prayer". That is, accept that God wants to bless you, accept that His word is true and accept that He has said that He will answer every prayer prayed in accordance with His will and in faith without doubting in the names of Jesus. If this is the case, then the only possible reason for you to be in lack, sickness or any other form of bondage must lie with YOU. That is NOT a criticism, it is a statement of fact and is, in fact, I believe a statement that should fill you with HOPE and JOY.

If you are all that stands between you and deliverance then you are no longer dependent on ANY third party. God can and will deliver you as soon as you have dealt with whatever it is that is giving Satan a foothold. Certainly, God may use other people to assist you but, even if you are the only person marooned on a desert island and you have your bible and are filled with the Holy Spirit, that is all that you will ever need for your deliverance!

Nevertheless, somehow, most people do not seem to know how to pray "diagnostic" prayers. To me, as an engineer, scientist, analyst and military commander, diagnostic prayers are simply the spiritual equivalent of the reasonable questions that anyone facing a problem in the world would ask in order to solve the problem.

Diagnostic prayers are prayers prayed in faith believing that God will answer, in which you ask God to help you to discover what is wrong and why you are not walking in His blessings, whatever the blessing may be. In other words, ASK GOD QUESTIONS and, if you do not understand the answer, ASK MORE QUESTIONS and keep on asking questions about the answers until all aspects of the problem have been dealt with and you have the victory.

Clearly, where an answer requires action, whether it be restitution, repentance or any other form of action, you will need to take that action, however much it may not be to your liking. Equally, the answer you receive is not necessarily going to be the same answer that someone else would obtain and therefore they are not necessarily going to be able to assist you to act on it. After all, it is YOUR personal sin.

However, if you pray thoughtfully, if you listen attentively, if you observe carefully what goes on around you, you will begin to understand where God is leading you. As you gain understanding, you will progressively pray more incisively until you have prayed through to the solution. Remember always to pray in the spirit without ceasing!

You can also pray defensive and protective prayers. As you begin to realize how totally incompetent you are in your own strength to achieve anything in the spiritual realm, you will also begin to pray prayers which grant God permission to operate more and more deeply in your life. As you do so, you are likely to begin to die to self and become increasingly "Holy Spirit led".

The prayers that follow are a direct transcription of a list that I have developed over several years which I still, from time to time pray over myself. They are not offered as some form of recipe, simply as a list that has helped me and which I believe, if you pray them sincerely and with faith, will help you.

2. A LIST OF PRAYERS

The following is the list of prayers referred to. All are prayed to the Father in the name of Jesus and therefore I will not state that explicitly with every prayer. Please note that I do not claim that every prayer is scriptural or entirely within the best will of God. This is simply a list of prayers that I pray. Nothing that is written below should be construed as suggesting that you should abdicate your responsibility to hear God and act on what He says to you. No matter what the wording may suggest to you, all **MUST** be prayed as a **HUMBLE** petition, not an arrogant demanding or avoiding of responsibility. If you do not like the wording, you are free to change them. If you have suggestions, I would welcome hearing from you.

1. Father God, in Jesus name, I ask you to please show me any unforgiveness, bitterness, offense, error, unrighteousness or other sins that I need to repent of and anything else that will keep me from hearing you or fellowshiping with you.
2. Please bring to my attention the sins that I am currently unaware of and forgive me even the sins that I do not know about or am unaware of.
3. Create in me a clean heart O God.
4. Pray Psalm 51 over yourself regularly.
5. Pray Psalm 119 over yourself regularly.
6. Speak to me through apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, books, tapes or in any other way to show me things that I am not hearing you clearly on or things that I need to know.
7. Send apostles and prophets to me for correction or direction as necessary. Keep me from false prophets, lying, false, vanity, religious, proud and antichrist spirits and all other demonic influence.
8. Crucify my self, selfishness, self righteousness, self centredness and all other forms of self. Let me become Christ centred and let my flesh die daily. Grant me a revelation to truly see myself as the chief of sinners as Paul did.
9. Help me to discipline myself daily to read your Word and pray continually and in tongues and to be in your presence all the time.

10. Make me critically aware of anything that is hindering my prayer life, reading of the Word or hearing you. Help me to keep from backsliding again.
11. Help me to put you first in everything and help me to keep from becoming too busy for You.
12. Help me to seek first the Kingdom of God and Your Righteousness and to do the things that You have called me to do as only priority.
13. Bring the right people into my life and take and keep the wrong people out of my life. I thank you that you will provide all my needs both physical and financial.
14. I apply the Blood of Jesus to my wife, my children (by name) and myself from the top of our heads to the soles of our feet. I apply the Blood of Jesus to the house, the walls, the floors, the roof, the ceilings, the windows and the doors, the doorposts and the lintels, the cars, the property and all that we own.
15. Help me to be continually conscious of and confessing the Power of the Blood of Jesus.
16. Guide me to take care of my body, Your temple.
17. Guide me to be a good husband and father and worker.
18. Grant me wisdom and understanding and lead me in all that I do.
19. Teach me to pray.
20. Make me more like Jesus day by day.
21. Show me your priorities every day.
22. Guide my every step, every minute of every day.
23. Let me acknowledge you before men at all times and in every way.
24. Guide my business and all those who work for it. Grant them wisdom and understanding in all things and help them to work as a team and come to know you more.
25. Thank you for abundant finances and that you take us out of debt.
26. Guide our rulers that our land may have peace.
27. I thank you that I put on and constantly wear the whole Armour of God : I wear the belt of truth and the breastplate of integrity, moral rectitude and right standing with God, my feet are shod with the firm footed stability of the Gospel of peace, lifting up over all the shield of saving faith upon which I can quench all the flaming missiles of the evil one. I wear the helmet of Salvation and carry the Sword that the Spirit wields that is the Word of God. I thank you that you help me to pray at all times and on every occasion in the Spirit and to keep alert and strong. (text from the Amplified Bible).
28. Read Ephesians regularly and pray appropriate passages.

29. Help me to keep from self confidence, pride and other carnal or demonic influence and show me immediately any demon attempts to attach itself to me or my family.
30. Show me what else to pray.
31. Please remind me to ask you before I do anything that will take time, cost money or impact anyone, anything, your work or your kingdom. Help me to do your will and not mine.
32. Lead me not into temptation. Pray the pattern prayer.
33. Help me to speak your word with boldness.
34. Read Romans 8 regularly, especially with regard to Christ as our righteousness.
35. Help me to remember 1 Timothy 1:15 "sinners of whom I am chief" (Paul)

I hope to include further prayers in the next volume, God willing.

Please understand, I do not claim to be an expert on prayer. I have prayed these prayers periodically for some years now and they seem to be bearing fruit. Much of what is requested here takes time to manifest in one's life. In some cases we may need considerable spiritual preparation before we can receive these things. In all cases, our will and our flesh can stand in the way.

3. CONCLUSION

Currently, I am wrestling with the question of whether some or all of the above should be prayed on the basis of thanking God for granting the prayers as opposed to petitioning Him. I think that it would be presumptuous to pray all of these differently but I am unsure and would welcome readers comments.

I sincerely pray that you have found this volume to be of some help. I welcome your comments and suggestions, particularly significant omissions and serious errors. At the same time, I appeal to you to focus on what is good in this document rather than on what is wrong with it. None of us are perfect and I increasingly realise how imperfect I am. While correction is important, if we become too focused on correcting others, we miss out on what God is seeking to do in our own lives and WE are primarily responsible for our OWN lives. At the same time, pride very quickly gains a foothold. If you are constantly seeing peoples flaws and errors, errors in books, etc and are telling them what is wrong, be very sure that God has told you to speak to them, if not pride is probably becoming established. Keep quiet and pray for them.

God bless you, I pray that you will take a few steps closer to Jesus and to victory in your life as a result of what is recorded in these pages.

James Robertson

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Note: Please refer to the **Caveat on page xii** and the section on **Vocabulary on page xv** for cautions regarding doctrine and word usage in the older eBooks that is inaccurate. Apart from these errors these eBooks contain much valuable information.

eBook 3:
Y2K – The Year 2000 :
Fact, Foolishness or Satanic Plot -
Published in 1998

This eBook presents an analysis of the event commonly known as Y2K relating to Computer Software.

Y2K
THE YEAR 2000
FACT, FOOLISHNESS OR SATANIC PLOT?

A DISCOURSE
BASED ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
AS AN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT,
SYSTEMS ARCHITECT AND ANALYST
AND COMPUTER PROGRAMMER

*An Analysis of Technical and Spiritual Factors
Behind "The Year 2000"
of RELEVANCE TO THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST*

AN END TIME ISSUES PUBLICATION

***"Hear me, O Judah
and you inhabitants of Jerusalem:
Believe in the Lord your God,
and you shall be established;
believe His prophets,
and you shall prosper."***

***...."Praise the Lord,
For His mercy endures forever."
2 Chronicles 20:20,21***

PREFACE

A significant part of my professional time during my career as an engineer specializing in the effective application of computer systems in support of business strategy has been taken up with seeking to understand "The Real Issues in Information Technology". As a consequence of this, I have spoken at over fifty conferences internationally and was recently listed in the Marquis "Who's Who in Science and Engineering" and subsequently approached for listing in "Who's Who in the World" for 1999.

Throughout my professional career, which I started by obtaining an honours degree in Civil Engineering, I have been actively involved with computers. In the early eighties I studied a number of University Text's on software design and programming and wrote my own computer software. Subsequently I became involved in the effective application of computers in business. As time progressed I became increasingly aware of the extent to which computers failed to meet managements expectations and became more involved in the diagnosis and rectification of these failures and at the same time became more involved in the development and implementation of business strategy. This knowledge and experience gave rise to the publications and conference appearances referred to above.

Following a major life experience which caused me to return to THE LORD Jesus Christ having literally stared death in the face, I have been seeking to serve Him with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength and particularly with ALL MY MIND. As I have sought to know Him more and to serve Him better, I have increasingly come to know of other developments in the world which are of greater spiritual significance than that which is seen. I have also sought to understand the things of God in a way that will enable me to answer the questions of so-called intellectuals, those with great academic achievement, in order to bring them to a saving knowledge of THE LORD Jesus Christ.

At the same time, I have increasingly become aware of the activities of secret societies and other Satanic agencies in business, government and elsewhere and come to know something about the "New Age" and the "New World Order".

For several years now I have been puzzled by the hype over the year 2000 or "Y2K" as it is now commonly referred to. I was unable to identify very many REAL technical reasons why it should be such a problem. I am still unable to identify many REAL reasons. Accordingly, in this document I seek to address certain issues which I hope will assist Christians to better understand what the Y2K debate is really about and therefore to assist them to better prepare for the year 2000. I will also endeavour to offer Christian business people some suggestions on how to deal with the "threat" which I feel confident will work for many of them.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document is not intended to be an authoritative reference work. It is intended to be, in a sense, a *conversation* with the reader, sharing thoughts and experiences as they come to mind rather than presenting some form of structured management document or formal teaching.

For this reason, thoughts have been recorded largely as they occur. It is almost certain that what is an important focus in my experience is not necessarily important in yours and vice versa and that the order of importance will also differ.

It is also not presented as a teaching with copious scripture references or technical references. Were I to have done that, this document would be many times longer and would not provide, as I currently hope it does, a relatively concise report of a diversity of sometimes seemingly unconnected thoughts all of which, I believe, have some bearing on understanding what is necessary to formulate an approach to the Y2K situation.

By virtue of the objectives set out above, there will never be enough information in this document to answer all your questions, that is not the intention. Jesus, through His Holy Spirit is the only teacher that you can truly rely on. As you identify passages that awaken your interest or are quickened to your attention, pray about them.

In faith, trust God to reveal to you what YOU need to know through His Word, through books, teaching tapes, videos, TV and Radio Programmes, teaching at churches and conferences that he may lead you to, prophets, teachers and other believers that He may bring across your path. Be diligent to seek the truth. Be constantly in His Word and in fellowship with other believers. Be always alert for His leading to buy a book or tape, listen to a radio programme, visit a church, attend a conference, help or talk to a stranger or do anything else contrary to your routine that will lead you to a source of knowledge.

Remember that only God knows your thoughts so don't keep talking about what He is showing you and, as far as possible, NEVER tell anyone your questions. Satan's cohorts (demons and angels) infest the atmosphere and those around you and are constantly listening for useful information to use against you. Pray silently within your heart, believing in Faith that He hears you and that He will answer your questions. If the answer rattles your paradigm and does not seem as though it could possibly be of God, ask Him in faith for confirmation. He loves you and He wants to prepare you for what lies ahead. He has great patience and He recognizes our difficulty in hearing and believing Him. If you walk in faith without doubting HE WILL LEAD YOU TO THE TRUTH YOU NEED TO BE APPROPRIATELY PREPARED.

Be prepared for a challenging and exciting ride! Recognize that God is no respecter of persons and no respecter of our traditions and doctrines. Expect Him to show you things that you will have great difficulty accepting. Expect Him to require you to do things and deal with things which are sometimes VERY challenging and uncomfortable.

If you truly want to serve HIM and you truly want to walk in His will and His blessings, then I encourage you to take up the challenge. By faith, hold onto your hat and enjoy the ride and His blessings!

God Bless You
James Robertson

A PRAYER TO START WITH

This document is not intended to be a rigorous teaching, it is intended to open up a treasure chest of topics for you to PRAY and SEEK GOD about in order to determine what is applicable to your life TODAY in order to redefine your paradigm of the "Year 2000 Problem", effective application of computers in business and business management in general. Different parts will apply at different times. Some may never apply. Some you may revisit again and again. Others may not be covered in this document. As you learn to trust God to lead you into the truth you need day by day, you will find that the walk becomes spiritually easier although it may become more demanding in terms of what you can see in the natural. Ultimately, it is all part of learning to be Spirit Led that you may one day justly claim to be a true Son of God (Romans 8:14).

The following prayer is offered to assist you get started, trust God to lead you in prayer day by day. Pray it IN FAITH WITHOUT DOUBTING AND HE WILL ANSWER YOU:

Father God, I come to you in the name of Jesus. I thank you that you know the parts of this document that apply to me and that are correct for me. I thank you that, as I start to read, you will quicken to my spirit that which is immediately relevant and that you will conceal from me that which is chaff or of no relevance right now.

I thank you that, as you open this document to me, you will teach me what to pray and you will give me utterance in my spirit in order that I may pray your will over my life and those that you have given me to lead.

I thank you that, as I bring sections, paragraphs, concepts and thoughts before you and lay my questions at your Holy throne, you will answer me.

I ask you, in the name of Jesus, to speak to me through Your Word, to lead me to the passages that apply to me and that will answer my questions. I thank you that Your Word contains all the answers that I will ever need to live my life according to your will and to achieve the impact that you have purposed for me at this time.

I thank you that you will speak to me through books, conferences, teaching tapes and videos, fellow business people, consultants, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and preachers, teachers and other people whom you will bring across my path. I thank you that you will lead me wherever I need to go to receive the answers to my questions and that your Holy Spirit is with me always to lead me into ALL TRUTH.

Help me Father to hear your voice clearly and close my ears and eyes to all that is not of you.

Satan, I bind you and your cohorts from blinding or confusing me in receiving anything that God has provided for me in this document. In Jesus Name.

I thank you Father that your Angels are encamped around me to protect me and to keep the enemy from interfering in my studies and I ask you to cover me, my family and all that I own, with the Blood of Jesus from the top of our heads to the soles of our feet.

I thank you Father that Your Word states that as a born again believer, I have the Mind of Christ. I thank you for leading me to victory.

In Jesus Name

CHAPTER 1 - BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The try.

2. CONTEXT

I am a Civil Engineer and Analyst by training with strong grounding in Mathematics, Science and applied problem solving. God has blessed me with a mind that constantly seeks to understand the underlying fundamentals of any situation whether physical or spiritual. I have learnt to use the gifts that I have developed in dealing with physical problems to dealing with spiritual issues as well.

Having served the Lord in the Anglican Church in my youth, turned away because of religion and other factors in my early twenties and been radically saved from the very brink of death (literally) in my late thirties, I found myself faced with a major intellectual problem in accepting that the Bible as the "Living Word of God". Having heard the voice of God and having experienced the presence and power of God enough to have complete certainty that He was real, by faith I chose to accept the Bible as the Word of God and embarked on a voyage of discovery, sometimes into uncharted or little known Spiritual waters.

After obtaining my Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering in 1976 I went on to undertake research towards my PhD. Having accumulated thousands of pages of laboratory results I found that the mainframe computer at the University where I was studying was totally overloaded and did not even have the storage available for one page of data. Accordingly, I purchased one of the first desk top personal computers in the days of the Apple II, CP/M (Control Program for Microcomputers) and similar technologies now largely forgotten. This was before the advent of the IBM PC XT. I rapidly discovered that getting the computer to do what the salesman had told me it could do was not a trivial matter and ended up studying a range of prescribed computer science text books in order to teach myself to write the computer software that I required. In the process the distributor of my computer went out of business and shortly afterwards the manufacturer in the United States went out of business. I also discovered that my "industry standard" computer did not conform to the standards as claimed. As a consequence, I was forced to learn a significant amount about hardware and communications and developed a network of contacts around the world with people who could assist me to solve my problems. Eventually, after a number of years I completed my PhD and received a major National award for it.

At the same time, I worked for my father's international Gold Share investment consultancy for four years and gained considerable exposure to the international stock and commodity markets and gained some insight into the global economy, travelling overseas a number of times as we consulted to major Swiss Banks, London Stock Brokers and other major players in the Gold investment market.

Subsequently, I returned to Civil Engineering in the field of Mining Geotechnics and over a period of four years was involved in a number of projects involving the use of computers in Ore Body Modelling, Mine Design, Slope Stability analysis and probabilistic risk management. I also managed the transition of the company I was with from a mini-computer system to one of the first Novell PC networks in Johannesburg and designed and project managed the development of a fully integrated suite of database software to provide comprehensive operational and financial management information and transaction processing for the business. I also managed the introduction of what subsequently came to be called "end user computing", putting a PC on every users desk and addressing the relevant training and support needs.

In 1989 I left my employer and started consulting on my own as a "Computerization Consultant", assisting clients to undertake needs analyses, specifying systems and project managing and contract managing the implementation. For four years I was involved in this type of consulting, primarily with regard to integrated operational, financial and management information systems for medium to large professional service companies using a combination of custom written software and off-the-shelf packages. Repeatedly I encountered non-technical reasons why projects did not initially meet expectations and started to publish on this topic.

In 1994 I started a multi-disciplinary company which included my I.T. consulting capability merged with a number of small computer software development companies. For the next four years we developed large integrated systems as well as smaller systems and executive information systems. I continued to publish widely on the factors giving rise to failure and to identify more and more factors giving rise to failure. Over time we developed techniques to address and overcome these factors. At the same time, as an avowedly Christian company, with a cross in our logo and "Jesus Christ is Lord" on the bottom of our letterhead, we started to encounter situations in our business environment which could only be understood spiritually. In May 1997, God told me to close down the business and took me through a series of short assignments from which I gained certain insights into what was going on behind the scenes which would otherwise never have come to my attention.

Earlier this year I was led to start writing a series of "discourses" on various topics, of which this is the fourth.

This discourse came to the fore in the space of a few days as a series of incidents brought years of knowledge and experience into sharp focus in what I believe to be a revelation of what is ACTUALLY going on behind the scenes with regard to Y2K. The first release of this document will be incomplete because of the urgency that I sense and also because I realize that there is still much to learn which you, the reader, may be able to help me with.

I do not present any of what I have written above as a boast. My intention is simply to position and contextualize what I am about to write with a view to appealing to you, THE READER, to consider the possibility that there may be a paradigm in your spiritual walk and business experience that is outside the realms of what you have previously considered to be the only valid understanding and interpretation. In doing this, I will endeavour to avoid criticising what others believe, my hope is that I will build on truths that others have in order to draw out more of the truth as we all sincerely seek to draw closer to God, to be more like Jesus and to seek ALL TRUTH.

3. DISCLAIMER

If I offend you, I ask you to forgive me, that is not my intention, I fully realize that, if you are offended you will have difficulty changing your paradigm and my objective is to lay a foundation that I believe

will assist the reader to reassess certain issues that may be having a profound influence in their lives. Please set aside anything that offends you and pray over it as you seek to extract what may be wheat and not chaff for you in this document.

This draft of this document, has been produced specifically to be read by people with whom I am in personal contact although it is my expectation that, in time, it will be published more widely and more formally, under the heading of "End Time Issues". At this stage, in particular, I hope to obtain comment, insight and testimonies from as many readers as possible with a view to presenting as comprehensive a picture as possible as I have no doubt that there are others whose experience differs drastically from my own who will place different emphasis on various aspects and will have revelation in different areas. Having said this, I must stress that this document in no way claims to be comprehensive, you may have unique issues and challenges in your life that no person other than the Holy Spirit of the Living God can assist you with, in all things LOOK TO JESUS NOT to men.

At this stage, I do not intend to present endless scripture and technical references. Right now I am not seeking to hard sell you anything, I am seeking to raise some issues for consideration and hopefully discussion leading to prayerful action in the expectation that where something applies to your particular situation, The Holy Spirit will quicken this to your attention and show you how to respond.

I look forward to receiving your comments and to discussing what follows with you.

4. A PRESSING QUESTION : IS Y2K REALLY SUCH A PROBLEM?

At the time of writing, there are less than seventeen months to 1 January 2000 and there is nothing that anyone can do to delay the deadline.

Increasingly, business people and computer users generally are seeking to assess the extent of "the problem" and how to overcome it. Various reports indicate that auditors may qualify financial statements if companies have not solved the Y2K problem and there are suggestions of banks refusing finance to companies who cannot supply a certificate demonstrating a clean bill of health. Numerous other horror projections of aircraft falling out of the sky, etc are being reported. It is suggested that numerous businesses and even banks could go out of business. There is great uncertainty and yet many people do not have a clear idea as to exactly what they must do. The whole thing seems scary but to a point, perhaps? unreal.

The question has to be posed : "*Is Y2K really such a problem?*"

In this document I will endeavour to present information which I consider to be critical with a view to answering the question from the point of view of:

Is the Y2K problem

FACT

or

FOOLISHNESS

or

SOMETHING ELSE?

In the sections that follow I will discuss some factors behind my interpretation of the situation and seek to assist you to draw your own interpretation and conclusions. These sections are based on limited observation of material in various books and articles to do with the Y2K phenomenon.

5. DOES THE YEAR 2000 HAVE SOME FUNDAMENTAL BIBLICAL SIGNIFICANCE?

Perhaps the first question that needs to be addressed in understanding the year 2000 is the question of whether 2000 has some deep spiritual significance which means that our normal paradigm of understanding must be set aside. The answer simply is no. In biblical terms the year 2000 is NOT the year 2000 it is actually the year 2004 and 1996 was actually the year 2000. In biblical terms we are ALREADY in the new millennium.

Marvyn Byers in the second edition of his book "*The Final Victory : The Year 2000*" published by Treasure House as an imprint of Destiny Image, P O Box 310, Shippensburg, PA 17257, USA in 1994 presents a robust argument on this issue in appendix D, page 299 and chapter 29, page 169.

Jesus was born during the reign of Herod who, according to Josephus, died just before the Feast of Passover and a few days after a complete lunar eclipse. The eclipse took place on the night of March 13 of 4 BC. Accordingly, Jesus has to have been born before March of **4 BC**. Other information is presented to the effect that Jesus was born during either 5 BC or 4 BC and it is noted that this interpretation is supported by other knowledgeable history books, encyclopedias and studies which confirm the timing of Jesus's birth as taking place in this period.

There is therefore no scriptural reason for 1 January 2000 of our current calendar to have any particular significance.

Referring again to Byers, our current, calendar was devised by Pope Gregory XIII and introduced in the year 1582 at a time when precise dating of events was, at best problematic. It is therefore easy to understand how an error of a few years could occur. Insofar as the year number is simply a counter for human consumption whether the year 2000 is labelled 2000 or any other number is of little significance if it has no scriptural significance.

6. DOES 1 JANUARY HAVE ANY SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Clearly, even if the year 2000 is not spiritually significant, 1 January, coming a week after Christmas, the traditional time of Jesus birth, could have significance. Referring again to Byers, we discover that there is strong scriptural evidence that Jesus was born during the Feast of Tabernacles which is in September or October each year. There is strong scriptural evidence that Jesus would NOT have been born around December.

We can therefore almost completely discount the possibility that 1 January 2000 has any direct scriptural significance and therefore that anything that happens or is projected to happen on 1 January 2000 will be the result of the actions of man, possibly assisted by the "God of this world" Satan.

7. IS THERE SOME SCRIPTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE ATTACHING TO THE YEAR 2000

Referring again to Byers, there does, however, appear to be strong grounds to believe that something of great spiritual and biblical significance could happen at Passover (Easter) 2000.

There would therefore seem to be good grounds for the enemy to seek to cause great instability and great falling away of believers before Easter 2000!

8. THE REAL QUESTIONS CONCERNING Y2K

At this point, it must be stressed that I am not stating that there is not a Y2K problem.

The problem is real but the real questions are

- a. HOW GREAT is the problem?
- b. How does one deal with it?
- c. Could it have been avoided and, if so, why was it not avoided?

I will seek to answer these questions based on my own experience with computers over more than twenty years in the sections that follow.

9. WHAT IS THE Y2K PROBLEM?

According to reports, the Y2K problem has a number of distinct components:

- a. Computer software which makes use of dates for calculating interest, debtors and creditors ageing, pensions and other calculations which are based on elapsed time calculated using the year number as a counter of years. Suggestions of organizations finding that stock control systems cease to work, that pension calculations become nonsense and other issues are raised in order to indicate the level of disruption that faulty computer and software could cause to businesses.
- b. Computer software which displays the date for the convenience of users and readers of output and for operators making entries to computers. For example, the date - time stamp attached to all files stored on a computer disk. There is some implication in talk about Y2K that this will have major implications for a wide variety of computer users.
- c. Allegedly microprocessors and other electronic circuitry in which the year of manufacture or other date related information is encoded onto the chip and which supposedly will cease working, malfunction or "melt-down" at one minute past midnight on 1 January 2000. Examples offered include critical hospital equipment and elevators in buildings ceasing to work, aircraft dropping out of the sky and numerous other alarming suggestions.

All the above sounds alarming, particularly references to "melt-downs" and aircraft falling out of the sky, what is the basis of these fears and are they justified.

10. CAN STATEMENTS MADE BY I.T. GURU'S BE REGARDED AS RELIABLE?

Before the more detailed technical issues are addressed, the question must be posed "Can statements made by I.T. guru's be regarded as reliable"?

In considering this question consider that the I.T. industry is probably the most under regulated and unstructured industry in the world today. In other professional disciplines, such as engineering, high levels of educational qualification and apprenticeship are required before a person can practice unsupervised. Serious disciplinary sanctions are enforced by professional controlling bodies which seek to regulate standards and ensure that buildings do not fall down and trains do not crash. Failure of an engineering system, including computer hardware, is a relatively uncommon event, so much so that it makes headline news.

No such comparable professional certification, let alone professional regulation exists in the computer industry, particularly in the computer software industry. Organizations like Microsoft proclaim "standards" like Windows and within months change and break the standards. There is no meaningful protest or objection from consumers who, locked into marketing hype chase the latest version of products they do not have any business case to upgrade in order to avoid being left behind with "outdated and incompatible software". There is no sound technical reason for this incompatibility.

I.T. people are also prone to using terms from the real world with scant regard for their true meaning. In the process, they disregard the fact that the words mean something else to other people. In broad terms, I have to suggest that it is unlikely that any computer chip will physically "melt down" on 1 January 2000. At worst, it will stop working, it might get into a closed loop that it cannot get out of. As best I can determine, the only way that a chip could physically self destruct at that point would be if it had been pre-programmed to do just that and the necessary energy sources and circuitry do cause such self-destruction had been carefully designed and tested in order to ensure that this one off behaviour would occur.

11. DOES THE I.T. INDUSTRY DELIVER AND IS MUCH OF WHAT IT DOES RELEVANT?

Consider also that statistics indicate that over 70% of corporations are dissatisfied with their I.T. investment and do not believe that they are getting value for money and that 70% of I.T. projects fail to reach completion. Statistics indicate that approximately 70% of all money spent on computers and computer related matters in the history of computers has been totally wasted and scrapped without achieving ANYTHING that was envisaged when the investment was first mooted. Can an industry with such a shocking record of under delivery be regarded as a reliable barometer of it's likely future performance?

My own experience over many years has shown me that people involved with computers very seldom understand "The Real Issues" with regard to the practical and profitable application of computers in business. They tend to get carried with "features" and "functionality" at the expense of solving the business problem. As a result, many, if not most I.T. decisions are based more on technology "nice to haves" than on real issues. Accordingly, much of what I.T. people regard as vital is, in fact, irrelevant. This leads me to conclude that a fair amount of the hype around year 2000 falls into this category. For example, if your cellphone cannot display the year correctly, does it affect your ability to use the phone? If your word processing software or spreadsheet cannot automatically display the year correctly, does it materially impact on your document? At worst in a spreadsheet you can apply a simple off-set type adjustment in order to get around the problem.

12. WHY IS THE YEAR IMPORTANT ANYWAY?

Before we go much further, we need to understand why the year is important to us.

Basically, the year number is just a counter. It counts the number of years since some arbitrary and, as we have seen in section, incorrectly determined base date. In terms of the currently accepted Jewish calendar, the year 2000 is the year 5760-5761 although according to Byers interpretation it could conceivably actually be 6004. In terms of our day to day life, the exact number is insignificant, it is the existence of a universally understood standard that matters. The fact that every nation on earth at the very least recognizes that the year which we label 2000 is labelled 2000 is only important insofar as it enables all nations to know the year that is being talked about.

If one person talked about 2000 and another 5761 we would find it confusing. If on one day I entered a date on a computer as being in 2000 and on another occasion entered the same date as being 5761

any other user of that data would be confused and the computer would make some serious computation errors in computing any calculation which compared the dates of the two entries. The problem would not be with the computer but with my failure to apply a consistent standard.

Thus the year 2000 is just a numeric counter or label that has been applied to all data relating to dates.

Since the year 2000 is such an arbitrary number, there is no real reason why it cannot be changed other than the amount of disruption that it would cause and the years that it would take everyone to get used to calling 2000 some other number. However, this results only from the difficulty of getting billions of people around the world to change a standard that they have come to regard as inviolate.

However, this does not stop your business from deciding to introduce a new local standard in order to minimize the impact of the Y2K problem. If you chose to set your computers back to 1 January 1990 or 1 January 1988 (if you have a need to accommodate the leap year) your Y2K problems will look completely different to those that you will experience if you elect to allow all your computers to tick over to 1 January 2000.

If you were to do this, you could do it at any time in the next seventeen (at time of writing) months, financial year end would probably be a good time, and you could probably do it with minimum disruption to your business. You would certainly be able to manage the impact through planned over time. I will discuss this option in more detail later, suffice it to stress now that 2000 is an entirely arbitrary, man made number which has no real relevance to any self respecting computer chip.

13. HOW THE Y2K PROBLEM MANIFESTS IN PRACTICE

The actual manifestation of Y2K non-compliance is as follows:

- a. The year counter 1998 contains four digits.
- b. It has been customary since the 19 prefix is taken for granted by most users to write 98 rather than 1998 in order to save effort, save space and save ink.
- c. On computer, doing away with the 19 prefix has happened to a point by accident because the manual systems that the computer systems were designed to replace did not worry about the 19.
- d. In part, the 19 was omitted to save disk space. It is currently being alleged that this is the real reason for Y2K. Fancy graphs demonstrating hardware and disk storage costs have been published to show why Y2K is a necessary consequence of informed cost containment decisions in the past. My experience indicates that this is not the case and, in a later section I will explain why any person who claims to have taken an informed decision to contain disk usage by limiting the year to two digits is either incompetent or lying.

Insofar as the correct calculation of the age of someone born in 1998, calculated in 2000 requires that the computer calculates $2000 - 1998 = 2$ whilst $00 - 99 = -99$ there will be a real error in any calculation of this nature after 1 January 1999 for any computer system or software WHICH DOES NOT INTERNALLY RECORD the 19. This will affect debtor and creditor age calculations, interest calculations, leave calculations, age next birthday, pension, etc, etc, etc. The impact is NOT insignificant and cannot be ignored IN SOME CASES.

However, there are some good technical reasons why well designed software and hardware may not necessarily manifest the problem in the way that it is described and there are some simple ways of overcoming the problem in a large number of cases. These are briefly discussed in sections that follow.

14. WHAT IS DATA?

Hopefully, by now, you are beginning to realize that the real issue with the Y2K is a numeric value that represents a counter relative to an arbitrarily set reference point and which is entered into a computer by keyboard or other entry device, stored on a computer disk and output on a screen or report and / or used in various calculations.

The only way that a computer remembers the date is either if it is written in magnetic or magneto-optical form as a binary pattern of zeroes and ones on a computer disk or tape or in the computers memory which may include so-called non-volatile memory which retains the pattern when power is switched off from the computer. In all cases, this is in practical terms no different to writing the same information on a piece of paper. The type, quality and colour of the paper and the nature of the writing instrument does not in any way alter the fact that the item of data is the year number "2000". In the same, way, replacing 2000 with 2001 in the same location involves overwriting the data on disk, it involves either erasing or obliterating with "Tippex" the image on paper. The concept is the same, the technique is different.

In computer terms, the manner in which the date is represented may differ from technology to technology but the principle is the same and the reality is that there are very few different representations used in practise. There really is not a great need for diversity since the date, an particularly the year, represents a small proportion of the data recorded in virtually every computer solution.

15. DATA REPLACEMENT

Having realized that data is really no different from writing on a piece of paper, it is apparent that to write over it is not particularly difficult, certainly not when it is in magnetic form.

Given that computers are very good at automatic repetitive processing, it becomes apparent that to either manually, using a data replace function in a database editor, or automatically using a small application written for the purpose, it is almost a trivial matter to search and replace the date fields in an entire database and systematically replace 1998 with 1986, and so forth. Once this has been done it is done, there is basically not very much that can go wrong other than for users to enter the wrong date, so we are back to the people problem.

However, this approach is potentially much easier to do reliably and has far fewer unforeseen problems than some of the other Y2K solutions which require looking for parts of the software to change in pieces of source code which have possibly not been edited for decades and which are badly documented and where version control problems could be insurmountable. Trying to change someone else's computer program years after it was written and when proper configuration management has not been implemented, which is in almost every case, is fraught with difficulty and makes the Y2K very real and practically insurmountable for many organizations if they seek to change their software.

Data replacement is a much more reliable and much lower risk solution with almost 100% probability of low cost success provided it is planned properly and certain aesthetic issues are addressed.

As a second phase, the aesthetic issues can be addressed by relatively minor changes to the data entry programs in order to subtract the chosen offset, such as twelve years, from every date entered, before it is stored. This will overcome the problem of operators inadvertently typing in the wrong date.

As a third phase, those reports which are widely distributed and particularly those that are distributed to clients, can be modified to add the offset back onto the date after the data has been retrieved from disk and before it is printed.

The remaining input, processing and reporting which is for internal use and only used by a limited number of sophisticated users in-house can remain with the date with the twelve year offset. People are remarkably adaptable, they will easily accommodate this anomaly.

It is my expectation that this approach will eliminate in excess of 99% of the risk, reduce the cost of Y2K conversion by a similar amount and eliminate most of the hassle. It will also cause the business to focus on the 20% of the issues that will deliver 80% of the benefit in terms of practical and cost effective Y2K compliance. This is the approach advocated in the sections that follow.

16. WHY DOES MOST COMPUTER SOFTWARE AND EQUIPMENT CONTAIN THE YEAR ANYWAY

A question that needs to be answered before we go much further is why a lot of equipment needs to know the year and, for that matter, why a lot of software needs the year.

As indicated above, the year is a counter, in reality it is only meaningful to the people that use computers, the computer has no need to know the year other than as a counter to which the software can apply any off-set it wishes in order to display a year that the user understands. Let us consider a few examples:

a. Cellphone

If we take the cellphone example referred to earlier. The only reason that I know of for a cell phone to know what year it is is in order to display the date, including the year, on the display as a matter of convenience to the user. If the year were not displayed or were inaccurate, what difference would it make? Only that a minor convenience feature is no longer available. The same applies to many other pieces of equipment that display the year. We are faced with a situation where, because the appliance or item of equipment had the internal clock necessary to drive a clock and because the display technology necessary to display the date was present, we now have innumerable pieces of equipment which display the date. If the date is wrong, so what? In many cases you will find that the date is not set or is set incorrectly, ipso facto the year 2000 is unlikely to be a problem.

If it really worries you, why not set the date back ten years now and then you will know that the year 2000 will not be a problem with that item of equipment. If the date is manually programmable then, to the best of my knowledge there cannot be any possible technical reason to prevent you doing this and, therefore, any possible technical reason why that piece of equipment should even know that the year 2000 has happened. Unless, of course, something else has been programmed in which you have no knowledge of.

b. Word Processing Software

If we take the example of word processing software referred to earlier. Typically it will use the date to date stamp files when they are written to disk but this may be a function of the operating system so it is possible that the software does not actually need to know the date in order to do

this. It will also have a date function and various related features to enable you to date stamp documents and have the current date automatically included in the document you are working on. If you never use that function it is highly unlikely that the software will ever detect that it has a problem. Software bugs only manifest when the software executes the particular function concerned.

Again, you should be able to eliminate your concern for the year 2000 today by setting the system clock on your PC's back by ten or twelve years and telling users not to use the date function. You may have some problems with date stamp incompatibility of data files but that there are reasonably simple ways of dealing with that problem if it disrupts your automatic back up procedures. Certainly, you should have little difficulty creating an environment where Y2K does not disrupt your word processing, your presentations and most of your other office automation.

c. Spreadsheet Software

The spreadsheet example is slightly more complex since you are likely to use the date and do date calculations somewhat more frequently. However, you are likely to find that in most cases the date is still a date stamp or, at most a counter. If you enter the date in one or more a separate cells as numeric values of Y2K and then minus ten or minus 12, convert the data to a date and do all calculations with Y2K-12 and then add on the offset at the end, you will get the correct answer ALL the time. In some places you may need to get a bit more elegant but the problems are unlikely to be insurmountable. Accordingly, a large portion of your apparent Y2K problems can potentially be overcome simply by putting the clock back on the equipment by any arbitrary offset that suits you. Just evaluate the merits of different offsets and prototype them first.

The remaining computer hardware and software actually does need the date for some purpose beyond what has been set out above. If you conduct an audit of all the equipment and software that you have been told is at risk from Y2K you may now receive a pleasant surprise.

By this time you should be starting to ask yourself why on earth Y2K has any significance for elevators in buildings, traffic lights and numerous other devices that are allegedly going to fall over on 1 January 2000. The answer is simply that, provided the clock on that device is reprogrammed at the next service to set it back by a specified number of years, there is unlikely to be any reason at all why these devices should even know that they are supposed to give problems. Unless, of course, someone has deliberately programmed them to know about the year 2000 and to break anyway. But no one would dream of doing something like that. Would they?

17. SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE THAT REALLY DOES NEED THE YEAR

This leaves us with some software and hardware applications that really do need to know the year, however, by this time, we have probably reduced the scope of the problem to the 20% (or less) of applications that really are significantly affected by Y2K and which therefore constitute 80% of the real problem. Let us consider a few examples.

a. Accounting Software

Accounting software needs the date in order to record the financial period and also for calculation of interest, debtors and creditors age analysis and similar calculations. The date is also required for invoice and statement dates, transaction dates, etc.

In the light of previous sections, by now you should be starting to realize that, in reality, if you tell your computer that the year is 1988 or 1990 and not 2000 or any other year that comes before

2000, THE COMPUTER should not know the difference, only the users will be slightly confused. However, if you make the change over financial year end, the inconvenience will be less.

You can overcome the problem of visible dates by some fancy footwork with the way you print your stationery. For example, print a dark shaded block where the computer is going to print "88" and print "2000" on the line above or below or beside. People outside your organization will NOT be confused, they will simply think that you could have done a better job designing your stationery. At the worst, you may have to put a red sticker or red block on your stationery telling people to read 1988 as 2000. Your software will still work.

In many cases, you will be able to edit the report specification in the report writer for your accounting software and could quite possibly define the report to print the current year plus 12 if that is your offset so the outside world would in fact see 00 instead of 88 and all the internal calculations would work.

There are some implementation problems with this approach but they are VERY unlikely to be anything like as serious as the problems of the Y2K upgrade to new software which has only recently been released as Y2K compliant and which any way is likely to contain some disclaimer for unforeseen developments as part of the hype referred to in section . The principal implementation in setting the date back relates to existing data which has the old date counter attached to it. In other words, if in 1998 you set your clock back to 1986 (in order to accommodate the leap year and give yourself a reasonable time frame for further correction and to avoid confusion) you will find that all your historical data on disc still says 1998 and sequential preceding years.

This is NOT as serious as it first seems. Virtually any database today can be edited with a variety of tools on the market and relatively simple software routines can be written to systematically search the database and replace one data value with another. With careful planning and pilot testing, most small and medium size organizations should be able to roll their accounting data back 12 years over a long weekend. All that is required is some software to systematically go through the database and, starting with the oldest date replace the number with a number that is exactly twelve years older. Thus 1990 becomes 1978, etc. Since most systems probably do not have more than about five years of historical data, most of which is seldom, if ever, used, this in no big deal.

Keep in mind that if you convert to new software you will have to do at least as much work to convert the data and, in most cases, will decide that the conversion is not worth the effort. If this is the case, you might just restart in the new year with your clock set back twelve years, almost painless relative to what most people are postulating. In fact, you might decided that it is easier to re-key the year end figures rather than to rely on any I.T. techie at R200 per hour plus.

b. Other General Business Systems

The same principles will apply to your inventory, stock control and numerous other business systems.

Combining this approach with that set out in section most small and medium size enterprises should find that the Y2K problem has been largely dealt with.

Taking account of the comments in section, we have now reduced the Y2K problem to the 20% of the parts of the systems that represent the 20% of the systems that have a real problem, in other words, ***we have reduced the scale of the problem to probably LESS than 4% of what it appeared to be at the start!***

18. IS IT ACTUALLY AN ISSUE?

At this point, you may wonder whether it is even necessary to set the clock back. After all, there is a possibility that, since the year is in fact only used in so few places your software might handle it anyway. After all, if you do a debtors age and it gives 00 - 99 = -99 instead of 1, will it actually make much difference? Within a few months the data will have sorted itself out. The only concern is if the software will crash in a manner that destroys your data or your hardware and you are unable to restart it.

I would venture to suggest that there is a lot of software that might hiccup slightly but once restarted will carry on working after Y2K as though very little has happened. In my opinion, it will require quite a lot of unnecessary code to cause it to do anything else. It is just the users who will be slightly inconvenienced and, with all the hype, if your date calculations are wrong I doubt that they will really get upset with you. In fact my experience suggests that those companies which are frantically replacing non-compliant systems and software will cause their customers and suppliers orders of magnitude more grief than you will so you will probably be the "good boys".

In any event, this is not too difficult to prototype and try out, any time that suits you between the day you read this and 1 January 2000. Please just make sure that you plan the test carefully and make the necessary backups so that you can roll back and reassess if something does go wrong. My life experience tells me that most people underestimate the complexity of anything to do with I.T. and then rush in without proper planning. This has nothing to do with Y2K, it is a fact of life. If you analyze it and plan it carefully, you have a better than 99% probability that you will get it right.

I am planning to do something along these lines in my own business. In fact, my only concern is that someone might have deliberately programmed something to cause something to break, otherwise I doubt I would be giving the matter any thought at all.

19. IS THE TWO DIGIT YEAR ACTUALLY NECESSARY TO SAVE COMPUTER STORAGE

The reason advanced for the two digit year as opposed to the four digit year, that is 98 versus 1998 is supposed to be related to historical cost of storage.

This assumes that a date requires 8 character spaces on disk to store and that two character spaces can be saved by cutting out the century and millennium digits. In other words 1 January 1998 would be stored as 01 01 98 (typically designated dd mm yy) instead of 01 01 1998 (dd mm yyyy) thus saving 25% of disk space. This ignores the fact that this date can be converted to a so-called Julian date which is a date number either starting from the beginning of the Julian calendar or with an offset to a more recent date in order to reduce the number of characters required for storage. The formula would be something like the following:

$$\text{JULIAN DAY NUMBER} = \text{INTEGER}(365.25 * \text{YEAR}) + \text{INTEGER}(30.6001 * \text{MONTH}) + \text{DAY} - \text{OFFSET}$$

This will compute a numeric value in terms of number of days since the start of the offset year which might be 1 January 1980 if the software was written in the 80's. I used this algorithm in a suite of

programs that I wrote in the early 80's where I was concerned about storage space on a very restricted computer. The algorithm for calculating the Julian Number is widely known and widely published and I would imagine was taught as part of most computer science and other degrees at most Universities. It is an efficient means of doing any form of date arithmetic and it is likely that most software that does date arithmetic internally makes use of the Julian day number principle in order to do those calculations. In fact, any software or hardware that does date arithmetic is almost certain to use the Julian date or a similar numeric value for calculations as the only efficient approach.

Even on the computer that I purchased in 1980, it was possible to store the Julian day number as a four digit double precision data value, thus using only half the storage space required to store the date in the human friendly manner. Using this algorithm it is highly unlikely that the software would even notice the passing of the year 2000 unless the "19" prefix was added by the software on date entry screens, in which case only a very small modification would be required in order to achieve year 2000 compliance on input and output and all internal calculations, data storage, etc would be unaffected.

Given that I had access to this information and this algorithm when I was in my early twenties and a relative novice in the computer field, I have great difficulty in understanding why there is now a problem with regard to the year 2000 which is being blamed on computer storage costs. It seems to me that any major corporation that has produced hardware or software in the last twenty years which does not make use of the Julian date approach or a similar approach and which claims to have been focused on saving disk space, is not being entirely honest or is incompetent. They could have reduced disk storage requirements by 50% instead of 25% and avoided the Y2K problem at the same time! You might try asking a few Y2K experts to explain this and see if the answers make any sense at all, particularly if they were to be required to present those answers in a court of law in response to a claim for negligence giving rise to liability to make good your Y2K costs.

Please understand, I am not saying that data has not been stored in this format for other legitimate reasons, I am only saying that anyone who alleges that disk storage was the consideration is either not well informed, trying to cover up a lack of foresight or negligence or is deliberately using an explanation that has no technical grounds.

To elaborate, many of those databases which store the date in the dd/mm/yy format, also store the "/" or equivalent divider. In other words, they store 8 characters. To have stored 10 characters represents a 25% increase in field width. The reason for storing the date data in this way is purely to make it easy on retrieval to do the necessary manipulation, it also makes it easy to use any third party query and reporting tool to examine the data and report on it. If the data was stored in Julian form, requiring only four characters for a double precision binary numeric value, it would require a decode algorithm to be run against the data before a human being could make sense of it. It is NOT necessary to decode the data for the computer to use the data for any form of ageing or other calculation since it is likely to convert the date into Julian form in order to do that calculation. The driving force is ONLY ease of use for humans.

When it is recognized that any database application contains much more information than the date and that typically it will include a transaction description of anything from 30 to 60 characters plus at least one numeric value of at least four to ten characters against most types of date, then it becomes apparent that an extra two characters for the date represents of the order of 4% maximum increase in disk space. If disk space was really a concern then, given the obvious critical impact of the year truncation, it would be much better to reduce the description field by two characters than to reduce the date field.

Every way you look at it, this aspect of the Y2K problem must be the result of an entirely short sighted myopia bordering on gross negligence. While my experience of the I.T. industry suggests that this is not beyond the bounds of possibility, the scale of the problem makes one wonder how so many major corporations at the cutting edge of technology could have overlooked this factor. Or, are there companies that have dealt with it that we do not know about and others that realize that it is not nearly as big issue as at first appears? Surely it is not possible that there has been widespread collusion to cause Y2K to happen? Why would anyone want to do that? Does any organization have the level of influence to make it happen? It couldn't be! Could it??????

20. BINARY VERSUS CHARACTER

In the previous section, reference was made to storing the Julian date as a binary numeric since this required less space. By way of explanation, most computers make use of a computer alphabet known as ASCII, older IBM computers made use of EBCDIC. The ASCII alphabet includes 256 possible characters that can be stored in a single character value on a disk or in memory. This number is a result of the 8 binary digits or bits that can be stored in a character or "byte". For most purposes, the ASCII code gives great versatility for text fields since it permits storing of letters, numbers, text formatting characters like carriage returns and control codes, as well as non-standard characters required for many European languages. The ASCII code list, developed, as best I recall, by the American Society of Electrical Engineers in the early days of computers is a robust code which has served the computer fraternity well in respect of storing much of the data that it has required to store.

However, when it comes to numeric data, it is very inefficient. There are only ten possible numeric characters plus the sign, therefore to store a numeric value in a character position which is capable of storing 256 different values is very inefficient. Accordingly, most computer software offers the capability to make use of a so called binary numeric form which fills the available space much more efficiently. In essence, this permits a value which would otherwise require four character spaces to store to be stored in two and a numeric value which would require eight digits to be stored in four. In other words, if space was really a major constraint this technique, together with the Julian date value would have taken much less disk space.

Surely, in an industry with the level of technical expertise that it claims to have, someone saw this coming and catered for it? Don't you think that the only other way something like this could have happened was with very careful coordinated planning? Surely that is not possible! Is it? Why on earth would they want to do it? Who has the resources to make it happen if they did?

21. AN ALTERNATIVE TO DATA REPLACEMENT : RESTART YOUR SYSTEMS

By now you may have realized that, in reality many business systems, particularly financial systems, make very little use of historical data. The data may be used for a few months after year end for ageing and interest calculation purposes but in most cases that is all.

After years of advising companies on how to cut over to new systems I have found it far easier to leave the old system running on the old data for historical enquiries and even to let debtor and creditor ageing run out naturally than to transport the data. After a few months the volume of data to convert has reduced drastically.

It will be the same with Y2K. If you convert over your upcoming year end, you will have the luxury of simply reinstalling your software with a new database, a relatively painless exercise with many but not all systems and running the new system with an offset of say 12 years. In this case you will not even have to do the data replacement!

Since my objective in this document is not to provide a comprehensive technical treatise, I will not dwell on this point, however, I am available to assist you to investigate this option.

22. CONCLUSION PART 1

Hopefully, by now you are wondering what the Y2K hysteria is all about and whether you actually need to be concerned. In fact you may now be beginning to understand why you have been experiencing difficulty getting excited about Y2K in your business. After all, if the problem is only 4% of what it is made out to be that is not really such a big deal.

I must stress that Y2K is a real problem, however, it's impact on many businesses will be much smaller than anticipated. Provided you take what has been written here to heart and recognize that there are a whole lot of systems which do not need to be touched, let alone replaced or tampered with, you will be well on the way to undertaking a sensible, rational risk assessment.

Once you realize that the bulk of the problem can be resolved by data replacement and a date offset or reinstalling systems with a date offset you should be able to breathe easier. Or can you?

The joker in the pack is repeated assertions about things like traffic lights stopping working, the impossibility of accurately determining the magnitude of the problem, etc. Talk about melt downs, etc is also cause for concern. There are reports of the USA preparing the National Guard for riots in January 2000 and the possible introduction of martial law. There are suggestions that Military tanks may not work. Airlines are talking of not flying, etc. Something does not gel with what I have written above. Have I missed something? Technically, I am pretty sure not! Unless, of course someone has deliberately programmed a whole lot of hardware and software to KNOW ABOUT THE YEAR 2000 AND DO SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

Surely that is not possible, is it? In the next section I will begin to examine this possibility.

CHAPTER 2 - THE SECRET SOCIETY FACTOR - THE NEW WORLD ORDER AND Y2K

1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous section we evaluated a variety of issues relating to business systems and established that the level of the Y2K problem appeared to be far less that it is made out to be. In this section we will seek to evaluate whether there could be more to Y2K than meets the eye.

2. HARDWARE DATES

There has been a lot of talk about Y2K affecting traffic lights, cars, aircraft, military tanks, etc. The first question that needs to be addressed is why would a traffic light controller need to know about the year. Even if the controller is programmed for seven day traffic synchronization it does not need to know the month, let alone the year. If it is programmed for 365 day synchronization then the year is important insofar as leap years are concerned, I doubt that any traffic synchronization system in the world is that sophisticated. It would be almost impossible to evaluate different synchronization patterns for individual days of the year. Apart from anything else, one would need years worth of data to develop any sort of statistically significant model and there would be no material benefit. The same applies to all the other systems referred to above.

It has been stated that certain systems keep track of the date last serviced, this may be so but someone has to program the date into the system in the first place, therefore it seems likely that in such cases it should be possible to restart the system with a date offset as previously described. So why is there a problem.

Certain reports concerning this issue suggest that the date is hard coded into the chip at manufacture. If this is the case, a number of factors must be considered.

Most microprocessor and other computer chips are completely inactive until they are connected into electronic circuitry and energized with the necessary electric current, etc. There is no need for them to retain memory until they are installed. Once installed, provision is made for so-called non-volatile memory to record system dates and similar information, however, this information is initially entered into the chip by some form of user interface software which obtains the date either from a keyboard or some other source. This same source should be able to change the date in future.

Secondly, if as seems to be implied, the chip has the year of manufacture hard coded in as a two digit year then there are some fairly serious technical implications. If this date is to be used to record service intervals, then it must include month, day and minute as well, presumably, otherwise a simple counter which records clock ticks from manufacture would suffice. Remember that the human date reference is of absolutely no relevance to the computer, it only requires to store the number of time periods in order to keep track of maintenance intervals. Remember also the comments in section with regard to the Julian date. Given that the processor will need to use the Julian date calculation in order to track maintenance intervals, why is the data not stored on the chip in Julian numeric format, it involves an unnecessary series of processes to store the date in date format so that human beings can read it. If it is stored in this format then there is NO Y2K problem!

Furthermore, considering the millions or billions of circuits included on these chips, there is absolutely no reason to limit the year to two digits. To do so would be petty in the extreme and would demonstrate a total lack of foresight and even the most basic technical risk assessment which I have great difficulty in believing that any registered professional electronics engineer would be guilty of. Furthermore, in the case of Military tanks, it is well known that the US Army Milspec is amongst the most stringent in the world. It defies the imagination to consider that the US Army did not take account of this issue. According to my understanding all US Milspec requires equipment to remain serviceable for a minimum of something like twenty years. In other words, if the rumours are true, all major military equipment manufacturers in the USA have been in breach of contract for nearly 20 years. This includes Boeing who are the manufacturers of a large proportion of the worlds aircraft both civilian and military and who craft must be included amongst those expected to fall from the sky. The level of negligence implicit in these assertions is beyond comprehension.

Surely if these rumours are true, by now there should be a witch hunt of the most incredible proportions with the Pentagon suing every major arms manufacturer who is guilty of this crime (there is no other word to describe it). But it is apparently not happening. Therefore we must conclude that either there IS NO PROBLEM or there is something else afoot.

3. Y2K : FACT, FOOLISHNESS OR SATANIC PLOT

By now I hope that I have established that, to a point Y2K is a fact and a reality but that there is no sound technical reason for it to give rise to anything like the magnitude of problem that is being portrayed. Therefore, one could easily conclude that most of the Y2K hype is just ill-informed hysteria and this it may well be.

However, when there is talk of mobilizing the US National Guard, declaring states of emergency and possibly introducing martial law, we need to look more carefully. When reports indicate that the major credit card companies, Mastercard and Visa have decided not to issue any credit cards with renewal dates after December 1999 and that there are comments that Y2K failure of "even 10%" of banks could give rise to a greater economic crash than the 1920's Wall Street crash, then someone is either overreacting to the hysteria, or there is something going to happen that has been planned or someone is planning to make it look like something happened.

At this time, I have to state that I am of the opinion that this is the case. The Bible talks of "great tribulation", there is talk in some quarters of the US State of Emergency including provision for all significant Christian leaders to be locked in concentration camps. The camps are allegedly already built and the computer to issue the arrest warrants allegedly already exists and is programmed with the necessary information. Bill Clinton allegedly already has the authority to declare a State of Emergency without consulting congress and Clinton is allegedly a member of the "Order of the Skull and Bones", "The Bilderberg Group" and other organizations associated with the Illuminati, Mafia and other secret societies all of whom have links with Freemasonry, all of whom take blood oaths and all of them therefore serve Satan / Lucifer as god and are heavily demon possessed and, therefore largely demon controlled. The ultimate manifestation of Satan's plan to complete what he started in the Garden of Eden is "The New World Order" and the "New Age" religion. I submit to you today that Y2K is a critical component in Satan's plans to take over the world and put his people in power around the world while at the same time seeking to finally stamp out God's people from the earth. However, God has a different plan and, if you are reading this, you are likely to find that you are called to play a critical role.

4. ON WHAT BASIS DOES Y2K ALIGN WITH "THE NEW WORLD ORDER"

Reports over several years have indicated that the protagonists of the New World Order are following an overall strategy, which is well summed up by much of Mao's doctrines on infiltration, destabilization, etc. In particular, they are seeking to reach a point where countries become ungovernable through crime or other means in a manner which allows a small group to declare a state of emergency, introduce martial law and take over the country, in the process removing opponents to concentration camps in numbers that will make Germany and Russia in the 40's and 50's look like Sunday school picnics. The underlying talk around the "problems" associated with Y2K are laying the foundations for this to happen.

Another aspect of the New World Order is a strategy to eliminate the current asset position of private individuals by eliminating all physical money and forcing all people to use electronic financial units. Y2K creates an environment in which the collapse of the entire world's banking system can be contrived to appear to happen associated with loss of all computer records of all bank accounts as a result of "unforeseen Y2K problems". A beneficent world Government, composed of dictators who have imposed states of emergency will then be able to issue "new financial units" electronically which will enable all people to make a new start in life, write off all existing debt and "sadly" also wealth and take what government, through the banks, gives them. Of course, since all computer records will "unfortunately" have been lost, a new form of identification will be called for. This new form of identification is likely to take the form of a microchip **injected under the skin of the right hand or forehead** refer Revelation 13:16 in the King James Translation, all other translations are incorrect, they indicate that the Mark of The Beast will be on the wrist or on the forehead. Indications are that this micro chip will be capable of containing your entire history, sensors in buildings will be able to track you as you enter and leave and the chip will contain a full record of your movements. It is alleged that

the chip will be capable of being tracked by satellite and that it will be possible to energize the chip in some way to alter your behaviour giving rise to severe depression, submissiveness or violent anger. Thus the act of accepting the micro chip may not, as such be an conscious act of submission to Satan but the consequences of receiving the chip will be behaviour which will cause you to sin and turn against God as Satan's agents on earth manipulate you against your free will and control your every movement.

If we did not serve the God of All the Earth, the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth who sent His Son Jesus Christ to die on the Cross of Calvary to take our sins upon himself and to gain victory over Satan, this last paragraph would be frightening indeed. However, greater who is He who is in us than he that is in the world and those who endure to the end shall be saved. The challenge right now is to ensure that you are in the right place spiritually to be able to endure to the end.

Right now, if you have not made a quality decision to serve the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength, do not delay another second. Get hold of the Christian who gave you this document and ask them to help you. Otherwise call

If you have made a decision to serve Jesus Christ, now is the time to recognize that there IS a day of Judgement and that you will be called to account for everything that you do in your life, even every idle word. Make a decision right now to repent of all lukewarmness and half hearted commitment, repent of all dalliance with the world and carnality and take up your cross and follow Him. If you are not where you realize that you need to be spiritually right now get hold of the Christian who gave you this document and ask them to help you. Otherwise call

Now we have our priorities right, rejoice that you are serving the Lord Jesus Christ, that He has seen fit to warn you of what is ahead and start praying fervently and humbly for Him to reveal to you your part in His plan. Make this information to other Christians that you know and to others whom the Lord may lead you to share this information with. Start networking with other Christians who are aware of what is happening, share what God is showing you and take steps to make the necessary preparation.

God is preparing areas of light in the world in a sea of darkness, you need to find one near you and make plans to move there. There is much to be done and much to be learned. Contact us on in order to make contact with others who are seeking to serve God.

5. CONCLUSION

We have presented the information that we believe is relevant to you gaining an understanding of what is REALLY HAPPENING with regard to Y2K.

As long as you are serving the Lord Jesus Christ you are on the right track, if you are not you do not have time to waste. There is much to be done.

God bless you,
JAMES ROBERTSON

----==ooOoo==----

Note: Please refer to the **Caveat on page xii** and the section on **Vocabulary on page xv** for cautions regarding doctrine and word usage in the older eBooks that is inaccurate. Apart from these errors these eBooks contain much valuable information.

eBook 4:
The Scriptural Definition of Marriage -
Published in 1999

This eBook presents a very detailed analysis of
what the Bible has to say regarding
Marriage, Divorce, Adultery and related topics.

This eBook marks the formal documentation of the point
at which I began to realize that
there was HUGE error in the formal Christian Church in ALL variants
that I had encountere.

**This eBook is in course of preparation and is incomplete
it may still contain grammatical errors or omissions.
The logical flow may require attention -
suggestions for improvement are welcome.**

15 November 2001 - IMPORTANT NOTE:

This eBook was written several years ago before the writer had a revelation of the true Names of Yahweh and Yahshua and that Christ is NOT an alternative name for Yahshua but simply means “the Anointing of the Set Apart Holy Spirit of Yahweh” or refers to one who is so anointed and that “God” is the name of a pagan deity and is a wrong translation of “Elohim” which means “mighty one” and that “the LORD” has nothing to do with the Creator but is actually a translation of “Baal” and that the name of the Saviour is “Yahshua” which means “the salvation of Yahweh” and cannot truly be Jesus. Also that Yahshua was hung on a tree, NOT crucified on a cross and that the cross has Satanic connotations.

Time has not permitted editing of this document to make these changes but readers are urged to take note of this and to adjust their own usage as an act of love toward our Heavenly Father!

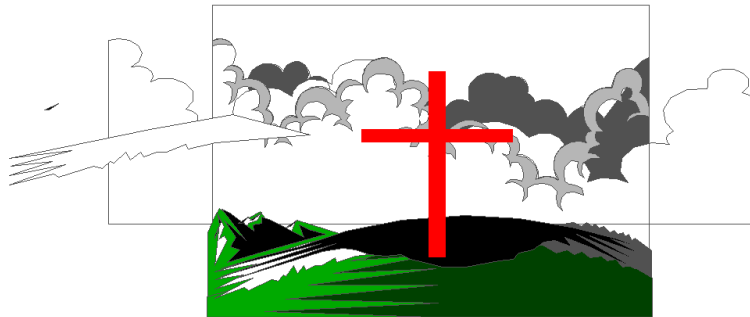
THE SCRIPTURAL DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

*What the scriptures
really say about marriage,
putting away ("divorce"),
adultery and the relationships
between men and women
as a type
of our relationship with
the
LORD JESUS CHRIST*

AN END TIME ISSUES PUBLICATION

By
James Robertson

VERSION 0.99



1 Timothy 4:1-3 states:

- 1 ***Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,***
- 2 ***speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,***
- 3 ***forbidding to marry (NKJ)***

This book provides a comprehensive scriptural analysis of what the Word of God really says about marriage, divorce, adultery and related subjects. It takes particular account of 1 Corinthians 6:9 and other scriptures which clearly indicate that adulterers will not inherit the kingdom of God and offers a comprehensive scriptural analysis of the scriptural definition of fornication, adultery, marriage and divorce. The book clearly shows that the act of sexual intercourse with a virgin IS the ACT of marriage and that the marriage covenant is cut in the virgin flesh (hymen) of the woman.

In 1 Samuel 13:14, Samuel, speaking to Saul, declares David to be a man after THE LORD'S "own heart". In 1 Samuel 25:42-44 we see that subsequent to this David took two wives in addition to the wife that he already had. In 2 Samuel 5:13, we see that David took further wives. Yet in 2 Samuel 12:7-8, after God sent Nathan the prophet to David to rebuke David for his adultery with Bathsheba we see that God says that HE gave David Saul's wives. In 1 Kings 15:5 we read that AFTER David's death, scripture STILL say's that David had done right in the sight of God. In fact, we find at least fourteen (14) instances in the books of Kings and Chronicles where we are told subsequent to his death that David "did right in the eyes of THE LORD all the days of his life".

Subsequently, about one thousand years after David's death, God, speaking through Paul, reported in Acts 13:21-23, confirms that David was a "man after THE LORD'S own heart" and from David's seed God raised up for Israel a Saviour (Jesus):

22 ***"... 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'***

23 ***"From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Saviour-- Jesus-- (NKJ)***

Here we see that despite his approximately eleven wives and ten concubines and despite a number of errors of which David was quick to repent, God referred to David as "a man after His own heart" about one thousand years after David's death! Surely it is utter foolishness to suggest that David was an adulterer for having more than one wife, as some have done? This book presents a comprehensive analysis of scripture to demonstrate that it is indeed GOD'S OWN HEART that a man should have more than one wife! It also demonstrates that Isaiah 4:1 indeed applies to this age:

- 1 ***And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach." (NKJ)***

Finally, from a variety of secular references the book provides some clues as to how the heresy of enforced monogamy came into existence in the Christian church and why this heresy is such an important part of Satan's plan to prevent the return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This is a challenging book which requires the reader to set aside all preconceived ideas and put THE WORD OF GOD FIRST.

If you are truly committed to serving THE LORD YOUR GOD with ALL your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength (Mark 12:30), this is a book you cannot afford not to read.

**"Hear me, O Judah
and you inhabitants of Jerusalem:
Believe in the Lord your God,
and you shall be established;
believe His prophets,
and you shall prosper."....**

**...."Praise the Lord,
For His mercy endures forever."
2 Chronicles 20:20,21**

CAUTION

This book contains many scriptures which will almost certainly require you to reconsider most, if not all, that you have believed the Bible says about marriage, divorce, adultery, sexual conduct and related matters. In the process you will almost certainly have many opportunities to be offended by what is contained herein.

If you are not committed to putting the written Word of God above all other sources of information, this book is probably not for you!

If you do regard the written Word of God in it's original, Holy Spirit inspired text, as the ultimate authority for the conduct of your life, then read on.

Remember John 1:14:

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (NKJ)

Jesus Christ is **The Word**, He is THE inspiration for all that is written in the Bible. Remember also Romans 9:32-33:

32 Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

*33 As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on **Him** will not be put to shame." (NKJ)*

Jesus Christ, "The Word" is the stumbling stone and rock of offense to those who seek truth by law (the teachings of men) and not by faith. And Jesus Christ, Himself, said in Matthew 15:6-9:

6 Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.

7 "Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

8 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.

9 And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' " (NKJ)

In this book many teachings of the modern church which are, in fact, commandments and doctrines of men, will be exposed.

If you fear man and place your comfort and your pride in your own knowledge above the Word of God, you may not receive what is contained in this book. If you fear God and you fear His judgment, consider carefully what is written in this book and seek diligently to rightly divide the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15) remembering that 2 Corinthians 5:9-11 states:

9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

*10 **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.***

11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. (NKJ)

PREFACE

JOHN 17

1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,

8 "For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

10 "And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

*11 "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, **that they may be one as We are.***

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;

*21 **"that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.***

*22 "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, **that they may be one just as We are one:***

*23 "I in them, and You in Me; **that they may be made perfect in one,** and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

25 "O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

26 "And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

In early 1995 I became greatly concerned about the high level of divorce (scripturally "putting away") in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. I was particularly troubled by the number of hurting and

abandoned women and I started to seek God to know the reason. Since then He has been exercising my faith and my understanding with regard to what is contained in His Word on the subject of marriage and related subjects.

In late 1995, while visiting the church in Malawi, I had a powerful encounter with the Spirit of God in which the Spirit came upon me in a manner which I have never again experienced. While the Power of God was upon me, He spoke through me to a group of three other people on various subjects and, in the process, confirmed that the core message of this book was from Him and that those who were saying that He was condoning the divorce that was taking place in much of the church, were committing "an abomination" in His sight and that He would "spit them out". At the same time He called me to obedience even unto the "death of the cross". Since then I have been led by His Spirit into increasing revelation with regard to the subject of this book and have been in the process of writing this book over a period of approximately a year, commencing in mid 1999.

Since 1995 I have increasingly come to realize that the Lord Jesus Christ has shown us in the passage quoted above and in many other scriptures that the body of Christ must become united and learn to walk in unity if we are to accomplish all that we have been called to do. I have also come to realize that while there is so much putting away ("divorce") and trauma in Christian marriages the church will never come to a place of real unity. As much as marriage is an earthly shadow of what awaits us in heaven when the Lord Jesus Christ returns, so much is Satan determined to destroy marriage as God ordained it.

As you read this book you will realize that virtually everything that you have believed about what you thought the Bible says about marriage is at best highly suspect, at worst the most appalling heresy, the legacy of nearly two thousand years of pagan influence on the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is my prayer that once you have prayerfully considered the scriptures in this book you will come to realize the magnitude of the challenge that we are facing. At the same time, I pray that you will see new hope to bring about an end to marital separation (putting away or "divorce") and fornication in The body of Christ and a new hope for Godly marriages which endure and overcome all that Satan can bring against them.

James Robertson

HOW TO USE THIS E-BOOK

This book is not intended to be a formal book, it is intended to be, in a sense, a *conversation* with the reader.

It is based on innumerable questions to God the Father in the name of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. It draws on innumerable instances where He has led me into situations to show me the truth, many instances where He has led me to purchase secular and Christian books to answer my questions. He has taken me on journeys of many thousands of miles to validate the revelations that He has given me and to permit me to meet face to face others to whom He has been speaking on these subjects. It has been refined through persecution, abuse and false accusation combined with spiritual attack on almost everything there was in my life that was open to attack.

In the process I came to a realization that I could not serve Him with all my heart, all my mind, all my soul and all my strength if I did not publish what He had shown me, no matter what the cost. In order to reach that place I had to reach a place of understanding the magnitude of the problem in terms of billions of souls burning in hell for eternity as a consequence of false teachings.

Dear reader, in the light of my own experience, I encourage you to persevere to the end of this book and not to give up. Read further in faith trusting Yahweh God through His Holy Spirit to lead you to the truth. Be constantly in His Word and in fellowship with His Spirit. Be always alert for His leading to buy a book or tape, listen to a radio programme, visit a church, help or talk to a stranger or do anything else contrary to your routine that will lead you to a source of knowledge.

Remember that only God knows your thoughts so don't keep talking about what He is showing you and, as far as possible, NEVER tell anyone your questions. Satan's cohorts (demons and angels) infest the atmosphere and those around you and are constantly listening for useful information to use against you. Pray silently within your heart, believing in Faith that He hears you and that He will answer your questions. If the answer rattles your paradigm and does not seem as though it could possibly be of God, ask Him in faith for confirmation. He loves you and He wants to lead you into all truth. He has great patience and He recognizes our difficulty in hearing and believing Him. If you walk in faith without doubting HE WILL LEAD YOU TO THE TRUTH YOU NEED.

Be prepared for a challenging and exciting ride! Recognize that God is no respecter of persons and no respecter of our traditions and doctrines. Expect Him to show you things that you will have great difficulty accepting. Expect Him to require you to do things and deal with things which are sometimes VERY challenging and uncomfortable.

If you truly want to serve HIM and you truly want to walk in His will and His blessings, then I encourage you to take up the challenge. By faith, hold onto your hat and enjoy the ride and His blessings!

God Bless You

James Robertson

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In order to assist readers to better understand the context of this book it is perhaps important to know something about the author.

The author has BSc and PhD degrees in Civil Engineering with over twenty five years of post graduate experience. He is also a retired part time Citizen Force Military Commander with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Since 1989 he has been in business as an independent Management Consultant specializing in Business Information Systems Architecture and Business Strategy development and implementation. He has published widely in these fields and presented papers at numerous international conferences with particular emphasis on "The Real Issues in Information Technology : Why 70% of Corporations are dissatisfied with their computer investments". As a consequence of this work he has been listed in "Who's Who in Science and Engineering" since 1998 and in "Who's Who in the World" (one of only 40,000 people) since 1999.

With this background his approach to his Christian walk and to the scriptures has been highly analytical. This followed a major intellectual struggle to recognize the original Holy Scriptures as breathed by the Spirit of God Himself. Having taken a decision to live by faith and to subjugate his intellectual incapacity to understand the scriptures with his own understanding, he has spent much time in reading the Word of God and in asking the Father in the name of Jesus to answer those questions which arose in reading the scriptures by faith. In this process he has become increasingly aware of the discrepancies between current doctrine and the Word of God and this has given rise to a series of documents which address what might be termed "The Real Issues in the Christian Walk".

Because of his background, this document might best be described as a technical analysis of scripture and it should be read against this back drop. The author makes no claim to being a salesman or a "people person" and his writing style may therefore appear harsh to many readers. This is not intended, it is simply a reflection of a long term training and career in technical and engineering writing and reporting.

In spiritual terms, the author walks in the office of Apostle with a specific calling regarding the restoration of certain lost truths of which the subject of this book is one.

A PRAYER TO START WITH

This book is intended to open up a treasure chest of topics for you to PRAY and SEEK GOD about in order to determine what is applicable to your life TODAY in order to redefine your paradigm of Christian and Godly marriage to conform to what God requires of us today. Different parts will apply at different times. Some may never apply. Some you may revisit again and again. Others may not be covered in this book. As you learn to trust God to lead you into the truth you need day by day, you will find that the walk becomes spiritually easier although it may become more demanding in terms of what you can see in the natural. Ultimately, it is all part of learning to be Spirit Led that you may one day justly claim to be a true Son of God (Romans 8:14).

The following prayer is offered to assist you get started, trust God to lead you in prayer day by day. Pray it IN FAITH WITHOUT DOUBTING AND HE WILL ANSWER YOU:

Father God, I come to you in the name of Jesus. I thank you that you know the parts of this book that apply to me and that are correct for me. I thank you that, as I start to read, you will quicken to my spirit that which is immediately relevant and that you will conceal from me that which is chaff or of no relevance right now.

I thank you that, as you open this book to me, you will teach me what to pray and you will give me utterance in my spirit in order that I may pray your will over my life and that which you have called me to do.

I thank you that, as I bring sections, paragraphs, concepts and thoughts before you and lay my questions at your Holy throne, you will answer me.

I ask you, in the name of Jesus, to speak to me through Your Word, to lead me to the passages that apply to me and that will answer my questions. I thank you that Your Word contains all

the answers that I will ever need to live my life according to your will and to achieve the impact that you have purposed for me at this time.

I thank you that you will speak to me through books, teaching tapes and videos, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and preachers, teachers and other people whom you will bring across my path. I thank you that you will lead me wherever I need to go to receive the answers to my questions and that your Holy Spirit is with me always to lead me into ALL TRUTH.

Help me Father to hear your voice clearly and close my eyes and ears to all that is not of you.

OUT LOUD: "Satan, I bind you and your cohorts from blinding or confusing me in receiving anything that God has provided for me in this book. In Jesus Name."

I thank you Father that your Angels are encamped around me to protect me and to keep the enemy from interfering in my studies and I ask you to cover my family and myself with the Blood of Jesus from the top of our heads to the soles of our feet.

I thank you Father that Your Word states that as a born again believer, I have the Mind of Christ. I thank you for leading me to victory.

In Jesus Name

CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS E-BOOK

The eBook has been written as a technical scriptural reference work, accordingly the style may in places appear terse. It is intended to provide a reasonably comprehensive collection of scriptures on the subjects discussed and to permit the scriptures to interpret themselves as far as possible with minimum commentary.

In this eBook the following conventions have been adopted:

1. TECHNICAL DESIGN OF THIS E-BOOK

The following documentation techniques have been applied in this eBook:

- a. Comprehensive scripture quotation have been provided for every reference in order to ensure that the scriptures speak as far as possible without my intervention and in order to spare readers the inconvenience of looking up the scriptures themselves.
- b. Verses of scripture before and after the verses of interest are quoted in order to provide the full context of the scriptures cited and avoid quoting scriptures out of context. It will be seen that in many cases these contextual scriptures provide interesting juxtapositions or reinforce just how seriously God views the matter under discussion.
- c. As far as possible I have also sought to quote related scriptures rather than simply using words which occur in scripture and assuming that readers are familiar with them.

- d. A wide variety of appendices are included to provide more comprehensive lists of supporting scriptures, more detailed commentary on the meaning of certain words and extracts from other books and commentaries which are important in supporting certain assertions made in the body of the text.
- e. Extensive use is made of numbered section and sub-section headings are included in order to ensure that the table of contents provides a reasonably comprehensive tool for locating specific concepts.
- f. Extensive use is made of cross references within the body of the text to reference related discussions within the book.
- g. A comprehensive "Table of Scripture References" is provided at page listing all scripture references used in the book.
- h. A comprehensive "Index of Key Words" is provided at page to assist readers to locate particular thoughts and principles.
- i. Prayers for salvation, repentance, deliverance and for spirit led guidance are provided at page in order to assist readers who may find themselves convicted of sin or faced with particular spiritual challenges as a consequence of the teachings in this eBook.
- j. A list of Internet addresses for Web sites which discuss issues related to the main subjects of this ebook are provided at page .

2. SCRIPTURE REFERENCE SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

a. COMPUTER BASED REFERENCE SOURCES

In preparing this ebook extensive use has been made of the "PC Study Bible for Windows" version 2.1G, October 1997, produced by Biblesoft, 22014 7th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98198, USA. Telephone ++ (206) 824-0547, Copyright 1988-1997 by James Gilbertson.

This computer based reference work includes the following translations and reference works which have been referred to in this ebook:

i. **KJV - The King James Version**

ii. **NAS - The New American Standard Version**

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iii. **NAU - The New American Standard Version Update**

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iv. **NIV - The New International Version**

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v. **NKJ - The New King James Version**

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vi. **RSV - The Revised Standard Version**

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vii. **TLB - The Living Bible**

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viii. **Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary**. Copyright © 1994 Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc. All rights reserved.

ix. **VINE'S - Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words**. Copyright © 1985 by Thomas Nelson Publishers. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

x. **The Online Bible Thayer's Greek Lexicon and Brown Driver and Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon**. Copyright © 1993, Woodside Bible Fellowship, Ontario, Canada. Licensed from the Institute for Creation Research. Used by permission. First published in Canada by Online Bible.

b. PAPER BASED REFERENCE SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

In addition, the following paper based translations and reference sources are referred to:

i. **TLT - The Living Torah**

The Living Torah, a modern Jewish translation by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, published by Maznaim Publishing Corporation, New York and Jerusalem.

ii. **LAM - Holy Bible from the Ancient Eastern Text : George M Lamsa's Translation from the Aramaic of the Peshitta**

Published by Harper Collins.

3. GREEK AND HEBREW REFERENCE SOURCES

The Old Testament scriptures referred to in this book are all translated from the Hebrew. The New Testament scriptures, with exception with certain scriptures from George Lamsa's translation from the Aramaic are all translated from the Greek texts.

Appendix I provide more detail on the Lamsa translation from the Aramaic. However, since the vast majority of reference material is based on the New Testament translations from the Greek, these are the translations primarily used.

In interpreting various passages of scripture it has been necessary to return to the source languages in order to confirm or adjust the translation in order to return to the original meaning of the scriptures.

For those readers not familiar with these resources the following may be helpful:

a. STRONG'S NUMBERS

Every word in the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament has been catalogued by Strong and allocated a unique reference number. This number is extensively used in Biblical analysis to link English translations back to the original Hebrew, to link all scriptures where the same word occurs and as a uniform means of referencing between different works. The Strong's numbers are associated with the King James Version.

These numbers are also used in the Interlinear Bible.

Accordingly, wherever reference is made in the text to a "Strong's number", this is the significance.

b. STRONG'S DEFINITION

Strong also produced a dictionary which is cited to define the meaning of words throughout this book. Accordingly the reference "Strong's Definition" indicates a definition drawn from Strong's Dictionary.

c. THAYER'S DEFINITION

Thayer's Dictionary performs a similar function to Strong's and references take the same form.

d. BROWN-DRIVER-BRIGGS DEFINITION

Brown-Driver-Briggs Dictionary performs a similar function to Strong's and references take the same form.

e. VINE'S DEFINITION

Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words performs a similar function to Strong's and references take the same form. Vine's definitions are more detailed and are therefore used to a lesser extent than the other reference works.

4. YAHWEH AS THE NAME OF GOD THE FATHER

The word "YAHWEH¹" is used in this document to reflect the fact that the correct translation of the Hebrew word generally translated "THE LORD" in the King James Version and many others is, in fact, "YAHWEH". YAHWEH is the proper name for our God and occurs 6,828 times in the Old Testament. Vines states:

"LORD

*The divine name YHWH appears only in the Bible. Its precise meaning is much debated. **God chose it as His personal name by which He related specifically to His chosen or covenant people.**" (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, (Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)*

By way of analogy, my proper name is "James" and I have the designation of "husband" to my wife, it would not be indicative of a meaningful marriage relationship if my wife were to constantly refer to

me as "husband" rather than "James". In the same way, it is not indicative of a meaningful relationship with our God to refer to Him as "Lord" rather than "YAHWEH" when He has given us His name to use and uses it throughout scripture.

For more information refer to the book "The Sacred Name" published by Qadesh La Yahweh Press, available on the Internet at:

<http://www.yahweh.org/publications/pdf1/sacrednm.pdf>

Accordingly, the name "Yahweh" is used throughout this book interchangeably with "God" and "God the Father" as a more technically accurate translation of the name of our God to English.

THE SCRIPTURAL DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

**What the scriptures really say about marriage,
putting away ("divorce"), adultery and the relationships
between men and women as a type
of our relationship with
the
LORD JESUS CHRIST**

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Do you desire to see the Power of God manifest in this world? Is your desire for Godly marriages in the Body of Christ rather than escalating marital strife, division and putting away ("divorce")? Would you like to see a church in which men are equipped and empowered to be the men God created them to be and women are empowered and equipped to be the women God created them to be and both are fulfilled in their respective roles? Would you like to see husband and wife united as Jesus and His Father are united? Would you like to see the Body of Christ united as never before?

As I was completing the first draft of this book I was given an article entitled "Wow! So that's how Jesus loves me!" published in the October 1999 issue of Joy Magazine. This article states that "Marriage was meant by God to be a prophetic sign and wonder to the world,". The article confirms many of the points in this book regarding marriage as a type of our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and some of what is written about marriage traditions. It is reproduced in appendix Q. **Readers are encouraged to read this article as a powerful demonstration of the incredibly beautiful plan that God has for scriptural marriage.**

In this book I will present a wealth of scripture which will show you how the Body of Christ can overcome marital strife and separation (putting away - commonly referred to as "divorce") AND learn to live together in unity in a manner which will give power to the Gospel such as we cannot currently

imagine. In order to do this it is necessary that we understand what scripture REALLY says about marriage, divorce, putting away, adultery and other matters which impact this objective. This book seeks to present scripture on these topics in a framework intended to assist you to evaluate and decide for yourself the extent to which that contained in this book indeed lays the foundation for this objective.

Do you desire at the time of your judgment not to find yourself to have been a Pharisee and to have been opposing God (Acts 5:34-40)? In the process of reading this book you will discover false teachings which are literally responsible for the eternal damnation of millions if not billions of souls. You will have the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to unlock truths which are of immense importance to the end time church and to the age which is to come. You will also have many opportunities to be offended but I urge you not to stumble on the rock of offense which is Christ for the truths herein are ignored at our peril (1 Peter 2:8).

In early 1995 I became greatly concerned about the high level of what is generally referred to as "divorce" in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. I was particularly troubled by the number of hurting and abandoned women and I started to seek God to know the reason. Since then He has been exercising my faith and my understanding with regard to what is contained in His Word on the subject of marriage and related subjects. He has also shown me that most of what we today refer to as divorce is, in fact, according to scripture "putting away" - separating from a spouse for unscriptural reasons. He has also shown me that the principal factor behind the high level of putting away in the church and the world is a series of wrong beliefs which affect many areas of church teaching.

A. WE ARE ONE BODY IN CHRIST

As a starting point, consider that **2 Corinthians 11:2** states:

*2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. **For I have betrothed YOU to ONE husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (NKJ)***

Who is the "you" referred to here? Surely it is all those who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord?

Romans 12:4-5 states:

*4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,
5 so **we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. (NKJ)***

B. MARRIAGE IS A TYPE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

Consider also Ephesians 5:25-33:

*25 Husbands, love your wives, just **as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,
26that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the
word,
27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such
thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.
28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.
29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.
30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.***

31 *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."*

32 ***This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.***

33 *Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (NKJ)*

These verses together clearly establish a very close and intimate relationship between marriage between man and woman and the marriage between Jesus Christ and His Church. Surely, while His bride is so riven with putting away (divorce) and we do not even know how to live together in harmony as man and wife, we can never approach being a bride without ***"spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish."***

C. WHEN THE WORLD SEES TRUE CHRISTIAN UNITY THEY WILL BELIEVE THAT THE FATHER SENT JESUS

John 17:20-22 states:

20 *"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;*

21 ***"that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.***

22 *"And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: (NKJ)*

Does this not clearly state that the world will believe that Jesus Christ was sent by God the Father when we **all are one**? Does this not indicate that unity in the church is a prerequisite to preaching the Gospel with real power and effect?

D. WE ARE WARNED OF DOCTRINES OF DEMONS FORBIDDING TO MARRY

1 Timothy 4:1-3 further states:

1 *Now the Spirit expressly says that **in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,***

2 *speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,*

3 ***forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. (NKJ)***

Given that there appear to be reasonable grounds to believe that we are indeed in the latter times, we must also ask ourselves what the relevance is of "doctrines of demons" to "forbidding to marry" and whether it has any relevance to the level of putting away (divorce) in the church. **I have no doubt that it does and in this book I will present scriptures in support of my argument.**

These conclusions are presented only after many hours of prayer and Holy Spirit guided research and much persecution and personal loss which has brought me to a point of sincere and utter conviction that what is written below is an accurate reflection of the Word AND Will of God on this matter as best I understand it today.

I fully appreciate that most readers will find this book extremely challenging and many may well be offended and reject it. For this reason I will endeavour to make maximum use of scripture and minimum use of my own interpretation.

E. WE MUST EACH PREPARE TO BE JUDGED

Each of us will be judged according to the revelation knowledge of the Word of God that was available to us and what we did with it.

James 3:1 states:

*My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that **we shall receive a stricter judgment.***
(NKJ)

Accordingly, I urge you not to summarily discard what is written here but to prayerfully take note and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

2. WHY SHOULD YOU CONSIDER THIS INTERPRETATION?

You may ask why you should read this discourse and why you should analyze the interpretation presented herein.

If this interpretation is correct then those who are teaching another doctrine are causing many to sin and many others to be turned away from Jesus Christ. If this is so then surely they can expect to find much blood on their hands when they stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ.

Romans 14:10 states:

*10 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For **we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*** (NKJ)

It is my earnest desire not to find myself in such a position and I am certain most readers will have the same desire.

A. MANY BELIEVERS ARE CURRENTLY TAKEN PRISONER BY THE ENEMY

The book, the Final Quest, by Rick Joyner, which reports a series of visions in which the author was taken up into the third heaven, clearly shows that many in the Body of Christ are currently prisoners of the enemy. Part of this vision is quoted in appendix R. This is graphically confirmed in a further vision reported by Joyner in his sequel, The Call.

B. IF WE LOVE GOD WE WILL KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS

Furthermore, I John 2:1-5 states:

- 1 *My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*
- 2 *And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*
- 3 ***Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.***
- 4 ***He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.***

5 *But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. (NKJ)*

I John 5:3 states further:

3 *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. (NKJ)*

Can there be any doubt that if we love God we will seek to keep His commandments and that if we do not keep His commandments we are not in Him?

C. GOD'S STATUTES ARE RIGHTEOUS AND WE MAY NOT ADD TO OR TAKE ANYTHING AWAY FROM THEM

Deuteronomy 4:2 states:

2 *"You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. (NKJ)*

Deuteronomy 4:7-8 states:

7 *"For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?*

8 *"And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day? (NKJ)*

Surely, if God's statutes and judgments are righteous we would not want to add to or take away from them? Surely He knows far better than we do how things were created to be? If you can truly agree with this I urge you to read on, no matter how difficult you may find some of the sections that follow!

D. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE TEACHER

Let us also consider 2 Peter 1:20-21:

20 *knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,*

21 *for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (NKJ)*

Clearly no scripture is open to private interpretation by man, no matter how many men may agree. **It is only the interpretation of Scripture which is God's interpretation which carries any weight!**

Furthermore, in Matthew 23:8-13, Jesus Himself states:

8 *"But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.*

9 *"Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.*

10 *"And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.*

11 *"But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.*

12 *"And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*

13 *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. (NKJ)*

It is quite clear that no man on earth is to be given a title which suggests that he is a teacher, the teacher is the Spirit of Truth.

In John 14:15-31 Jesus states:

15 *"If you love Me, keep My commandments.*

16 ***"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever--***

17 ***"the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.***

18 *"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.*

19 *"A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.*

20 *"At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.*

21 *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."*

22 *Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"*

23 *Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.*

24 *"He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.*

25 *"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you.*

26 ***"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.***

27 *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

28 *"You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.*

29 *"And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.*

30 *"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.*

31 *"But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here. (NKJ)*

Jesus refers here to *"the Spirit of truth"* and also to *"the Holy Spirit"* as being a helper whom He will send to those who love Him and states that this Helper will *"teach you all things"*

Clearly we are not to rely on men to interpret scripture. They may share with us what they believe God has shown them BUT we are each accountable for determining whether that interpretation is of God or not.

Remember that the Mosaic Covenant (the "Old Covenant") provided for Priests, Levites and Judges to interpret the Law and they were anointed with the spirit of God. This is demonstrated in **Numbers 11:24-29**:

24 So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD, and he gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle.

25 Then the LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and **took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders**; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again.

26 But two men had remained in the camp: the name of one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. Now they were among those listed, but who had not gone out to the tabernacle; yet they prophesied in the camp.

27 And a young man ran and told Moses, and said, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."

28 So Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, one of his choice men, answered and said, "Moses my lord, forbid them!"

29 Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? **Oh, that all the LORD'S people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!**" (NKJ)

With the coming of the New Covenant, which was to be taken to the Gentiles, it would no longer be practical to retain the Temple Service and the Priestly order. Accordingly, God unfolded the next step in His plan of redemption and gave His Holy Spirit to dwell in every born again believer in order to teach them. Since we have been privileged to receive greater and more precious gifts than those under the Old Covenant, we must be that much more diligent to ensure that we rely on the Holy Spirit to interpret the Word of God for us.

E. WE ARE TOLD TO BEWARE OF DOCTRINES OF DEMONS IN THE LATTER TIMES

1 Timothy 4:1-3 warns us:

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that **in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons**,

2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. (NKJ)

We are certainly in the latter times and this scripture clearly applies to people who are in "the faith" who depart therefrom by "giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons". Surely it is clear that this refers to believers who listen to deceiving spirits and / or accept doctrines of demons? Clearly we must be on our guard!

F. THE FATE OF FALSE WITNESSES AND LIARS

Proverbs 30:5-6 states:

5 Every word of God is pure; he is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.

6 **Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.** (NKJ)

Proverbs 21:28 in the NIV states:

A false witness will perish, and whoever listens to him will be destroyed for ever. (NIV)

Revelation 21:8 states:

8 *"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."* (NKJ)

There are various other scriptures which indicate that the preaching or teaching of false doctrine or lies will lead to a harsh judgment against those who utter such teachings AS WELL AS those who listen to (accept?) such teachings.

Accordingly there would seem to be good grounds to test all teachings carefully before we accept them.

G. ADULTERY SENDS PEOPLE TO HELL

Consider also that Proverbs 7:27, referring to an adulteress, states:

27 *Her house is **the way to hell**, descending to the chambers of death.* (NKJ)

Surely, if adultery can send a person to hell we should be clear what the scriptural definition of adultery actually is. We should also be diligent not to define something as adultery when it is not or to define something as not being adultery when it is. As you read this book you will find a number of instances where current church doctrine is doing both of these things.

I urge all readers to take careful account of what is written here in the light of these scriptures!

3. THE SHAME OF THE CHURCH AND EMPTY THRONES : PREPARE YOURSELF FOR JUDGMENT

In the book, "The Final Quest", Joyner reports a number of incidents during his experience in the Judgment Hall of heaven which should profoundly influence the thinking of every Christian who reads this book. The three passages that follow seem to me to be of cardinal importance:

A. THE CHURCH IS WITHOUT JUDGES AND THEREFORE COVERED WITH SHAME

On page 128 to 129 of "The Final Quest", the Lord Jesus is reported as saying:

"There is a freedom that comes when you perceive truth, but whoever I set free is free indeed. The freedom of My presence is greater than just knowing truth. You have experienced liberation in My presence, but there is yet much more for you to understand about My judgments. When I judge I am not seeking to condemn, or to justify, but to bring forth righteousness. Righteousness is only found in union with Me. That is the righteous judgment, bringing men into unity with Me.

"My church is now clothed with shame because she does not have judges. She does not have judges because she does not know Me as the judge. I will now raise up judges for My people who know My judgment. They will not just decide between people or issues, but to make things right, which is to bring them into agreement with Me.

"When I appeared to Joshua as the Captain of the Host, I declared that I was for neither him nor his enemies. I never come to take sides. When I come it is to take over, not to take sides. I appeared as the Captain of the Host before Israel could enter her Promised Land. The church is now about to enter her Promised Land, and I am again about to appear as the Captain of the Host. When I do I will remove all who have been forcing My people to take sides against their brothers. My justice does not take sides in human conflicts, even those of My own people. What I was doing through Israel I was doing for their enemies, too, not against them. It is only because you see from the

earthly, temporal perspective that you do not see My justice. You must see My justice to walk in My authority because righteousness and justice are the foundation of My throne.

"I have imputed righteousness to the people I have chosen, but like Israel in the wilderness, **even the greatest saints of the church age have only aligned themselves with My ways a small part of the time, or with a small part of their minds and hearts.** I am not for them or against their enemies, but I am coming to use My people to save their enemies. I love all men, and desire for all to be saved."

I could not help thinking of the great battle that we had fought on the mountain. We did wound many of our own brethren as we fought against the evil controlling them. There were still many of them in the camp of the enemy, either being used by him, or kept as his prisoners. I started to wonder if the next battle would be against our own brothers again. The Lord was watching me ponder all of this, and then He continued.

"Until last battle is over, there will always be some of our brothers who are being used by the enemy. But that is not why I am telling you this now. I am telling you this to help you see how the enemy gets into your own heart and mind, and how he uses you! Even now you still do not see everything the way that I do.

"This is common with My people. **At this time, even My greatest leaders are seldom in harmony with Me. Many are doing good works, but very few are doing what I have called them to do. This is the result of divisions among you.** I am not coming to take sides with any one group, but I am calling for those who will come over to My side....."

This extract clearly indicates that there are currently few, if any, Christians who are really in the will of God much. It also clearly indicates that the church is not walking in justice and integrity. Until we become acutely aware of the coming judgment and measure ourselves against what the Word of God tells us awaits us on the day of judgment, few will be concerned about the possibility that their doctrine is false. As you read this book I urge you to become judgment minded. It is likely that you will find much in this book to offend you, however, I truly believe that most of what is presented herein is a reasonably accurate reflection of the Word of God AND the Will of God and, accordingly, I urge you to examine yourself closely in the mirror of the Word any time you are offended by what is contained herein.

B. THE MINISTRY AND THE MESSAGE OF THE MODERN CHURCH IS HARDLY RECOGNIZED BY THE EARLY APOSTLES

On page 135 to 136 of "The Final Quest", Joyner reports an interview with the Apostle Paul.

Then he continued, "There are two more things that we attained in our time that were lost very quickly by the church, and they have not yet been recovered. You must recover them."

"What are they?" I inquired, feeling that what he was about to say was more than just an addendum to what he had already said.

"You must recover the ministry, and the message," he said emphatically.

I looked at the Lord, and He nodded His affirmation, adding, *"It is right that Paul should say this to you. Until this time he has been the most faithful with both of these."*

"Please explain," I implored Paul.

"Alright," he replied. "Except for a few small places in the world where there is great persecution or difficulties now, we can hardly recognize either the ministry or the message that is being preached today. Therefore, the church is now but a phantom of what it was even in our time, and we were far from all that we were called to be. When we served, being in ministry was the greatest sacrifice one could make and this reflected the message of the greatest sacrifice that was made - the cross. The cross is the power of God, and it is the center of all that we are called to live by. You have so little power to transform the minds and hearts of the disciples now because you do not live, and do not preach, the cross. Therefore, we have difficulty seeing much difference between the disciples and the heathen. That is not the gospel or the salvation with which we were entrusted. You must return to the cross."

With those words he squeezed my shoulders like a father, and then returned to his seat. I felt like I had received both an incredible blessing and a profound rebuke.

Here we clearly see that the ministry and the message of the church are far removed from those of the early church. While I do not mean to suggest that the message of this book is central to bringing the church back to where she belongs, I believe that it is a critical component of what must be addressed before the church can serve God as He has called her to serve. From personal experience I must also warn you that spreading the truths contained in this book is likely to bring intense persecution. In the light of the above passage I would encourage you to recognize that the very occurrence of persecution with regard to these truths serves to indicate how important they are and therefore how much energy Satan has expended and continues to expend to prevent the publication and teaching of these truths.

C. MANY THRONES IN HEAVEN ARE CURRENTLY EMPTY YET THEY COULD HAVE BEEN FILLED BY ANY GENERATION

Having progressed through the judgment experience, and met many people whom he had understood to be prominent men of God yet who are in the lowest rank in heaven, Joyner finds himself standing before the Lord Jesus Christ:

The Lord then looked at the galleries and said, *"Those empty seats could have been filled in any generation. I gave the invitation to sit here to everyone who has called upon My name. They are still available. Now the last battle has come, and many who are last shall be first. These seats will be filled before the battle is over. Those who will sit here will be known by two things: they will wear the mantle of humility, and they will have My likeness. You now have the mantle. If you can keep it and do not lose it in the battle, when you return you will also have My likeness. Then you will be worthy to sit with these, because I will have made you worthy. All authority and power has been given to Me, and I alone can wield it. You will prevail, and you will be trusted with My authority only when you have come to fully abide in Me. Now turn and look at My household."*

I turned and looked back in the direction I had come from. From before His throne I could see the entire room. The spectacle was beyond any comparison in its glory. Millions filled the ranks. Each individual in the lowest rank was more awesome than an army, and had more power. It was far beyond my capacity to absorb such a panorama of glory. Even so, I could see that only a very small portion of the great room was occupied.

I then looked back at the Lord and was astonished to see tears in His eyes. He had wiped the tears away from every eye here, except His own. As a tear ran down His cheek he caught it in His hand. He then offered it to me.

"This is My cup. Will you drink it with Me?"

There was no way that I could refuse Him. As the Lord continued to look at Me I began to feel His great love. Even as foul as I was He still loved me. As undeserving as I was He wanted me to be close to Him. Then He said:

*"I love all of these with a love that you cannot now understand. I also love all who are supposed to be here but did not come. I have left the ninety-nine to go after the one who was lost. **My shepherds would not leave the one to go after the ninety-nine who are still lost.** I came to save the lost. Will you share My heart to go to save the lost? Will you help to fill this room? Will you help to fill these thrones, and every other seat in this hall? Will you take up this quest to bring joy to heaven, to Me and to My Father? This judgment is for My own household, and **My own house is not full.** The last battle will not be over until My house is full. Only then will it be time for us to redeem the earth, and remove the evil from My creation. If you drink My cup you will love the lost the way that I love them."*

From this passage it is clear that the thrones in heaven are largely yet unoccupied and even the throne room in heaven is largely empty. In other words, billions of souls who might have spent eternity in heaven with Christ are burning in Hell for eternity. I truly believe that the heresies and false teachings exposed in this book account for a large percentage of the souls who are not in heaven today. Accordingly, I urge you, if you desire to have the Lord's heart for the lost, earnestly examine what is written here and challenge yourself to take the truth and broadcast it to the world, I have no doubt that God requires this of every one who reads this book.

At the same time, many are heaping up wrath for themselves on the day of judgment by teaching these heresies despite having more access to the written Word of God than any generation that has ever lived. I implore you, as you read further, consider well what is written in this book and prayerfully consider what you should do before you respond to whatever offence Satan may bring your way.

D. THERE ARE MANY MORE WOMEN IN HIGH OFFICE IN HEAVEN THAN MEN

In the last paragraph on page 117 of The Final Quest, referring to the High Thrones in Heaven, Joyner states:

*"However, it seemed that **faithful, praying women and mothers occupied more thrones than any other single group.**"*

In the first paragraph on page 23, referring to those in the forefront of the battle against the enemy, Joyner states:

*"To my further surprise, **the great majority of these soldiers were women and children.**"*

This confirms a point that is developed in section regarding Isaiah 4:1. There are many more women than men in the Body of Christ today and this is God's intention. It is time that the church comes to understand how this apparent imbalance is to be accommodated in a manner that is in accordance with the Word of God AND the Will of God. This book seeks to develop the understanding of what this entails.

4. A WORD OF CLARIFICATION - NOTHING IN THIS BOOK IS INTENDED TO UNDER- STATE THE DELIVERANCE PURCHASED FOR MANKIND THROUGH JESUS' SACRIFICE AT CALVARY

Sadly, the knowledge of the Word of God in the modern church, as we have seen in the extracts from the Final Quest is not nearly what it should be. Accordingly, in my experience of seeking to share the truths in this book with other believers, many think that in some way this teaching is seeking to dilute what Jesus did at Calvary.

I would like to make it quite clear that this is not the case. The knowledge of the church has diverged so far from the truth of scripture that our paradigm results in things which are entirely scriptural appearing unscriptural and things which are entirely unscriptural are regarded as scriptural. As you read this book you will find numerous instances of this phenomenon. As you encounter such instances I urge you not to be offended but rather to examine how your personal knowledge and experience, when closely examined in the light of what is written here, in fact corroborates what is written and, likewise, the extent to which you have, over the years, compromised your understanding in deference to the doctrines of men whom you thought were more knowledgeable than you.

Let me sum up:

- a. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, incarnate through the virgin, Mary.
- b. He was crucified at Calvary, He died and was buried.
- c. On the third day, He rose again and sit's on the right hand of the Father in heaven.
- d. He will judge the living and the dead.
- e. He will return to gather his church to Him and to rule the world.
- f. Through His sacrifice on the Cross He purchased for us:
 - i. Salvation and eternal life for those who believe in their hearts and confess with their mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord.
 - ii. Healing for our bodies.
 - iii. Deliverance from the works of Satan and his demons on earth.
- g. Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is the Alpha and the Omega. He is the Word of God.
- h. There is NO OTHER NAME GIVEN BY WHICH MEN CAN BE SAVED!

Jesus Christ made a great and terrible sacrifice on the Cross for our redemption. He went to the cross, not to purchase licentiousness and laxity but to purchase the spiritual wherewithal for us to become priests to God and to serve Him faithfully and to become Son's and Servant's of God. He expects us to lay down our lives and take up our cross and follow Him daily. This book is about some of the requirements for doing this in order to prepare His church for His return.

If you Love Him and Reverently Fear Him, you will not turn to the left or the right from discerning the truths contained in this book and putting them into practice in your life and preaching them from the mountain tops.

5. A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THOSE WHO MAY BE CONVICTED OF SIN BY THE TEACHINGS IN THIS BOOK

There are many teachings in this book which will convict many readers of sin in their lives.

If you are convicted of sin, remember above all things 1 John 1:1-10:

- 1 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life--*
- 2 *the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us--*
- 3 *that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.*
- 4 *And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.*
- 5 *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.*
- 6 *If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.*
- 7 ***But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.***
- 8 *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*
- 9 ***If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***
- 10 *If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (NKJ)*

Above all things, as you become aware of your sin, give no heed to any lies that Satan may tell you. Turn your eyes upon Jesus, LOOK FULL IN HIS WONDERFUL FACE, confess your sins, repent of your sins, ask for AND RECEIVE His forgiveness, purchased for you at Calvary, and receive your deliverance!

If you do not have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ or are not "born again", "The Message of Salvation" is presented for you on page .

If you are uncertain how to pray to receive salvation, to recommit your life to the Lord, to receive forgiveness for sin, to receive deliverance from certain consequences of sexual sin, "Prayers for salvation, repentance, deliverance and Spirit Led guidance" are presented on page.

Our contact details are presented at the beginning and end of this book and the Internet addresses of various Christian ministries which may be able to help you are listed on page .

Above all, do not let the knowledge of any sin, no matter how desperate the revelation which may follow from reading this book, get you down. The more sin you repent of in this life, the more pleasing your life will be to your precious Saviour and His Father and the less judgment you will face in the life to come. See all revelation of sin in your life as a wonderful opportunity to please Him. After all, He died on the Cross to take your sin, do not slight Him by refusing to give it to Him. He is waiting with open arms to receive YOUR BURDENS. Right now, His word to you is in Matthew 11:28-30:

28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (NKJ)

Remember also that Jesus said in John 10:10:

10 "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. (NKJ)

Above all things, the message in this book is about abundant living for those who have been oppressed by heretical doctrines and deliverance from bondage to the sin resulting from these heresies!

I encourage you to read on expectantly and see what the Lord will do!

6. A SUMMARY OF SOME OF THE KEY POINTS IN THIS BOOK

This book addresses two main issues, the first is the truth about marriage doctrine in terms of God's plan for marriage, the second relates to the practical scriptural guidance relevant to learning to live this life style.

In summary:

A. SCRIPTURE PERMITS A MAN TO HAVE MORE THAN ONE WIFE

Deuteronomy 21:15 states: *"If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved," (NKJ)*

This is quite clear, a man may have two wives.

Exodus 21:10 states : *"If he takes another wife, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights." (NKJ)*

Clearly a man is permitted to take another wife subject to certain conditions.

B. ENFORCED MONOGAMY IS A STUMBLING BLOCK TO THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

What are the implications of the current doctrine of enforced monogamy which denies that a man may have more than one wife?

- i. Millions, if not billions of Jews and Moslems recognize the books of Moses as given by God, they know that these passages of scripture are given by God who never changes. Therefore they cannot accept that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Messiah.

- ii. Millions of people around the world live in societies which recognize that a man may have more than one wife. Monogamy has destroyed the very fabric of family life in Africa and elsewhere. The spread of AIDS in Africa can largely be attributed to this breakdown.
- iii. Millions of government and world leaders including one of the most powerful men in the world, business executives and ordinary men in the street in the Western world have sexual relationships with more than one woman.

These people cannot accept the yoke of monogamy and therefore they cannot accept the "Gospel" of Christ as preached today!

Enforced monogamy is a stumbling block to the Gospel of Jesus Christ that is sending billions of souls to hell!

C. THE CHURCH HAS LOST ALL RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF VIRGINITY

Deuteronomy 22:20-21 states:

20 *"But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman,*
21 *"then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and **the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house; so you shall put away the evil from among you."** (NKJ)*

This passage of scripture clearly identifies that a woman must be a virgin when she gets married. If she is not she is a harlot. **There is no scriptural basis to determine that the man who takes a woman's virginity should not have another wife!**

Thus enforced monogamy makes a mockery of the Word of God!

D. THE CHURCH INCORRECTLY DEFINES ADULTERY AND CAUSES MILLIONS TO FALL

1 Corinthians 6:9 states: *"Do you not know that **the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?** Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, **nor adulterers**, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, (NKJ)*

An adulterer is anyone who has had sex with a woman whose virginity has been taken by another man and who is not a widow or scripturally divorced.

The doctrine of enforced monogamy is keeping millions of people out of the kingdom of God!

E. THERE ARE FAR MORE WOMEN THAN MEN IN THE CHURCH, GOD INTENDED THEM TO HAVE BELIEVING HUSBANDS

Isaiah 4:1 referring to the church in these days states: *And **in that day seven women shall take hold of one man**, saying, "We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach."*

In other words, there will be seven times more women than men in the church. This is being fulfilled before our eyes in many congregations. Hundreds of thousands of devout Christian women are desperately seeking mature Christian husbands who are unmarried and not finding them.

The lives of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of devout Christian women is made a misery because they cannot find a Godly husband! Many fall into sin or backslide!

F. CONCLUSION : ENFORCED MONOGAMY IS HERESY OF THE WORST KIND!

1 Timothy 4:1-3 states: *1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, **giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons**, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 **forbidding to marry**, (NKJ)*

Clearly enforced monogamy is one of the doctrines of demons referred to here.

ENFORCED MONOGAMY IS HERESY OF THE WORST KIND!

G. BUT : GOD HAS A MUCH BETTER PLAN

God's vision for marriage in these last days is a pattern and a type of the wonderful lives those who overcome to the end will live with Christ for eternity. A life filled with love, peace and joy. A life in which men and women are truly fulfilled as the men and women that God has called them to be. A life in which the world will see Christ in whole families and come flocking to the light. A life in which every Christian family will be a spiritual power house able to do greater works that Jesus did, as stated in John 14:12:

*12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and **greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.** (NKJ)*

Read on and see what treasure is contained for you today in the Word of God. I do not have all the answers but The Holy Spirit does and, if we trust Him and walk by faith He WILL lead those who desire it into all truth on these issues.

7. POLYGAMY IS AN ABOMINATION IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

Many people today, particularly in the Christian church, use the word "polygamy" to refer to a man having more than one wife. However, the word polygamy, translated literally, means "many either sex" - poly meaning many and gamy referring to the reproductive cell or gamete of either sex. Polygamy is therefore used to describe any plant or animal in which sexual reproduction takes place within the context of multiple male sexual organs exchanging seed with multiple female sexual organs. In other words, in worldly terms, an orgy, in scriptural terms **fornication**.

The definition of adultery clearly shows that in scripture a situation in which a female mates with multiple males is adultery and fornication and is an abomination in the sight of God. **Polygamy is therefore a sin and an abomination in the sight of God** and it is quite possible for any spiritually sensitive person to discern that this is so. This does not, however, in any way indicate that "polygyny", the marriage of one male to more than one female, as described throughout scripture, is in any way a sin.

This book IS about what the Bible, taken as the Holy Spirit inspired Word of God, says about marriage. No more and no less. **It is my profound belief that if you hold the Holy Scriptures sacred you will have no option but to agree with what is written here and to discard what I truly believe is a "doctrine of demons" which has been espoused in the name of Christ for about 1,700 years.**

CHAPTER 2: HOW DOES SCRIPTURE DEFINE THE MARRIAGE COVENANT?

In order to lay the foundation for this book, let us first determine the scriptural definition of marriage and the marriage covenant:

1. VIRGINITY : WHAT IS MARRIAGE

In order to define marriage, let us see what the Bible says. Deuteronomy 22:13-21 states:

- 13 *"If any man takes a wife, **and goes in to her**, and detests her,*
14 *"and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,'*
15 *"then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the **evidence of the young woman's virginity** to the elders of the city at the gate.*
16 *"And the young woman's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her;*
17 *'now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, "I found your daughter was not a virgin," and yet these are the evidences of my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.*
18 *"Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him;*
19 *"and they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. **And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.***
20 *"But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman,*
21 *"then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and **the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house; so you shall put away the evil from among you.***

Deuteronomy 22:14 in Lamsa's translation states:

- 14 *And give an occasion of speech against her, charging her with adultery, and bring an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I lay with her, I found her not a virgin. (LAM)*

This translation clearly equates the lack of virginity with evidence of adultery.

Deuteronomy 22:14 in the New International Version states:

- 14 *and slanders her and gives her a bad name, saying, "I married this woman, but **when I approached her**, I did not find proof of her virginity," (NIV)*

This translation more clearly indicates that the man approached the young woman to consummate the marriage but, presumably on inspection, found her not to be a virgin.

Deuteronomy 22:19 in the King James Version states:

- 19 *And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; **he may not put her away** all his days. (KJV)*

Consider also Deuteronomy 22:28-29 in the King James version:

28 If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days. (KJV)

Supplementing this scripture, Exodus 22:16-17 states:

16 "If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife.

17 "If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins. (NKJ)

I will present some comments and interpretation based on Deuteronomy 22:13-21 together with the subsequent scriptures and then corroborate it with further scriptures. Most of the scriptures referring to virginity are listed in Appendix A for your convenience. Other section provides a more detailed interpretation of Deuteronomy 22:28-29 and Exodus 22:16-17 under the title "one night stands".

A. VIRGINITY IS A PRE-REQUISITE FOR GODLY MARRIAGE

These scriptures give rise to the following comments:

- i. The evidence of the woman's virginity is without doubt a cloth used to collect the blood shed from the young woman's hymen when she was penetrated in sexual intercourse the first time.
- ii. I do not believe that there is any disagreement that the word "virgin" in the context of a woman refers to a woman who has never had sexual intercourse and, in scriptural terms, whose hymen is intact.
- iii. It is equally clear that the man who accuses his bride of not being a virgin after he "goes into her" or "approaches" her is married to her and this marriage cannot be dissolved if he has brought a false accusation.
- iv. BUT if his accusation is correct then the young woman is defined by the Word of God as a "harlot" and is sentenced to die immediately.
- v. If a man takes a virgin forcibly he is responsible for her for life, he may never put her away or "divorce" her.
- vi. If a man entices a virgin and lies with her, her father may refuse to permit her to marry the man when the father first hears about it, if the father does not refuse to permit her to marry then they are considered to be married. Refer to section relating to the passage of Scripture in Judges 21 verses 20 to 23 where wives are taken for Benjamin in terms of this principle. If the father does not permit her to marry it would appear that Deuteronomy 22:13-21 prohibits her from ever remarrying.

B. VIRGINITY IS SACRED

The following interpretation can be derived from this:

- i. Virginity is sacred and Holy, it is not negotiable in the sight of God.

- ii. A woman who is not a virgin is only eligible to marry if she is a widow or divorced on scripturally acceptable grounds (refer Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:3-10, Mark 10:2-12 where Jesus makes it quite clear that there are certain specific conditions under which sexual union with a scripturally divorced woman is not adultery, see also the discussion on divorce .
- iii. A woman who was a harlot or adulteress is only eligible to marry if she has come to salvation and / or she has come to true repentance of her sin and deliverance therefrom. She must be divorced in the sight of God from the man who took her virginity and any man to whom she may have been technically (legally) married in the sight of the world. Such a woman should only be married by a man who is absolutely certain that God has released her for marriage.

C. SOME ASIDES REGARDING VIRGINITY

There are some side issues necessary to fully understand this scripture and therefore to avoid misinterpreting it in the current age:

- i. The virgin referred to in this passage of scripture was typically approximately twelve and a half years old and was on the point of commencing menstruation or had only just commenced. This is confirmed in the Talmud and other sources. The Talmud, Steinsaltz Edition, Volume IX, Tractate Ketubot Part III, published by Random House New York, pages 1 to 13 repeatedly defines a virgin as being a girl between the age of twelve and twelve and a half years corresponding to the point at which a girl allegedly attains sexual maturity and is regarded as an adult woman. Refer to other section for an extract of the Talmud on this point.

Accordingly, the physical factors which can give rise to perforation of the hymen in older virgins would not have been experienced. Note that so-called "child brides" were still common in the Middle East until recently. I have met a woman of Lebanese descent whose parents' generation frequently married brides in the age group 12 to 15.

I mention this, not with a view to stimulating controversy about the acceptable age of a girl at marriage but to overcome any difficulty that modern readers may have with this scripture based on the tendency for modern, athletically active, young women to damage their hymens before marriage. It is important to understand that it is spiritual folly to marry a woman with a damaged hymen unless one is absolutely certain that God has declared her free to marry. Failing this the man will be committing adultery.

- ii. It would appear that witnesses were present at the act of defloration otherwise there could not have been any "evidence" as the man and woman would not be permitted to give evidence scripturally. Certainly it would seem that the father must have been present in order to be able to testify with regard to the evidence of virginity in Deuteronomy 22:16! If he was not present surely any cloth with blood on it would suffice as "evidence"?
- iii. To the best of my knowledge, the hymen, like the foreskin, serves no known biological purpose of material significance. It only serves as a warning to the bridegroom to the effect that ***"if this seal is broken, do not marry"***.

We must therefore ask the question, "Why did God create woman with a hymen?" And surely, the answer can only be "To warn the bridegroom of impending spiritual danger if it is damaged or absent!".

D. THE CRITICAL CONCLUSIONS : SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH A VIRGIN IS MARRIAGE AND WOMAN WAS CREATED FROM THE BEGINNING TO HAVE ONLY ONE HUSBAND

The critical conclusions that can be derived from this scripture are:

- i. ***Since God created woman to lose her virginity only once, she was only intended to marry once and therefore to only marry one man, in other words, biblical marriage IS sexual intercourse with a virgin!***
- ii. Since it is equally clear that once a man has penetrated a virgin and taken her virginity, he is married to her, we must conclude that God permits a man to marry more than one wife since it is perfectly possible for a man to take the virginity of more than one woman.
- iii. God ordained woman to be this way from creation NOT after the fall of Adam and Eve. There is no scripture to indicate that after the fall God re-engineered Eve and added the hymen as an after-thought!
- iv. Therefore, whatever acceptable sexual states God foresaw for woman at creation, as measured by this unique "seal of virginity" must still surely prevail in our fallen state although God did introduce divorce for certain critical cases of spiritual or sexual fornication or treachery.

Appendix D contains many more examples of scriptures which support the fact that Yahweh permits a man to have more than one wife.

E. VIRGINITY : CAVEATS

The above discussion on virginity is intended to highlight the importance of virginity in the sight of God. At the same time, current social practice presents us with a situation in which women typically marry at an age considerably older than twelve and a half years, use tampons and participate in activities which give rise to a greatly increase likelihood of the hymen being innocently perforated before marriage. This introduces some serious complexity in the life of any God-fearing man since it is apparent from the discussion on adultery that adultery is a very serious sin which leads to the guilty parties having a part in the lake of fire and brimstone if not repented of. **Consequently a man faced with the prospect of consummating a marriage with a woman with a perforated hymen would be well advised to earnestly seek the Lord for absolutely unambiguous confirmation that God will permit him to marry her and that he will not be committing adultery.**

I am also advised that in older women where the hymen is intact it may become tough with the result that great pain is experienced in first intercourse but the hymen does not tear and no blood is shed. However, in such an instance there should be little or no doubt that the woman is a virgin.

2. WHAT IS THE MARRIAGE COVENANT?

I think it is generally accepted within the church that marriage is a covenant relationship, however, there are diverse explanations of the nature and form of this covenant and how it comes into existence. This section seeks to understand the true scriptural marriage covenant.

A. COVENANT REQUIRES THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD

What is the actual sign of the marriage covenant? Hebrews 9:18-20 states:

18 Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood.

19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,

20 saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you." (NKJ)

Clearly a covenant cannot be dedicated without blood.

B. COVENANT REQUIRES THE CLEAVING / SPLITTING OR CUTTING OF SOME LIVING CREATURE

Referring to Genesis 15:4-21 we read concerning Abram:

4 And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir."

5 Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

6 **And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.**

7 Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."

8 **And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"**

9 So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

10 **Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.**

11 And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.

13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.

14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

15 "Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.

16 "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that **passed between those pieces.**

18 **On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates--**

19 "the Kenites, the Kenezites, and the Kadmonites,

20 "the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Rephaim,

21 "the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." (NKJ)

This is the passage (verse 6) where Abram believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness as referred to in Galatians 3:6:

just as **Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."** (NKJ)

and in Romans 4:9-12 we read:

9 *Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that **faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.***

10 *How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.*

11 *And **he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised,** that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also,*

12 *and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. (NKJ)*

In this passage there appears to be a clear correlation between the covenant under which Christians now walk and the covenant that God cut with Abram in Genesis 15:4-21. There is also a correlation with a subsequent covenant cut between God and Abraham by way of circumcision, as discussed in section below.

However there is another principle contained in Genesis 15, specifically in verse 10:

Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; . . .

in verse 17 we read:

*. . . .a smoking oven and a burning torch that **passed between those pieces.***

The smoking oven and burning torch are widely regarded as being manifestations of the presence of God since verse 18 states that "**On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram,**". So it would appear that God passed between the halves of the animals in making the covenant.

Is there confirmation of this interpretation in scripture?

Jeremiah 34:18 states:

*'And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of **the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it-- (NKJ)***

It appears clear in this case that the covenant made with God by the Princes of Judah and others referred to in the subsequent verses involved cutting a calf in two and passing between the parts of it. Essentially the same actions that we see in Genesis 15:10 to 18.

However, there is more to it. The Living Torah, a modern Jewish translation by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, published by Maznaim Publishing Corporation, New York and Jerusalem, translates **Genesis 15:10:**

*[Abram] brought all these for Him. He **split** them in half, and placed one half opposite the other.*

Here we see the word translated "cut" in the New King James Version, translated split.

The footnote to Genesis 15:10 in the Living Torah states:

*"**split them . . . This was the way of making a covenant (Rashi). Indeed, the words b'rith (covenant) and bathar (split) appear to be closely related (.....) It symbolized that just as the two halves of***

*the animal were really one, so were the two people making the covenant. Moreover, **just as one side cannot live without the other, so the two cannot live without each other** (.....). It was also seen as a malediction; **anyone violating the oath would be torn asunder like the animals** (.....)."*

In this one note we begin to see the deeper meaning embodied in Deuteronomy 22:13-30 revealed:

- i. The covenant is made by splitting or cutting some living thing and shedding blood.
- ii. People who make a blood covenant become one and cannot live without one another.
- iii. A person who breaks covenant is to be put to death.

This is confirmed by a variety of independent sources who have studied the blood covenant in scripture and also in pagan practice. Refer teachings by Kenneth Copeland on "Covenant Made by Blood : Heseb - Agape", ISBN 0-88114-790-7, published by Kenneth Copeland Ministries.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines:

*"split ... Break forcibly, be broken into parts esp. longitudinally or with the grain or **plane of cleavage**; ..."*

Consider also the physical reality of a "meat cleaver" as something that cleaves or cuts into the meat.

C. THE MARRIAGE COVENANT IS CUT WHEN A MAN CLEAVES INTO HIS VIRGIN WIFE

Bringing this together Genesis 2:21-25 in the King James Translation states:

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

*24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall **cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.***

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (KJV)

Thus we see the man cleaving or splitting his wife, forcibly breaking apart her hymen on the plane of cleavage, shedding blood. He then proceeds to "walk" or "pass between" the two halves completing the covenant act.

The imagery is vivid and powerful. If we put aside our prudery for a moment and wonder at the physical appearance of the external female sexual organ, we should be even further amazed at the imagery which our God has encapsulated in what superficially is an organ whose structure and design makes no earthly sense. It is not intended to, it faithfully recreates the two halves of the covenant animal, even to the hair covering the animal! Surely we must conclude that God knew the end from the beginning and designed woman to be symbolic of His covenant with Man.

Taking it further, He symbolically recreates the cutting of the covenant every time a wife who truly loves her husband and gives herself totally to him experiences sexual orgasm coupled with a flood of blood into the labia minora!

How can we conclude other than that the sexual act is the most sublimely holy representation of the act of covenant? How can we be other than appalled at how this symbolism has been lost and distorted?

The sexual act is an act of such enormous spiritual significance - is it any wonder that Satan has expended the energy that he has to deceive us for so long?!

How can we for a moment suggest that there is another purpose for virginity?

D. THE FEMALE SEXUAL ORGAN IS THE SYMBOL OF THE MARRIAGE COVENANT

Clearly every time a covenant minded man sees his wife's sexual organ he is instinctively reminded of his covenant with her. Clearly it is an abomination for any other man to have sight of the outward symbol of that covenant, let alone to penetrate it, thus breaking the covenant.

Should we not ask ourselves whether it is possible that the heart of man seeks for this covenant purity with woman and, because of the wrong teaching of this age, turns to pornography and lust as the only substitute that offers any recognition of a deep desire for covenant?

Surely the symbolic portrayal of the female sexual organ, aroused and provocatively displayed in the form of the blood red "heart" used on valentine's day cards, to say "I love you" and as a seemingly innocuous symbol of love throughout our society represents one of the most effective devices that Satan has used to distract us totally from the true meaning of the love that God intended to exist between man and woman? Do you realise that every time you see a red heart (♥), Satan is tricking you subliminally to contemplate woman's most private AND most Holy part! In a very real sense the door to her heart, refer to the discussion on the one flesh bond.

Remember that 1 Corinthians 12:23-24 states:

*23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and **our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,***

*24 but our presentable parts have no need. But **God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, (NKJ)***

E. THE CLOSE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN COVENANT AND THE MARRIAGE COVENANT

BUT WAIT - IT GOES FURTHER!

Ephesians 5:22-33 in the King James Version states:

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

*23 **For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.***

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, **and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.**

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she **reverence** her husband. (KJV)

Surely here we see one of the most perfect examples of God's infinite attention to detail, His wonder and His majesty. We see the blood covenant between Christ and His bride the church, neatly tied in to the blood covenant between a man and his wife both demonstrated symbolically by the covenant cut by walking between the halves of the animal that has been "cleaved".

If I return for a moment to the three points made earlier:

- i. The covenant is made by splitting or cutting some living thing and shedding blood:
 - 1) Between man and man - an animal.
 - 2) Between man and woman - the hymen of the woman.
 - 3) **Between man and God - the precious Blood of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, shed on the cross at Calvary by the crown of thorns, the lashes, the nails and the spear all of which cleaved into His flesh.**
- ii. People who make a blood covenant become one and cannot live without one another:
 - 1) Between man and man - spiritual curses come into effect, something which our generation is woefully ignorant of, but that is a subject for another discourse.
 - 2) Between man and woman - the one flesh bond, a powerful spiritual bond which literally unites and ties them together "until death do us part".
 - 3) Between man and God - the born again reality, a powerful spiritual force in which the Spirit of Jesus comes to live within the Temple of the Believer who believes in their heart and confesses with their mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord.
- iii. A person who breaks covenant is to be put to death:
 - 1) Between man and man, long since lost. Numbers 30:2 states:
 - 2 *"If a man vows a vow to the LORD, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth. (NKJ)*

Today a man's word is seldom his bond. Yet there are still potentially eternal consequences since Revelation 21:8 is quite clear that "ALL liars" will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone.

- 2) Between man and woman, long since lost in the natural but as I understand it spiritual death still results from unrepented adultery. Today adultery hardly seems to be regarded as serious sin, even in the church. Many preach that it is easily "repented" of. In reality, the covenant bond can only be broken by the death of one spouse unless God, in His mercy and in response to humble petition in the name of Jesus, cuts the tie. But He will only do this as a consequence of persistent treachery on the part of one spouse.

But the offender who does not repent in this life will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone!

- 3) Between man and God the penalty REMAINS ETERNAL SEPARATION FROM GOD - REAL DEATH. Nothing has changed even though modern man and the church make light of this. People are breaking covenant with God all the time and turning their backs on Him to go to Hell, they just do not realize it. The deception that it is not serious for people to break their word and for people to commit adultery has given rise to a far worse deception, that it is acceptable to betray and disobey God!!

I sincerely hope that by now you will have begun to realize just how deep and how serious the subject of this book is. Millions, if not billions of souls are in Hell and many others are on their way as a consequence of man's heresies in this area!

F. WHY DOES THE BIBLE SEEM TO GIVE SO LITTLE DIRECT GUIDANCE ON MARRIAGE?

In another dimension, Ephesians 5:31-32 which states that **a man "shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church"** answers another question. That of why, if marriage is so important, does God seemingly give so little direct guidance in the Bible on marriage? The answer must surely be contained in the above verses coupled to **2 Corinthians 11:2-3 which states:**

- 2 *For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have **betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.***
- 3 *But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ (NKJ)*

There are other scriptures which relate the holy virgin, prepared for the coming of her husband, to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ including Ephesians 5:27 above. This thought is well developed in the article "Wow! So that's how Jesus loves me!", reproduced in Appendix Q. Note that at the same time the use of the metaphor of the "bride of Christ" is an allegory, metaphor or parable, in a sense, we become married to Jesus the instant that we pray the prayer of salvation and His Spirit comes to dwell within us, thus we are at the same time both married and betrothed to Jesus in a way that is perhaps difficult for many to grasp.

This same thought is carried through into 2 Peter 3:14:

- 14 *Therefore, beloved, **looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; (NKJ)***

Can there be any doubt that the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, traces the marriage of Jesus Christ to His bride, culminating with the wedding feast described in Revelation 19:9?

9 *Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." (NKJ)*

G. JESUS MARRIED TO MILLIONS IF NOT BILLIONS

Surely, in seeking to understand these scriptures, we must recognize that the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13 refers to a man who was betrothed to marry ten virgins at the same wedding feast!

1 *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.*

2 *"Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*

3 *"Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,*

4 *"but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*

5 *"But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*

6 *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'*

7 *"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.*

8 *"And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'*

9 *"But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'*

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

11 *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'*

12 *"But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*

13 *"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming. (NKJ)*

If Jesus, Himself, saw fit to refer to such an example in public, surely we must conclude that it was not unheard of for a man in Jesus' day to be married to more than one woman? In this case we must surely accept that it is heresy to suggest that a man can only have one wife!?

This parable must be understood in terms of a broader context in terms of which I have heard it reported that Jewish tradition involved a bridegroom, having arranged the betrothal, going "to prepare a place" for his bride by building on to his father's dwelling. The bride in her turn would prepare her garments to be without spot or blemish and would leave a lamp burning in the window at all times to let her bridegroom know that she was waiting for him. With this additional knowledge, the scripture above takes on a whole new dimension and, as you meditate on this, you will see how so much more of the scriptures speak to us of the marriage between man and woman. More details are contained in appendix Q.

This tradition further comes to vibrant life through John 14:1-3:

1 *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.*

2 *"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

3 *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (NKJ)*

Surely it is clear that Jesus is referring to the marriage tradition of the time. He is saying that there are many mansions and He is going to prepare a place for His bride. If there are many mansions or rooms then there must be many brides!

H. A MAN MARRYING MORE THAN ONE WOMAN AT THE SAME TIME

A problem some may have with the ten virgins of Matthew 25:1-13 is the prospect of a man marrying more than one woman in the same wedding celebration. More specifically, a man consummating marriage with five or ten women in the same night! That may rattle our paradigms but can there be any doubt that this is what Jesus is referring to? There is certainly no scripture which expressly prevents a man from marrying more than one woman at the same celebration. There is at least one account in scripture which appears to suggest that a man could have married two wives at the same time.

2 Chronicles 24:2-3 states:

2 *Joash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest.*

3 *And Jehoiada took two wives for him, and he had sons and daughters. (NKJ)*

I. UNDERSTANDING GOD'S COVENANT LOVE AS IT APPLIES TO MARRIAGE

As we come to terms with the understanding of the correlation between marriage and the New Birth in Christ, developed above, we can begin to see the richness of the instruction that God gives us with regard to marriage throughout the Bible. Thus, when Jesus says that He will *"never leave us or forsake"* us in Hebrews 13:5, we must accept that this applies just as much between a husband and wife.

When God defines His *"agape"*, covenant keeping love in 1 Corinthians 13:1-10:

1 *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.*

2 *And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*

3 *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.*

4 *Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;*

5 *does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;*

6 *does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;*

7 *bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

8 *Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.*

9 *For we know in part and we prophesy in part.*

10 *But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. (NKJ)*

Surely we must recognize that this is the love that God refers to in Ephesians 5:22-33, cited above. A fuller definition is offered in Appendix B page, where the full text of Vine's Expository Dictionary with regard to Love is quoted. It seems notable to me that there is not a single reference to relations between husband and wife in this entire passage - do we truly believe that the Bible offers no material

commentary on the love between husband and wife? Surely not! Surely we must accept that love between husband and wife is an earthly type of the love between Christ and His bride of which I am sure both you and I hope to be members? Therefore, we must surely accept that the entire Bible contains guidance on marriage?

Above all, surely we must accept that:

Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered. Love seeks the welfare of all, <Rom. 15:2>, and works no ill to any, <13:8-10>; love seeks opportunity to do good to `all men, (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Furthermore:

"Love can be known only from the actions it prompts. God's love is seen in the gift of His Son, <1 John 4:9,10>. But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects, <Rom. 5:8>. It was an exercise of the divine will in deliberate choice, made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself, Cf. <Deut. 7:7,8>. (Vines op. cit.)

"Christian love has God for its primary object, and expresses itself first of all in implicit obedience to His commandments, <John 14:15, 21,23; 15:10; 1 John 2:5; 5:3; 2 John 6>. Self-will, that is, self-pleasing, is the negation of love to God.

Surely we must conclude that God is quite specific in what He considers to be love in the context of husband and wife : it is not an impulse, it is a choice, it seeks the welfare of the spouse according to the Word and the Will of God, not it's own welfare nor the welfare of the spouse as determined by their opinion of what is best for them, it is determined by the principles set out in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8:

Love:

1. *suffers long*
2. *is kind*
3. *does not envy*
4. *does not parade itself*
5. *is not puffed up*
6. *does not behave rudely*
7. *does not seek its own*
8. *is not provoked*
9. *thinks no evil*

10. does not rejoice in iniquity

11. rejoices in the truth

12. bears all things

13. believes all things

14. hopes all things

15. endures all things

Love never fails!

Love is a series of choices with regard to an approach to the relationship which is totally devoid of any consideration of SELF. As the Agape Love of God is applied in the marriage relationship as a choice of life style, romantic love follows NOT the reverse!

Surely, if this were the love practised between husband and wife, putting away ("divorce") in the church would be dramatically reduced! However, it would seem that, in following the false doctrine of monogamy and pursuing the Jezebel inspired belief that a woman owns her husband, God's pattern for marriage and the relationship between man and wife has been almost totally lost!

J. THE COVENANT REQUIREMENT FOR CHRISTIAN MEN TO CARE FOR MORE THAN ONE WOMAN

Surely we cannot be ready as a spotless bride prepared for our bridegroom until we have learned to live in God's form of marriage? Surely this requires that men learn to care for more than one woman and women learn to share their husband with another wife? Surely the church cannot learn to live together in unity until men and women in the body of Christ have learned to live together in harmony? Is there not a clear parallel between the seven churches of Revelation and the seven women in Isaiah 4:1?

Revelation 1:4-8 states:

- 4 *John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,*
- 5 *and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,*
- 6 *and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*
- 7 ***Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.***
- 8 *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (NKJ)*

Surely this speaks about the end of the age when Jesus will return for His bride and she will be caught up to join Him in the air? Surely the church is the bride and this passage speaks of seven churches, each with distinct attributes?

Isaiah 4:1-6 states:

- 1 ***And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach."***
- 2 *In that day the Branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious; and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing for those of Israel who have escaped.*
- 3 *And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy-- everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem.*
- 4 ***When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning,***
- 5 ***then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering.***
- 6 ***And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain. (NKJ)***

Surely this speaks of the time that is now fast approaching and has perhaps already dawned? And the situation described in Isaiah 3:16-26:

- 16 *Moreover the LORD says: "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet,*
- 17 *Therefore the Lord will strike with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will uncover their secret parts."*
- 18 *In that day the Lord will take away the finery: the jingling anklets, the scarves, and the crescents;*
- 19 *The pendants, the bracelets, and the veils;*
- 20 *The headdresses, the leg ornaments, and the headbands; the perfume boxes, the charms,*
- 21 *and the rings; the nose jewels,*
- 22 *the festal apparel, and the mantles; the outer garments, the purses,*
- 23 *and the mirrors; the fine linen, the turbans, and the robes.*
- 24 *And so it shall be: instead of a sweet smell there will be a stench; instead of a sash, a rope; instead of well-set hair, baldness; instead of a rich robe, a girding of sackcloth; and branding instead of beauty.*
- 25 *Your men shall fall by the sword, and your mighty in the war.*
- 26 *Her gates shall lament and mourn, and she being desolate shall sit on the ground. (NKJ)*

Speaks of the age which is drawing to a close, where the attire of women in the church can surely not be regarded as modest and the conduct of many is as described here?

It is widely acknowledged that there are currently far more women than men in the church. I know of congregations where a simple headcount in any meeting will show up to ten times more women than men. I suggest that you may be challenged to find a congregation anywhere where there are not at least twice as many women as men. Surely then, we are in the age that Isaiah 4:1 speaks of?

Consider also that 7 is the number of completion and perfection.

Appendix D contains many more examples of scriptures which support the fact that Yahweh permits a man to have more than one wife.

3. A KEY CONTRAST : THE FORESKIN

In contrast to the verses from Deuteronomy 22:13-30 cited in sections on virginity and the sacredness and scriptural importance of the hymen, consider what Genesis 17:9-14 says about the foreskin of man:

9 *And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.*

10 *"This is **My covenant** which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: **Every male child among you shall be circumcised;***

11 *"and **you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.***

12 *"He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.*

13 *"He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.*

14 *"**And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.**" (NKJ)*

This is just the first of numerous scriptures on the subject of circumcision and the removal of the foreskin, many of which are cited in Appendix C.

A. THE FORESKIN SERVES NO USEFUL PURPOSE

In Genesis 17:9-14 cited above, we see certain parallels with the previous passage on virginity. In particular:

1. Blood is shed by the cutting of flesh - the foreskin in this case versus the hymen in the previous.
2. The flesh that is cut off in this case again appears to serve no useful anatomical or biological purpose. It is apparently redundant and can therefore be removed without any long term harm. In fact, males who are not circumcised have, particularly in earlier generations, been prone to infection under the foreskin. It is, to a point a liability and a health hazard if not removed.
3. If the man is not circumcised he is cut off from his people. David referred to Goliath as an "uncircumcised Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:26 and 36) signifying that Goliath did not have a covenant with God and was therefore not entitled to His protection and His promises while David did.

B. THE FORESKIN IS ONLY USEFUL FOR CUTTING COVENANT WITH GOD

The only interpretation that can be placed on the foregoing conclusions is that the foreskin was created for a specific purpose, to signify covenant with God.

C. SOME ASIDES REGARDING THE FORESKIN

1. It would seem to be intentional on the part of God that He chose to place the sign of His covenant on an organ which man was obliged to take notice of on a daily basis and could therefore be constantly reminded of his covenant with God.

2. The presence or absence of a foreskin has no relevance in terms of section with regard to marriage and virginity. **God did not provide any safety mechanism comparable to the hymen to warn a bride that a man was not a "virgin".**
3. Therefore, if God ever intended a man to be restricted to one wife he was grossly unjust in providing a fail safe mechanism to protect men against adultery and providing no such mechanism to protect women!

D. THE CRITICAL CONCLUSION : NOTHING IN CREATION PREVENTS A MAN FROM CONSUMMATING MARRIAGE WITH MORE THAN ONE WOMAN

These two passages regarding virginity and the foreskin bring us directly to what you may regard as a rather shocking conclusion:

1. There is nothing in scripture which prevents a man from consummating marriage with more than one woman. Therefore, God created man and woman from the outset for a man to be married to several women at the same time.
2. Therefore, the current doctrine of the church regarding a man only having one wife is not correct.

OR IS THERE SOMETHING THAT WE HAVE MISSED?

While I would like to believe that the scriptures presented so far represent definitive proof of God's intention that man should have more than one wife, my experience to date indicates that there are many who will still have doubts. To this end, let us consider further scriptures.

CHAPTER 3: WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE SAY ABOUT ADULTERY?

Since adultery is THE sin which relates to ungodly sexual conduct and is widely used by modern Christians to describe a man who has sexual intercourse with more than one woman, it is necessary that we analyse the scriptural definition of adultery.

1. DEFINITION OF ADULTERY

A. ADULTERY DEFINED IN DEUTERONOMY 22

Let us consider the definition of adultery. Deuteronomy 22:22 states:

22 "If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die-- the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.

This is quite unambiguous, adultery involves a man (any man, marital state unspecified) lying with a very specific woman, a woman married to a husband and the penalty for adultery is death to both guilty parties.

B. ADULTERY DEFINED IN ROMANS 7

Romans 7:1-3 states:

- 1 *Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?*
- 2 *For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.*
- 3 ***So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. (NKJ)***

Can there be any uncertainty regarding the definition of adultery? It is clearly a woman who marries another man while her husband lives!

C. ADULTERY DEFINED IN PROVERBS 6

There are numerous other verses which give the same definition. **Proverbs 6:23-35 is particularly explicit:**

- 23 *For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life,*
- 24 *To keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress.*
- 25 *Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids.*
- 26 ***For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.***
- 27 *Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?*
- 28 *Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared?*
- 29 ***So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent.***
- 30 *People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving.*
- 31 *Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold; he may have to give up all the substance of his house.*
- 32 ***Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul.***
- 33 *Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away.*
- 34 ***For jealousy is a husband's fury; therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.***
- 35 *He will accept no recompense, nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts. (NKJ)*

This is also quite clear, adultery involves "going in to" one's neighbours **WIFE** and jealousy is the **HUSBAND'S** fury. There is no such provision regarding a man who is already married to another woman "going into" a virgin. There is also **NO** provision for jealousy as a wife's fury. Female jealousy is a Satanic counterfeit of the Godly jealousy of a husband!

D. ADULTERY DEFINED IN PROVERBS 7

Proverbs 7:5-27 states:

- 5 *That they may keep you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words.*
- 6 *For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice,*
- 7 *And saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, a young man devoid of understanding,*
- 8 *Passing along the street near her corner; and he took the path to her house*

- 9 *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.*
- 10 *And there **a woman met him, with the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.***
- 11 *She was loud and rebellious, her feet would not stay at home.*
- 12 *At times she was outside, at times in the open square, Lurking at every corner.*
- 13 *So she caught him and kissed him; with an impudent face she said to him:*
- 14 *"I have peace offerings with me; today I have paid my vows.*
- 15 *So I came out to meet you, diligently to seek your face, and I have found you.*
- 16 *I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of Egyptian linen.*
- 17 *I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.*
- 18 *Come, **let us take our fill of love until morning; let us delight ourselves with love.***
- 19 ***For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey;***
- 20 *He has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home on the appointed day."*
- 21 *With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him.*
- 22 *Immediately he went after her, **as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,***
- 23 ***Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would cost his life.***
- 24 *Now therefore, listen to me, my children; pay attention to the words of my mouth:*
- 25 *Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths;*
- 26 ***For she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men.***
- 27 ***Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death. (NKJ)***

This woman is clearly an adulteress, she is seeking "love" with a man other than her husband. Equally clearly, the spiritual consequences of adultery are too terrible to contemplate, reference is made to an ox to the slaughter, a fool to the stocks, an arrow striking his liver, a bird hastening to a snare. It is quite clear that this one act will cost him his life, that she has slain many strong men and that **her house is the way to hell. Can there be any doubt that adultery will commit the soul of the offender to Hell?! Certainly true repentance, confession of sin and asking for forgiveness will deliver the soul of the offender who sin's unwittingly but what of the many who keep sinning because they cannot keep their sexual drive within the bounds of enforced monogamy?**

E. ADULTERY DEFINED IN PROVERBS 9

Proverbs 9:13-18 states:

- 13 *A foolish woman is clamorous; she is simple, and knows nothing.*
- 14 *For she sits at the door of her house, on a seat by the highest places of the city,*
- 15 *To call to those who pass by, who go straight on their way:*
- 16 *"Whoever is simple, let him turn in here"; and as for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,*
- 17 *"Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant."*
- 18 ***But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of hell. (NKJ)***

Again, can there be any doubt that those who partake of adultery and harlotry are committing their souls to hell?! How then can the church dare to define adultery as anything that it is not and institute doctrines which, of necessity, require that adultery is condoned?

F. ADULTERY DEFINED IN NUMBERS 5

As a further confirmation of what the Word of God has to say in terms of providing a definition of Adultery, **consider Numbers 5:11-31:**

11 *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,*

12 *"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'If any man's wife goes astray and behaves unfaithfully toward him,*

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

14 *'if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, who has defiled herself; or if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, although she has not defiled herself--*

15 *'then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. He shall bring the offering required for her, one-tenth of an EPHAH of barley meal; he shall pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, because it is a grain offering of jealousy, an offering for remembering, for bringing iniquity to remembrance.*

16 *'And the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD.*

17 *'The priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water.*

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

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

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

21 *'then the priest shall put the woman under the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman--"the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your thigh rot and your belly swell;*

22 *"and may this water that causes the curse go into your stomach, and make your belly swell and your thigh rot." Then the woman shall say, "Amen, so be it."*

23 *'Then the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall scrape them off into the bitter water.*

24 *'And he shall make the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her to become bitter.*

25 *'Then the priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand, shall wave the offering before the LORD, and bring it to the altar;*

26 *'and the priest shall take a handful of the offering, as its memorial portion, burn it on the altar, and afterward make the woman drink the water.*

27 *'When he has made her drink the water, then it shall be, if she has defiled herself and behaved unfaithfully toward her husband, that the water that brings a curse will enter her and become bitter, and her belly will swell, her thigh will rot, and the woman will become a curse among her people.*

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

- 29 *'This is the law of jealousy, when a wife, while under her husband's authority, goes astray and defiles herself,*
- 30 *'or when the spirit of jealousy comes upon a man, and he becomes jealous of his wife; then he shall stand the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute all this law upon her.*
- 31 *'Then the man shall be free from iniquity, but that woman shall bear her guilt.'* (NKJ)

Again, there is no ambiguity here, it is quite clear that it is the woman who goes astray with another man. There is no reference to a married man taking a second woman as a wife being adultery.

G. ADULTERER'S BARRED FROM THE ASSEMBLY

reference from Lamsa "No adulterer shall enter into the assembly of the Lord"

H. ABRAHAM AND ABIMILECH

In order to obtain another perspective of the way God views adultery, let us consider another passage of scripture.

In Genesis 20:1-18 we read the following report:

- 1 *And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar.*
- 2 ***Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.***
- 3 ***But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife."***
- 4 *But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also?"*
- 5 *"Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this."*
- 6 ***And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her.***
- 7 *"Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."*
- 8 *So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very afraid.*
- 9 *And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? **How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin?** You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done."*
- 10 *Then Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?"*
- 11 *And Abraham said, "Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will kill me on account of my wife.*
- 12 *"But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.*
- 13 *"And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, 'This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, say of me, "He is my brother."'"*
- 14 *Then Abimelech took sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him.*

15 And Abimelech said, "See, my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you."

16 Then to Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; indeed this vindicates you before all who are with you and before everybody." Thus she was rebuked.

17 **So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children;**

18 **for the LORD had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife. (NKJ)**

In this passage we see that adultery is a sin against God, that even although Abimelech had done this thing after Abraham and Sarah had deliberately misled him and ABIMILECH had acted in good faith, God told him that he was "a dead man". Furthermore, God closed up ALL the wombs in the house of ABIMILECH, both of his wife and his female servants. Thus, although ABIMILECH already had at least one wife, God defined adultery as being the taking of "a mans wife" and would have executed judgement, even death, if he had actually consummated the relationship or had not repented!

Further, we see that even if a woman lies about her marital state, the man is guilty. Presumably this applies as much to a woman who lies to the effect that her hymen was perforated in athletics or through the use of a tampon, or who says her husband is dead or says that God permitted her to get divorced or for that matter who is mistaken in her belief. We have ministered to a woman who was seduced under hypnosis when she was in her teens and only had the full situation revealed to her by the Holy Spirit when she was in her forties and had been living in adultery in the sight of God for nearly twenty years!

Clearly it is also a sin if the pastor has said that she is free to remarry! **In such a case the pastor will presumably also be found guilty on the day of judgment!**

Can one do other than exclaim **Woe to this evil and perverse generation!**

Adultery is not to be taken lightly, it truly is an abomination in the sight of God. This is confirmed throughout scripture. Surely, to call marriage that is acceptable in the sight of God, that is the taking of more than one wife, "adultery" must also rank as an abomination in His sight?

I. SEXUAL IMMORALITY IS SIN AGAINST ONE'S OWN BODY

1 Corinthians 6:13-20 states:

13 *Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.*

14 *And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.*

15 *Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? **Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!***

16 *Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."*

17 *But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.*

18 *Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, **but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.***

19 *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?*

20 *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (NKJ)*

Clearly sexual union with a harlot or adulteress joins the man's body, the temple of the Holy Spirit, to hers. Refer section on the one flesh bond for more details. How then can the church permit men and women to remarry when they are not divorced in the sight of God? How can they prevent a man from taking a woman whose virginity he has taken as a second wife because he is already married, thus condemning her to widowhood or adultery? Is this not the most heartless religious heresy? And an affront to the Holy Spirit and our uncompromisingly righteous Saviour?

J. ADULTERY IS SIN AGAINST GOD

In the previous section we see that God Himself states that adultery is sin against Him.

In Psalm 51, David repents of his sin in his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband (2 Samuel 11 and 12):

1 *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving-kindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.*

2 *Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*

3 *For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.*

4 ***Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight-- that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.***

5 *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.*

6 *Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.*

7 *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

8 *Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice.*

9 *Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.*

10 ***Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.***

11 ***Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.***

12 ***Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.***

13 *Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You.*

14 *Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.*

15 *O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.*

16 *For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; you do not delight in burnt offering.*

17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart-- these, O God, You will not despise.*

18 *Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem.*

19 *Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then they shall offer bulls on Your altar. (NKJ)*

This scripture is perhaps the most powerful example of true repentance in the entire Bible. Clearly David truly feared that God would cast him away and take His Holy Spirit from David. David had also

apparently lost the joy of his salvation. This Psalm clearly portrays the cry of a desperate man who has known God and knows the magnitude of his sin. At this time he had approximately ten wives in addition to Bathsheba and ten concubines. Surely we should not refer to anything as adultery if it is not? Likewise, we should surely not do anything to downplay the seriousness of adultery when it occurs?

Appendix N lists a range of scriptures containing the words adultery, adulterer, adulteress, fornication, fornicators, harlot in order to illustrate just how seriously God views these sins.

Appendix D contains many more examples of scriptures which support the fact that Yahweh permits a man to have more than one wife.

K. THE CURSES OF THE LAW

Appendix S lists the curses associated with breaking the Mosaic Law or Mosaic Covenant or Torah. These curses apply to all those laws which are listed from Deuteronomy, Leviticus, Numbers, Exodus and Genesis. In other words, they apply to those who add to or take away from the commandments of God, they apply to those who commit adultery and harlotry, etc. In other words, they apply to all those who have taught the heresies addressed in this book AND to all those who wittingly or unwittingly have sinned as a consequence of these heresies. Conservatively we are talking of millions of people, probably we are talking about billions!

But Jesus became a curse for us, I hear you cry! Yes, certainly Jesus became a curse for us but we must still repent of our sins, confess them before God and ask for and receive forgiveness. Under the old covenant the sin offering was put to death on behalf of the sinner. This required the sinner to bring the sacrifice to the temple. Under the New Covenant, Jesus became our sacrifice, once and for all BUT we must still bring our sacrifice of a broken and a contrite heart before the throne of grace and ask for forgiveness!

Equally, if we sin wilfully we crucify Jesus again! **Hebrews 6:1-8 states:**

- 1 *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,*
- 2 *of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*
- 3 *And this we will do if God permits.*
- 4 ***For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,***
- 5 ***and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,***
- 6 ***if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.***
- 7 *For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God;*
- 8 *but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.*
(NKJ)

How many men and women who call themselves by the name of God, who style themselves with titles like "Reverend" and "Pastor", contrary to the Word of God, who have access to as many translations of the Bible as they want as well as access to diverse reference materials or who even publish such

materials, are crucifying again the Son of God and putting Him to an open shame? It seems to me that there are far more than most men and women would like to believe. We may well find on the day of Judgment that God's books tell a different story of many whom we have regarded as pillars of the church.

Do not forget Matthew 7:21-29:

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'

23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:

25 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

26 "Now everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

27 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, 29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. (NKJ)

Today we see many who prophesy, cast out demons and do wonders in the name of Jesus, yet Jesus here declares that He will say to MANY that He NEVER KNEW THEM! Brothers and sisters, this is shattering scripture, but it is scripture nevertheless. As you read this book, can you say with certainty that you truly know the Lord and do the will of His Father or have you been preaching heresy and condemning God's children for seeking to live lives in accordance with scripture? I urge you to consider carefully what you have taught and applied in this area of doctrine and to determine whether you need to repent and turn from your wicked ways!

Consider Ezekial 18:30:

30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord GOD. **"Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. (NKJ)**

Consider also that many of the sins of Israel that Ezekial and others prophesied against were similar to the sins of the church today! Yet we have a new and better covenant!

2. ADULTERY AFTER JESUS CAME (UNDER THE NEW COVENANT)

There seems to be a widely held view that somehow Jesus did away with the penalty for adultery and that adultery is now something that can be confessed and repented of where after it goes away so that the couple concerned can continue their relationship if they are married in the sight of the church.

This is seemingly based upon John 8:1-11:

1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

- 2 Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.
- 3 **Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery.** And when they had set her in the midst,
- 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, **this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.**
- 5 "Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"
- 6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.
- 7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."
- 8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.
- 9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.
- 10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"
- 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; **go and sin no more.**" (NKJ)

Clearly Jesus told her to **sin no more**. Imagine the scene, the woman was caught in the act but the man was allowed to flee. Historical reports that I have read seem to suggest that the application of the scripture relating to stoning for adultery was seldom if ever practised in Jesus day. Caligula was emperor in Rome during Jesus life time and debauched living, not that different from the world today but perhaps more public, was widespread in Rome and Greece and throughout the "civilised" world. Accordingly it would seem that this woman had been living in a situation in which the likelihood of any serious natural consequences for her dalliance were unlikely. Suddenly she found herself facing death while her lover who was present (she was caught in the act) was seemingly permitted to flee and not pursued.

Is it not possible that under those circumstances she came to a rapid and sincere repentance? Is it not possible that Jesus who knows our thoughts knew that she had truly repented?

Psalm 94:11 states:

11 The LORD knows the thoughts of man, that they are futile. (NKJ)

Matthew 9:4 states:

4 But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" (NKJ)

Is it not possible that Jesus was as much grieved by the great hypocrisy of those who "caught her in the act" and yet did not bring her lover with her to be stoned as Jesus might have been grieved by her sin?

Dare we construct a doctrine of universal indulgence of fornication from this one incident? Particularly when this passage is not included in all manuscripts? Refer footnotes in NIV and other translations. No doubt true repentance with a broken spirit and a contrite heart brings forgiveness but how can this be achieved when a man has put away "divorced" his wife because the church will not permit him to take a second wife?

Certainly we can deduce that if a person commits adultery, recognizes it as sin and turns from it asking God for forgiveness, they will receive that forgiveness and they can continue their lives without eternal consequences.

The experience of David, as outlined in section clearly demonstrates this. BUT David was living under the Mosaic covenant as a prophet! So has that much changed? Has God not always responded with mercy to a "broken spirit and a contrite heart?"

Nevertheless, in the passage in John 8:11, Jesus clearly tells her to "**go and sin no more.**" How can we suggest that a man can marry a "divorced" woman whose "divorce" God has not sanctioned, acknowledge that this is adultery and then tell her and her new "husband" that if they confess their sin after first intercourse from then on it will be in order? I have heard teachings to this effect! Is this not an abomination in the sight of God?

At the same time we must recognize that despite his sincere and abject repentance, David's family lived under the curse of his actions for generations, as portrayed in the Books of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah. Are we absolutely certain that this curse is cut off by Jesus' sacrifice?

The experience presented in the case history in other section, clearly indicates that heartfelt repentance is not enough to cut off the consequences of adultery. There is far more spiritual "housekeeping" required to cut off the curse AND the consequences in this life - the one flesh bond must be severed by the Grace of God, soul ties must be cut, unGodly promises and vows must be renounced on both sides and cut off, restitution to the husband and family may be required, curses spoken against one must be cut off, demonic gateways must be closed and familiar spirits associated with the liaison must be cast out, all demons transferred between the parties must be dealt with. It is apparent from this testimony that this all requires great soul searching and seeking of God to identify all issues that must be cut off. In the case report this took years. The person who is the subject of the case history walked the road of recovering from adultery having been trapped by Satan's lies when back slidden many years ago. Six years after the event God was still showing him aspects of ignorance and spiritual consequences which were still not finally dealt with.

A. REVELATION 21:8 IS QUITE SPECIFIC : SEXUAL IMMORALITY LEADS TO A PART IN THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

However, if they do NOT confess their sin and repent in this life, Revelation 21:1-8 is quite specific:

- 1 *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.*
- 2 *Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.***
- 3 *And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.*
- 4 *"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*
- 5 *Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."*
- 6 *And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.*
- 7 *"He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

8 **"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, *sexually immoral*, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."** (NKJ)

Other translations of Revelation 21:8 state:

King James Version:

8 *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and **whoremongers**, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

Revised Standard Version:

8 *But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, **fornicators**, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death."*

The words "sexually immoral" in the New King James Version, "whoremongers" in the King James Version and "fornicators" in the Revised Standard Version are all alternate interpretations of the word *pornos* Nestle's number 4205:

Thayer Defines 4205 pornos-

- 1) *a man who prostitutes his body to another's lust for hire*
- 2) *a male prostitute*
- 3) ***a man who indulges in unlawful sexual intercourse, a fornicator***

The base word of 4205 referred to by Strong is 4097:

Thayer Defines 4097 piprasko-

- 1) *to sell:*
 - a) *used of price, one into slavery*
 - b) *used of the master to whom one is sold as a slave*
- 2) *metaphorically:*
 - a) ***sold under sin, entirely under the control of the love of sinning***
 - b) ***used of one bribed to give himself up wholly to another's will***

These words are seemingly closely allied with the word *porneia* which is translated "fornication" in Matthew 5:32 in the King James Version:

32 *But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of **fornication**, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. (KJV)*

The same word occurs in Matthew 19:9:

9 *And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for **fornication**, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*
(KJV)

Strong defines 4202 porneia (por-ni'-ah);

from 4203; harlotry (including adultery and incest); figuratively, idolatry:

KJV-- fornication.

Thayer defines 4202 porneia-:

1) *illicit sexual intercourse*

a) adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals, etc.

b) sexual intercourse with close relatives; Lev. 18

c) sexual intercourse with a divorced man or woman; Mk. 10:11,12

2) *metaphorically, **the worship of idols**; used of the defilement of idolatry, as incurred by eating the sacrifices offered to idols*

Note that sexual intimacy between women, referred to today as "lesbianism" is not explicitly defined or prohibited anywhere in scripture, despite the commentary in Thayers definition above.

Appendix L lists all scriptures which contain the word "porneia" in order to give readers a better understanding of the scope of the word, note the distribution between sexual immorality and spiritual unfaithfulness. I believe that the Lord has also shown me that porneia includes continuous spiritual unfaithfulness or idolatry or betrayal over an extended period by a spouse with a refusal to repent or deliberate returning to that sin. As evidenced in the case history presented in other section, the Lord extends considerable grace to the offending spouse to give them time to come to repentance before permitting divorce. This may relate to conditions such as a spouse who is a psychopath, an alcoholic, a person who physically abuses the other spouse and similar traits associated with intense demonic oppression corresponding to effectively spiritual idolatry on the part of the offender. It seems that God's blessing for divorce may only come when the offending spouse has either reached a point where they are beyond redemption or have renounced their salvation.

We must remember that, while one is married to such a spouse one is afforded an opportunity to die to self and to learn how to become more Christ like. It is probably easier to store up treasure in heaven when in such a marriage than it is in a lukewarm marriage to another believer where you are not making any real effort to serve God.

Thus we see that divorce is only permitted in the event of adultery, sexual abominations, persistent idolatry and betrayal. **It is NOT permitted because a man takes a second wife!**

B. IF JESUS RELAXED THE LAW ON ADULTERY WHY DID JOHN THE BAPTIST DIE?

Consider Mark 6:16-27:

16 *But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!"*

- 17 For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.
- 18 **For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."**
- 19 Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not;
- 20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.
- 21 Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee.
- 22 And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you."
- 23 He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom."
- 24 So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!"
- 25 Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."
- 26 And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her.
- 27 **Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, (NKJ)**

This same incident is recorded in Matthew 14:1-12. Can there be any doubt that John opposed adultery with absolute conviction? Surely if the current doctrine had applied he would just have told Herod confess his sin and he could carry on living with Herodias. Surely if Jesus was in the process of changing the law He would have sent a message to John to tell him about the change? **No! We must accept that the Word of God has NOT changed with regard to adultery. If John the Baptist was prepared to die rather than compromise, then surely so should we?**

C. CONCLUSION : A WOMAN WHO HAS SEX WITH MORE THAN ONE MAN WHILE THE FIRST IS ALIVE IS DEFINED AS AN ADULTERESS AND A HARLOT EXCEPT IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

There cannot be much doubt that adulterers and adulteresses, who are referred to elsewhere as harlots and so forth, fall into the category of "sexually immoral". Accordingly, I have not doubt that we must accept that any person who is an unrepentant (either did not know or refused to repent) adulteress, in other words ANY WOMAN WHO HAS HAD SEX EVEN ONCE WITH MORE THAN ONE MAN over her life time, other than:

1. A widow.

or

2. A divorcee whom God has released to divorce AND to remarry and who has been formally divorced.

or

3. A woman who was a harlot and who has come to full and sincere revelation of her sin, confession thereof AND repentance AND whom God has released to marry.

will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone WHETHER THEY CLAIM TO BE BORN AGAIN OR NOT!

Likewise, ANY MAN WHO HAS HAD SEX EVEN ONCE WITH EVEN ONE SUCH WOMAN and who has not come to recognition of their sin, confession of that sin before God and sincere repentance of that sin, will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone!

D. THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF "PASTORS"

Matthew 23:8-13 states:

- 8 *"But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.*
9 *"Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.*
10 *"And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.*
11 *"But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.*
12 *"And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*
13 *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. (NKJ)*

Notwithstanding Jesus' injunction to call no man Rabbi or Teacher, Christian leaders insist on appropriating the title "Pastor" or "Reverend" or "Father" to themselves. They fail to distinguish between the office of pastor or teacher and converting that into a title. No one would consider calling themselves "Bookkeeper Smith", they know that bookkeeper is a job description. Likewise, pastor is a job description.

Having set themselves up in this position, sadly many seem to lose sight of Jesus commandment that we should regard ourselves as servants to our brethren. They then take it upon themselves to pronounce on issues of doctrine, to decide whether a couple are suitable marriage material or not, to decide whether a divorce is sanctioned by God, to decide whether a woman who is not a virgin is free in the sight of God to marry and to prescribe and pronounce on many other issues.

It is important to recognize that every individual is accountable before God for their own sin. Accordingly, while a pastor who wrongly counsels that a couple are free to marry will be accountable for his sin, the individuals will still be called to account on the day of judgement and, as best I can determine, if they have committed adultery by following their pastor's advice they will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone. The pastor is also likely to be found on the Day of Judgement to have added to or taken away from the Word of God and to have lied to the couple, albeit in ignorance.

Remember also that Matthew 23 continues in verses 14-39 to state:

- 14 *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.*
15 *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.*
16 *"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.'*
17 *"Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold?*
18 *"And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.'*

- 19 **"Fools and blind!** For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift?
- 20 "Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it.
- 21 "He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it.
- 22 "And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.
- 23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have **neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith.** These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.
- 24 **"Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!**
- 25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.
- 26 "Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.
- 27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.
- 28 **"Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.**
- 29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,
- 30 "and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'
- 31 "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.
- 32 "Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt.
- 33 "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?
- 34 "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city,
- 35 "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.
- 36 "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.
- 37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!
- 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate;
- 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" (NKJ)

How sure are we that these words do not apply in great measure to many leaders in the church today? A close reading of *The Final Quest*, indicates that they apply far more than most would like to believe. Now is the time for all who call themselves by the name of Christ to carefully examine themselves in the mirror of the Word of God to determine their spiritual state.

E. JUDGEMENT REVISITED

Some people are of the opinion that these people will not burn for eternity but certainly there seems to be scripture to suggest that they will spend eternity in an extremely unpleasant place. On the other

hand, from the report of Joyner in the "Final Quest" it does appear that there is a possibility that a person who truly trusts God by faith for salvation through the name of Jesus may just be saved into heaven with no treasure and possibly having gone through a particularly dreadful judgment experience but it does not seem worth gambling on this when there are so many explicit scriptures to indicate that there is quite possibly another fate which truly is worse than death.

Luke 16:18-31 reports:

18 **"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery."**

19 *"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.*

20 *"But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate,*

21 *"desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.*

22 *"So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.*

23 *"And **being in torments in Hades**, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

24 *"Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; **for I am tormented in this flame.**'"*

25 *"But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.*

26 *'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'*

27 *"Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house,*

28 *'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'*

29 *"Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'*

30 *"And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'*

31 *"But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'" (NKJ)*

Is it not an interesting juxtaposition that verse 18 speaks of divorce and adultery and the story of Lazarus starts the next verse? Is it not possible that God is seeking to tell us something here?

Jude 1:7 states:

7 *as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, **suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.** (NKJ)*

Hebrews 6:2 states:

2 *of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of **eternal judgment.** (NKJ)*

Can there be any doubt that this eternal judgment is eternal fire? Whatever the exact form may be it is undoubtedly torment and suffering.

NOTE IN PARTICULAR that the voice that speaks the words reported in Revelation 21:1-8 cited on page, identifies Himself in verse 21:6 as the "Alpha and Omega", this is no less that Jesus Himself speaking!

Shortly thereafter, in verses 22:18 and 19 we are specifically cautioned not to add to or take away from anything written in "*this book*". Revelation 22:16-20 states:

16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;**

19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!
(NKJ)

It certainly seems to me that we should not contemplate suggesting that someone who commits adultery will not have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone.

F. CRITICAL CONCLUSION : UNREPENTED ADULTERY WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY LEAD TO A PART IN THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE IF NOT ETERNAL SEPARATION FROM GOD IN HELL

It seems to me that it is impossible to conclude other than that adultery carries the severest possible penalty, the second death and a part in the lake of fire and brimstone, potentially for eternity.

3. IS IT TRUE THAT, ONCE CONFESSED, ADULTERY IS NO LONGER ADULTERY?

There are teachings to the effect that if you marry a divorced woman you are committing adultery but if you confess your sin and repent of it, it is not adultery thereafter.

Matthew 19:9 in the King James Version states:

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, **except it be for fornication**, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.
(KJV)

Clearly, unless a woman is divorced with the blessing of Yahweh and, by implication, is the innocent party in the sight of God, and has a certificate of divorce as discussed in other section, any man having intercourse with her will be committing adultery.

If she is not divorced with Yahweh's blessing then every time a man has intercourse with her they are committing adultery, it does not matter if they have a certificate from the state or the church, they are still committing adultery. Jesus Himself made this quite clear.

If they confess and repent after every sexual encounter then that is wilful sin and Hebrews 10:23-31 is quite explicit about the consequences of that:

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

25 *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

26 ***For if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,***

27 ***but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.***

28 *Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.*

29 ***Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?***

30 ***For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people."***

31 ***It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (NKJ)***

It does not seem to me that there can be any uncertainty about the outcome of this conduct. As you study the discussion on the one flesh bond and related supernatural forces designed by God to make marriage work, you will come to realize just how powerful God's plan for marriage is, just how effectively Satan has corrupted it and just how great the opportunity is that awaits you to make marriage work with your existing marriage partner or partners (those who have wives because God has not acknowledged your divorce, amongst others).

The reality is that there is much that we do not understand about Godly marriage if putting away ("divorce") is to be avoided and if we recognize that a harsh, legalistic approach will not work. This thinking is developed progressively in the rest of this book.

4. GOD'S DEFINITION OF SEXUAL SIN

Leviticus 18:1-30 provides a comprehensive statement of God's definition of sexual sin:

1 *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,*

2 *"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'I am the LORD your God.*

3 ***'According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances.***

4 ***'You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the LORD your God.***

5 *'You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.*

6 *'None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his **nakedness**: I am the LORD.*

7 *'The **nakedness** of your father or the **nakedness** of your mother you shall not uncover. She is your mother; you shall not uncover her **nakedness**.*

8 *'The **nakedness** of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it is your father's **nakedness**.*

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

- 10 *'The **nakedness** of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their **nakedness** you shall not uncover; for theirs is your own **nakedness**.*
- 11 *'The **nakedness** of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father-- she is your sister-- you shall not uncover her **nakedness**.*
- 12 *'You shall not uncover the **nakedness** of your father's sister; she is near of kin to your father.*
- 13 *'You shall not uncover the **nakedness** of your mother's sister, for she is near of kin to your mother.*
- 14 *'You shall not uncover the **nakedness** of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt.*
- 15 *'You shall not uncover the **nakedness** of your daughter-in-law-- she is your son's wife-- you shall not uncover her **nakedness**.*
- 16 *'You shall not uncover the **nakedness** of your brother's wife; it is your brother's **nakedness**.*
- 17 *'You shall not uncover the **nakedness** of a woman and her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her **nakedness**. They are near of kin to her. **It is wickedness**.*
- 18 *'Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her **nakedness** while the other is alive.*
- 19 *'Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her **nakedness** as long as she is in her customary impurity.*
- 20 *'Moreover **you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, to defile yourself with her**.*
- 21 *'And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.*
- 22 *'**You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination**.*
- 23 *'**Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion**.*
- 24 *'**Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you**.*
- 25 *'**For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants**.*
- 26 *'**You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you***
- 27 *'**for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled),***
- 28 *'**lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you**.*
- 29 *'**For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people**.*
- 30 *'**Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that you do not commit any of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I am the LORD your God.**'" (NKJ)*

Strong defines the word "nakedness" in the above scriptures as follows:

6172 `ervah (er-vaw');

from 6168; nudity, literally (especially the pudenda) or figuratively (disgrace, blemish):

KJV-- nakedness, shame, unclean (-ness).

Brown-Driver-Briggs defines 6172 `ervah-

nakedness, nudity, shame, pudenda, genitalia

a) pudenda (implying shameful exposure)

b) nakedness of a thing, indecency, improper behavior

c) exposed, undefended (figurative)

Thus "nakedness" is not only the sexual act as indicated by certain translations, it is the observance of the sexual organs of the people referred to. Surely this must extend to sexual intercourse AS WELL!

It is fairly widely reported that the sacrifices to **Molech** were a way of getting rid of unwanted children. Surely abortion must be just such an abomination? The question which I believe that every person who calls themselves by the name of Christ and claims to believe in the Bible must ask themselves is **"How many abortions result from pregnancies fathered by men who are already married to other women and believe that they are not permitted to take a second wife? Is it not likely that the false doctrine of monogamy plays a substantial role in the level of abortion?"**

The above passages from Leviticus are EXTREMELY robust when it comes to stating God's opinion of these sins. He repeatedly states that it is for these sins that He visited Judgement on Egypt and that He is driving the people out of Canaan. It appears also that these were the same sins which resulted in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet many of these sins are openly portrayed and practised in the world today!

Note that verse 9 refers to *"the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother"*, this is worded this way in order to accommodate a daughter of ANOTHER WIFE!

Surely if The Lord does not define a man having more than one wife amongst this schedule of sexual sin as sin, then it is almost certainly NOT sin? Furthermore for man to add a form of marriage (a man having more than one wife), which so many scriptures clearly indicate God approves of, to this list of sexual sin must surely be an abomination in the sight of God!?

This text is more or less duplicated in Leviticus 20:1-27:

- 1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,*
- 2 "Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: 'Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives any of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones.*
- 3 'I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given some of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name.*

- 4 'And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives some of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him,**
- 5 'then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech.**
- 6 'And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people.
- 7 'Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God.
- 8 'And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you.
- 9 'For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood shall be upon him.
- 10 'The man who commits adultery with another man's wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.**
- 11 'The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.**
- 12 'If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death. They have committed perversion. Their blood shall be upon them.**
- 13 'If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.**
- 14 'If a man marries a woman and her mother, it is wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you.**
- 15 'If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal.**
- 16 'If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood is upon them.**
- 17 'If a man takes his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it is a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness. He shall bear his guilt.**
- 18 'If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people.**
- 19 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt.**
- 20 'If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless.**
- 21 'If a man takes his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.**
- 22 'You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out.

23 *'And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them.*

24 *'But I have said to you, "You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey." I am the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples.*

25 *'You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.*

26 *'And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.*

27 *'A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them.'* (NKJ)

Note the close association between sexual immorality and spiritual immorality, note that the same terms are applied to both - harlotry, prostitute, fornication, adultery, relating back to the term porneia used by Jesus with respect to grounds for divorce!

It is important to note that again there is nothing to prohibit a man having more than one wife BUT he is enjoined NOT to have intercourse with a woman during menstruation. Again, consider the curses for disobedience listed in Deuteronomy 28-30 in Appendix S. Remember that while Jesus became a curse for us we must still confess our sin's and repent for His sacrifice to take effect. If we do not know the book of the Law, how will we know our sins?

It may also be relevant to note that Leviticus 20:13 relating to homosexuality expressly states *"If a man lies with a male **as he lies with a woman**, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them."* This verse does not address sexual intimacy between women as many Christians would assert and there are no other verses that I have been able to find which do. At best we can say that the Bible is silent with regard to sexual intimacy between the wives of one man while it would probably be possible to develop a reasonable scriptural argument against intimacy between women who were not the wives of one man. Again I am not seeking to be contentious, I am simply stating what the Word of God says and DOES NOT SAY. **If we cannot find the scripture to support our prejudices then it is time that we have the integrity to state that they are personal prejudices and NOT attribute them to the word of God! Surely if we fear God and His judgment we will not do such a thing?**

Deuteronomy 27:14-26 further addresses the subject of sexual sin and lists those forms of sexual sin which are specifically cursed:

14 *"And the Levites shall speak with a loud voice and say to all the men of Israel:*

15 *'Cursed is the one who makes any carved or molded image, an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen!'*

16 *'Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*

17 *'Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor's landmark.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*

18 *'Cursed is the one who makes the blind to wander off the road.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*

19 *'Cursed is the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and widow.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*

- 20** *'Cursed is the one who lies with his father's wife, because he has uncovered his father's bed.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*
- 21** *'Cursed is the one who lies with any kind of animal.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*
- 22** *'Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*
- 23** *'Cursed is the one who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*
- 24** *'Cursed is the one who attacks his neighbor secretly.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*
- 25** *'Cursed is the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'*
- 26** *'Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' (NKJ)*

It is important to note that **incest is listed together with bestiality.**

5. JUST HOW SERIOUSLY DOES GOD VIEW SEXUAL SIN?

This section addresses a passage of scripture, Judges chapters 19 to 21, which contains some principles which most modern Christians are likely to find difficult. However, if we believe that God does not change (Malachi 3:6 *"For I am the LORD, I do not change; (NKJ)"*) and that the word of God will not pass away (Jesus says in Matthew 24:35 *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. (NKJ)"*), we must consider the application of these scriptures.

A. THE OBLIGATION TO HOSPITALITY

Judges 19:1-21:

- 1 *And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite staying in the remote mountains of Ephraim. He took for himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah.*
- 2 *But his concubine played the harlot against him, and went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there four whole months.*
- 3 *Then her husband arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her and bring her back, having his servant and a couple of donkeys with him. So she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the young woman saw him, he was glad to meet him.*
- 4 *Now his father-in-law, the young woman's father, detained him; and he stayed with him three days. So they ate and drank and lodged there.*
- 5 *Then it came to pass on the fourth day that they arose early in the morning, and he stood to depart; but the young woman's father said to his son-in-law, "Refresh your heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way."*
- 6 *So they sat down, and the two of them ate and drank together. Then the young woman's father said to the man, "Please be content to stay all night, and let your heart be merry."*
- 7 *And when the man stood to depart, his father-in-law urged him; so he lodged there again.*
- 8 *Then he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart, but the young woman's father said, "Please refresh your heart." So they delayed until afternoon; and both of them ate.*
- 9 *And when the man stood to depart-- he and his concubine and his servant-- his father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him, "Look, the day is now drawing toward evening; please spend the night. See, the day is coming to an end; lodge here, that your heart may be merry. Tomorrow go your way early, so that you may get home."*

- 10 However, the man was not willing to spend that night; so he rose and departed, and came to opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). With him were the two saddled donkeys; his concubine was also with him.
- 11 They were near Jebus, and the day was far spent; and the servant said to his master, "Come, please, and let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and lodge in it."
- 12 But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside here into a city of foreigners, who are not of the children of Israel; we will go on to Gibeah."
- 13 So he said to his servant, "Come, let us draw near to one of these places, and spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah."
- 14 And they passed by and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin.
- 15 They turned aside there to go in to lodge in Gibeah. And when he went in, he sat down in the open square of the city, for no one would take them into his house to spend the night.
- 16 Just then an old man came in from his work in the field at evening, who also was from the mountains of Ephraim; he was staying in Gibeah, whereas the men of the place were Benjamites.
- 17 And when he raised his eyes, he saw the traveler in the open square of the city; and the old man said, "Where are you going, and where do you come from?"
- 18 So he said to him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah toward the remote mountains of Ephraim; I am from there. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; now I am going to the house of the LORD. But there is no one who will take me into his house,
- 19 "although we have both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and bread and wine for myself, for your female servant, and for the young man who is with your servant; there is no lack of anything."
- 20 And the old man said, "Peace be with you! However, let all your needs be my responsibility; only do not spend the night in the open square."
- 21 So he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank. (NKJ)

We see here the application of the scriptural obligation of hospitality to strangers referred to in **Matthew 25:31-46:**

- 31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.
- 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.
- 33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.
- 34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, '**Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:**
- 35 'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; **I was a stranger and you took Me in;**
- 36 'I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'
- 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?
- 38 'When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?'

- 39 *'Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'*
- 40 *"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*
- 41 *"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, '**Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:***
- 42 *'for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;*
- 43 ***'I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'***
- 44 *"Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'*
- 45 *"Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'*
- 46 ***"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."** (NKJ)*

B. HOMOSEXUAL RAPE IS MORE SERIOUS THAN HETEROSEXUAL RAPE

Judges chapter 19:22-24:

- 22 *As they were enjoying themselves, suddenly certain men of the city, perverted men, surrounded the house and beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, "Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him carnally!"*
- 23 *But the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brethren! I beg you, do not act so wickedly! Seeing this man has come into my house, do not commit this outrage.*
- 24 *"Look, here is my virgin daughter and the man's concubine; let me bring them out now. Humble them, and do with them as you please; but to this man do not do such a vile thing!"*

We see that rape of a woman is viewed as less serious than homosexual rape. Today homosexual sin is regarded as acceptable by the world and even by some in the church. No apparent distinction is drawn between homosexual rape and heterosexual rape. This observation does not in any way diminish the seriousness of heterosexual rape, it only makes the point that it appears from these scriptures that homosexual rape is viewed by God as being **EVEN MORE SERIOUS** than heterosexual rape!

C. THE SIN COMMITTED - RAPE AND CONSEQUENTIAL MURDER

Judges chapter 19:25-28:

- 25 *But the men would not heed him. So the man took his concubine and brought her out to them. And they knew her and abused her all night until morning; and when the day began to break, they let her go.*
- 26 *Then the woman came as the day was dawning, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, till it was light.*
- 27 *When her master arose in the morning, and opened the doors of the house and went out to go his way, there was his concubine, fallen at the door of the house with her hands on the threshold.*
- 28 *And he said to her, "Get up and let us be going." But there was no answer. So the man lifted her onto the donkey; and the man got up and went to his place.*

The sin of the men of Gibeah was firstly to seek homosexual rape, then to gang rape the concubine, thirdly that this led to her death. We see in chapter 20, verse 4 below that this was regarded as murder, even though the woman died as a consequence of the rape and was still alive at the end of the rape.

D. THE RESPONSE OF THE LEVITE AND OF ISRAEL

Judges chapter 19:29 - 20:11:

29 When he entered his house he took a knife, laid hold of his concubine, and divided her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel.

30 And so it was that all who saw it said, "No such deed has been done or seen from the day that the children of Israel came up from the land of Egypt until this day. Consider it, confer, and speak up!"

JUDGES CHAPTER 20

1 So all the children of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, as well as from the land of Gilead, and the congregation gathered together as one man before the LORD at Mizpah.

2 And the leaders of all the people, all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot soldiers who drew the sword.

3 (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) Then the children of Israel said, "Tell us, how did this wicked deed happen?"

4 So the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "My concubine and I went into Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, to spend the night.

5 "And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and surrounded the house at night because of me. They intended to kill me, but instead they ravished my concubine so that she died.

6 "So I took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of the inheritance of Israel, because they committed lewdness and outrage in Israel.

7 "Look! All of you are children of Israel; give your advice and counsel here and now!"

8 So all the people arose as one man, saying, "None of us will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house;

9 "but now this is the thing which we will do to Gibeah: We will go up against it by lot.

10 "We will take ten men out of every hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, a hundred out of every thousand, and a thousand out of every ten thousand, to make provisions for the people, that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may repay all the vileness that they have done in Israel."

11 So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, united together as one man.

We see that this one instance of intended homosexual rape, the actual gang rape and the death of the rape victim was seen as sufficient cause for 400,000 men of Israel to gather at one place in order to give effect to the scriptural provisions for dealing with homosexuality, rape and murder. The relevant scriptures are as follows:

i. THE PENALTY FOR ADULTERY IS DEATH

Deuteronomy 22:22 deals with adultery:

22 "If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die-- the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel. (NKJ)

In the case cited above, the men who raped the concubine knew that she was married and that they would therefore be committing adultery.

ii. THE PENALTY FOR RAPE IS DEATH

Deuteronomy 22:25-27 deals with rape:

- 25 *"But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die.*
- 26 *"But you shall do nothing to the young woman; there is in the young woman no sin deserving of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbour and kills him, even so is this matter.*
- 27 *"For he found her in the countryside, and the betrothed young woman cried out, but there was no one to save her. (NKJ)*

It seems reasonable to conclude that in the case under consideration the case of the concubine who was taken by overwhelming force would be comparable to the young woman in the countryside. The crime was rape and the death penalty is laid down by scripture.

iii. THE PENALTY FOR MURDER IS DEATH

Numbers 35:16-21 deals with murder:

- 16 *'But if he strikes him with an iron implement, so that he dies, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death.*
- 17 *'And if he strikes him with a stone in the hand, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death.*
- 18 *'Or if he strikes him with a wooden hand weapon, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer; the murderer shall surely be put to death.*
- 19 *'The avenger of blood himself shall put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death.*
- 20 *'If he pushes him out of hatred or, while lying in wait, hurls something at him so that he dies,*
- 21 *'or in enmity he strikes him with his hand so that he dies, the one who struck him shall surely be put to death. He is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him. (NKJ)*

The death penalty applies for murder and it is to be administered by a person who is termed the "avenger of blood" who is apparently any member of the community who witnessed the murder or has some family or other tie with the victim which confers on him the responsibility for avenging the death of the victim.

iv. THE PENALTY FOR HOMOSEXUALITY IS DEATH

Leviticus 20:13 deals with homosexuality:

- 13 *'If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them. (NKJ)*

While there is no indication of a penalty for homosexual intent, in this case the intent would appear to indicate a level of perversion among the men of Gibeah which was extreme.

v. CONCLUSION : SCRIPTURE REQUIRED THE DEATH PENALTY FOR THE MEN OF GIBEAH

There can be no doubt that scripture required the death penalty for the men of Gibeah who raped the concubine and, since the number of men involved was more than the Levite on his own could oppose and since the other men of the city had not acted to oppose the sin, it required that the people of Israel collectively assemble in order to execute judgement.

E. THE RESPONSE OF BENJAMIN

Judges chapter 20:12-16 reports the response of the tribe of Benjamin:

- 12 Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What is this wickedness that has occurred among you?"*
- 13 "Now therefore, deliver up the men, the perverted men who are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and remove the evil from Israel!" But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel.*
- 14 Instead, the children of Benjamin gathered together from their cities to Gibeah, to go to battle against the children of Israel.*
- 15 And from their cities at that time the children of Benjamin numbered twenty-six thousand men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered seven hundred select men.*
- 16 Among all this people were seven hundred select men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair's breadth and not miss.*

Instead of executing judgment themselves or handing the offenders over to Israel to be judged and sentenced, Benjamin takes the part of the rapists thereby making themselves also guilty by association. Of necessity, in order to honour scripture Israel would have to act in unity to overcome Benjamin or else compromise on the judgment required by scripture.

F. THE RESPONSE OF ISRAEL AND GOD TO BENJAMIN AND THE OUTCOME OF THE FIRST BATTLE

Judges chapter 20:17-21:

- 17 Now besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword; all of these were men of war.*
- 18 Then the children of Israel arose and went up to the house of God to inquire of God. They said, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?" The LORD said, "Judah first!"*
- 19 So the children of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah.*
- 20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel put themselves in battle array to fight against them at Gibeah.*
- 21 Then the children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day cut down to the ground twenty-two thousand men of the Israelites.*

In response to Benjamin's sin, rather than saying "the blood be on your hands", the Israelites prepare to go to war. However, before they go to war they go to ask God if they should go and the LORD tell's them to go to war. We thus see that God required the judgement's laid down in scripture to be executed. However, Benjamin kill twenty two thousand Israelites.

G. THE RESPONSE OF ISRAEL AND GOD TO THE OUTCOME OF THE FIRST BATTLE; THE SECOND BATTLE**Judges chapter 20:22-25:**

- 22 *And the people, that is, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves and again formed the battle line at the place where they had put themselves in array on the first day.*
- 23 *Then the children of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until evening, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, "Shall I again draw near for battle against the children of my brother Benjamin?" And the LORD said, "Go up against him."*
- 24 *So the children of Israel approached the children of Benjamin on the second day.*
- 25 *And Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah on the second day, and cut down to the ground eighteen thousand more of the children of Israel; all these drew the sword.*

Having suffered the loss of twenty two thousand men, Israel remains resolved to execute judgment and return to ask the Lord if they should go up again. He instructs them to go up again and a further eighteen thousand are slain. It is notable that having lost 22,000 men Israel still is resolved to execute judgment on a group of men for the rape and murder of ONE woman. Is this not a far cry to the attitude of the world and the church today to the rape or murder of one person?

Surely if this degree of respect for the Word of God prevailed today we would not see anything approaching the levels of rape and murder that we see in our society today?

H. THE RESPONSE OF ISRAEL AND GOD TO THE OUTCOME OF THE SECOND BATTLE; THE THIRD BATTLE**Judges chapter 20:26-48:**

- 26 *Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, went up and came to the house of God and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.*
- 27 *So the children of Israel inquired of the LORD (the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days,*
- 28 *and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days), saying, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?" And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."*
- 29 *Then Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah.*
- 30 *And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in battle array against Gibeah as at the other times.*
- 31 *So the children of Benjamin went out against the people, and were drawn away from the city. They began to strike down and kill some of the people, as at the other times, in the highways (one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah) and in the field, about thirty men of Israel.*
- 32 *And the children of Benjamin said, "They are struck down before us, as at first." But the children of Israel said, "Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways."*
- 33 *So all the men of Israel rose from their place and put themselves in battle array at Baal Tamar. Then Israel's men in ambush burst forth from their position in the plain of Geba.*
- 34 *And ten thousand select men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. But the Benjamites did not know that disaster was upon them.*

- 35 *The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel. And the children of Israel destroyed that day twenty-five thousand one hundred Benjamites; all these drew the sword.*
- 36 *So the children of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to the Benjamites, because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah.*
- 37 *And the men in ambush quickly rushed upon Gibeah; the men in ambush spread out and struck the whole city with the edge of the sword.*
- 38 *Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in ambush was that they would make a great cloud of smoke rise up from the city,*
- 39 *whereupon the men of Israel would turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to strike and kill about thirty of the men of Israel. For they said, "Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle."*
- 40 *But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and there was the whole city going up in smoke to heaven.*
- 41 *And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin panicked, for they saw that disaster had come upon them.*
- 42 *Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and whoever came out of the cities they destroyed in their midst.*
- 43 *They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them, and easily trampled them down as far as the front of Gibeah toward the east*
- 44 *And eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell; all these were men of valor.*
- 45 *Then they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon; and they cut down five thousand of them on the highways. Then they pursued them relentlessly up to Gidom, and killed two thousand of them.*
- 46 *So all who fell of Benjamin that day were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword; all these were men of valor.*
- 47 *But six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and they stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four months.*
- 48 *And the men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin, and struck them down with the edge of the sword-- from every city, men and beasts, all who were found. They also set fire to all the cities they came to.*

We see that after losing 40,000 men Israel returns to ask the Lord whether to continue with the battle. This time they fast and offer sin offerings and peace offerings first. From this we can conclude that the reason that they failed in the first two battles was because of unconfessed sin amongst the people of Israel. The Lord again tells them to go up and this time they succeed, still losing another 30 men in the process.

We should consider carefully the resolve of the men of Israel to honour the Word of God and to execute judgment that, even though 40,000 had been killed they were still prepared to go into battle again. It seems inconceivable that today any part of our society would even begin to consider the need for righteousness to be so important as to suffer such a great loss in response to one gang rape! How little we understand the Lord's standards of righteousness!

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF OATH'S AND VOWS**Judges chapter 21:1-25:**

- 1 *Now the men of Israel had sworn an oath at Mizpah, saying, "None of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife."*
- 2 *Then the people came to the house of God, and remained there before God till evening. They lifted up their voices and wept bitterly,*
- 3 *and said, "O LORD God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe missing in Israel?"*
- 4 *So it was, on the next morning, that the people rose early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.*
- 5 *The children of Israel said, "Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up with the assembly to the LORD?" For they had made a great oath concerning anyone who had not come up to the LORD at Mizpah, saying, "He shall surely be put to death."*
- 6 *And the children of Israel grieved for Benjamin their brother, and said, "One tribe is cut off from Israel today.*
- 7 *"What shall we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them our daughters as wives?"*
- 8 *And they said, "What one is there from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Mizpah to the LORD?" And, in fact, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh Gilead to the assembly.*
- 9 *For when the people were counted, indeed, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead was there.*
- 10 *So the congregation sent out there twelve thousand of their most valiant men, and commanded them, saying, "Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children.*
- 11 *"And this is the thing that you shall do: You shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman who has known a man intimately."*
- 12 *So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man intimately; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.*
- 13 *Then the whole congregation sent word to the children of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon, and announced peace to them.*
- 14 *So Benjamin came back at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh Gilead; and yet they had not found enough for them.*
- 15 *And the people grieved for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a void in the tribes of Israel.*
- 16 *Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who remain, since the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?"*
- 17 *And they said, "There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel.*
- 18 *"However, we cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the children of Israel have sworn an oath, saying, 'Cursed be the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.'"*
- 19 *Then they said, "In fact, there is a yearly feast of the LORD in Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah."*
- 20 *Therefore they instructed the children of Benjamin, saying, "Go, lie in wait in the vineyards,*

- 21 *"and watch; and just when the daughters of Shiloh come out to perform their dances, then come out from the vineyards, and every man catch a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh; then go to the land of Benjamin.*
- 22 *"Then it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, that we will say to them, 'Be kind to them for our sakes, because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; for it is not as though you have given the women to them at this time, making yourselves guilty of your oath.'"*
- 23 *And the children of Benjamin did so; they took enough wives for their number from those who danced, whom they caught. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and they rebuilt the cities and dwelt in them.*
- 24 *So the children of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family; they went out from there, every man to his inheritance.*
- 25 *In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (NKJ)*

From this passage we discover that the men of Israel, having taken an oath concerning any person who did not come up to assist with executing judgement, execute that oath on Jabesh Gilead utterly destroying the town. We further see that despite grieving for Benjamin that the six hundred survivors do not have wives, Israel is not prepared to relax their oath concerning giving wives to Benjamin. We see hear a respect for honouring a man's word which is all but lost in our community today. We also see that there is a recognition that the punishment for failing to keep one's word is from God.

J. TAKING OF WIVES

From the above passage we also see the application of some other scriptural principles. Firstly, **Deuteronomy 22:28-29 states:**

- 28 *"If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out,*
- 29 *"then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days. (NKJ)*

Exodus 22:16-17 states:

- 16 *"If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife.*
- 17 *"If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins. (NKJ)*

Since Deuteronomy 22:28-29 deals with sexual intercourse with a virgin by force and Exodus 22:16-17 deals with seduction of a virgin it would appear that the girl's father is entitled to refuse his daughter to the man who has taken seized her. This appears to be the principle applied with regard to the virgins of Shiloh.

Again these passages raise some issues which are very different to modern teachings. Firstly we see that there was no courtship, there was no discussion about whether the couple were well suited to another or whether they were life partners. They were paired off, apparently without material choice and were regarded by all of Israel as being married. There is no indication of any possibility that those marriages would not work. This is a far cry from the attitudes to experimental sex and virginity that

characterized most of the world today and which are not materially opposed by much of the Christian church.

K. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH IN THE END OF THE AGE

These scriptures should be interpreted against **Ezekial 33:8-9**:

- 8 *"When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die!' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand.*
- 9 *"Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. (NKJ)*

Surely every person who has a Bible and certainly every person who reads their Bible should consider the possibility that they are called to be watchmen to the world in which we live. Surely, if we fail to recognize the import of scriptures such as those considered in this document we place ourselves at risk of finding the blood of those who perish for eternity upon our own heads at the day of judgment!

Surely it is time for those who call themselves by the name of Christ to become serious about opposing homosexuality and warning homosexuals of the eternal consequences of their sin. Likewise, they should become serious about demanding the death penalty for murder and rape. Surely, insofar as the Christian church fails to do this the blood will be collectively on the heads of the church and there is much judgment in store in the final tribulation for those who do not take their part in opposing unscriptural conduct in our society?

6. LUST AND ADULTERY OF THE HEART

Matthew 5:27-30 states:

- 27 *"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.'*
- 28 ***"But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.***
- 29 *"If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*
- 30 *"And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. (NKJ)*

Clearly a man who lusts after a woman is committing adultery in his heart. In other words, he is sinning in his heart against God.

A. LUST IS COVETOUSNESS AND IS SIN

Exodus 20:17 states:

- 17 *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; **you shall not covet your neighbor's wife**, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's." (NKJ)*

It is important to note that, as explained in section, which discusses the Hebrew and Greek words to describe a woman and a wife and determines that there is no distinction in scripture since all adult women were either married, widows or harlots. It is further explained in section, which discussed the age at which women married in scripture. Thus Jesus was not introducing a new commandment in Matthew 5:28 but only restating the tenth commandment.

Consider also Deuteronomy 5:1-22:

- 1 *And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them.*
- 2 *"The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.*
- 3 *"The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.*
- 4 *"The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire.*
- 5 *"I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain. He said:*
- 6 *'I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*
- 7 *'You shall have no other gods before Me.*
- 8 *'You shall not make for yourself any carved image-- any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;*
- 9 *you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,*
- 10 *but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*
- 11 *'You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.*
- 12 *'Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.*
- 13 *Six days you shall labor and do all your work,*
- 14 *but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall not do any work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you.*
- 15 *And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.*
- 16 *'Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*
- 17 *'You shall not murder.*
- 18 *'You shall not commit adultery.*
- 19 *'You shall not steal.*
- 20 *'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*
- 21 ***'You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.'***
- 22 *"These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly, in the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. (NKJ)*

We thus see that lust and coveting of a woman (a neighbour's wife), together with all other forms of lust and covetousness are expressly forbidden by God in the Ten Commandments, written by God

Himself on tablets of stone. Yet our whole societies approach to marriage place inordinate emphasis on the physical appearance of the object of affection.

B. LUST IN OUR SOCIETY AS THE BASIS FOR SELECTING MARRIAGE PARTNERS

Young men and women place much of their emphasis on how "good looking" a member of the opposite sex is and hence how desirable that person is. It seems to me that this is nothing short of lust. In fact, it is my contention that objective consideration of the entire process of courtship practiced in our society and, by implication, endorsed by the church is largely driven by lust.

If a young person without the knowledge, experience and wisdom to evaluate the personality, etc of a member of the opposite sex is left to select a marriage partner themselves they are inevitably going to rely on what they can see and therefore make a mistake. Thus, when the church tells young people that they are "too young to marry", they are effectively saying that they are too young to choose. In this regard they are entirely correct. As discussed in section on betrothal, the scriptural way of betrothal was for the parents of the man and woman to arrange the match taking account of social standing, etc. In fact, the match was likely to be between cousins or children of neighbours in the same village. In other words, between children of families who had known each other for years and where the parents had observed the development of one another's children and identified which children were suited to one another. Conversely, when the Holy Spirit makes the match, He looks on the heart,

1 Samuel 16:7 states:

*7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but **the LORD looks at the heart.**" (NKJ)*

2 Corinthians 4:18 states:

18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (NKJ)

Thus, by changing God's principles of marriage and forcing young people to make their own choice of marriage partner and then forcing them to wait to an age greater than scripturally required the church creates a recipe for marital disaster and THEN seeks to counsel it's victims on how to select a marriage partner and to make marriages work!

C. LUST AS OPPOSED TO LOVE

Other scriptures on lust include **Proverbs 6:23-26:**

23 For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life,

24 To keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress.

*25 **Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids.***

*26 **For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.** (NKJ)*

Proverbs 11:6 states:

*6 **The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.** (NKJ)*

Romans 13:8-14 states:

- 8 *Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.*
- 9 *For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*
- 10 *Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*
- 11 *And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.*
- 12 *The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.*
- 13 *Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.*
- 14 *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. (NKJ)*

Can there be any doubt that lust in all its forms is a major sin AND a major stumbling block in the lives of the world and the church today.

Consider also that the approach of the world to selecting marriage partners on appearance must, inevitably, give rise to a situation where, once the "beloved" is no longer so physically attractive or when they demonstrate some of the inevitable foibles of human personality they are deemed to no longer be the appropriate marriage partner. This is a key message in much, if not all, of what is presented under the guise of "love" on television, in magazines and in books. Surely then it is no wonder that men and women turn to pornography.

If we consider God's definition of love in **1 Corinthians 13:4-8:**

- 4 *Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;*
- 5 *does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;*
- 6 *does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;*
- 7 *bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*
- 8 *Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. (NKJ)*

How different this is from the thing that the world calls love today which is surely nothing more than lust?! Surely the church must look to itself to determine how it has contributed to this appalling situation through the false doctrines addressed in this book.

D. LUST, PORNOGRAPHY AND FASHION

Consider also Proverbs 23:7:

- 7 *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. "Eat and drink!" he says to you, but his heart is not with you. (NKJ)*

As a man thinks in his heart, so is he - as he lusts through pornography or the distorted approach to life portrayed on television, so is he or so he becomes - an adulterer. The author can confirm this from first hand experience and it is only by the Grace and Mercy of God that I am alive today to write this

book. Lust is indeed one of Satan's most subtle and destructive lies - that it is O.K. to look (and to lust) and that this will not harm you!

Consider also Ezekial 24:15-18:

15 Also the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

*16 "Son of man, behold, I take away from you **the desire of your eyes** with one stroke; yet you shall neither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down.*

17 "Sigh in silence, make no mourning for the dead; bind your turban on your head, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your lips, and do not eat man's bread of sorrow."

*18 So I spoke to the people in the morning, and **at evening my wife died**; and the next morning I did as I was commanded. (NKJ)*

Here we clearly see that the Lord refers to Ezekial's wife as **the desire of his eyes**. In other words, it is not wrong for a man to desire his wife or wives. God has created woman's body, her breasts and her private parts to be attractive to her husband BUT ONLY to her husband. As indicated in other section, the female sexual organ IS the sign of the marriage covenant!

Since, in Bible times it would appear to be entirely unheard of for a woman to expose herself in a bikini or bathing costume in a place where a man other than her husband could see her it appears reasonable to conclude that the Lord intended man to be aroused by the appearance of his wife's nakedness in private. If this is indeed so then we should not be unduly surprised that men are stimulated by scantily clad women, whether in the flesh or in pictures. In particular, we should realise that clothing that hugs the breasts or pubic area to all intents and purposes exposes the naked body. **Tightly fitting bathing costumes where the outline or shadow of the nipples or where the form of the Mons Venus (female pubic mound) and sometimes even the cleft or folds of the vulva are clearly visible are certainly at the very least causing men to stumble and potentially asking for trouble and almost certainly an affront to our Holy and Righteous God!**

On the one hand, wives may have an obligation to display their bodies in a pleasing fashion for their husbands in the privacy of the marriage chamber. On the other hand, ALL women should dress modestly in public. Insofar as this is unlikely to happen as a generally rule in our present society, those who call themselves by the name of Christ would do well to exercise discretion with regard to where they go and what they watch.

E. LUST AND THE DRESS OF YOUNG WOMEN

Careful consideration of the contents of the preceding sections together with the discussion on virginity and one night stands should cause all readers to realize that it is extremely unwise for any young woman (age twelve or older) to dress "immodestly", in other words in clothes which reveal their breasts or mons relatively explicitly. While it is possibly not practical for a young woman to dress in clothes as modest as those worn by women in certain Middle Eastern countries, even today, it would seem that a good maxim would be to ensure that they are dressed materially more modestly than those with whom they associate. The objective should be not to cause some man to stumble and also, CRITICALLY, not to inadvertently cause a situation to arise in which their virginity is taken through lust, provoked by their dress.

F. LUST, PORNOGRAPHY AND ENFORCED MONOGAMY

By the same token, when a man has the capacity to love more than one woman and is prevented from doing so, is it not inevitable that he will turn to lust and pornography to satisfy a deep down desire in

his soul for covenant relationship with more than one woman? Is it not incredible how far the church has permitted Satan to totally corrupt God's plans for the marriage relationship between man and woman?

By the same token, a wife in a monogamous marriage whose husband has been created to be polygynous, should not really be surprised if her husband turns to lust and pornography to satisfy his need. It is perhaps possible that a wife in a monogamous marriage could make a particular effort to meet all her husband's needs but, as discussed with regard to Isaiah 4:1 in other section, since every woman is different and no one woman will meet all the needs of a polygynous husband, this is likely to prove to be a futile effort destined to fail. It would therefore appear that woman who insist on forcing their husbands to remain monogamous should accept that lust and pornography are likely to be an inevitable consequence AND that they will then become partners in the sin of their husbands.

How much better it would be if such a man were free to take an additional wife in order to more fully meet all his needs for companionship, intellectual interchange, spiritual interaction in worship and service to God, help with the business of his family and his household and his sexual needs. It seems apparent to me that most of these needs can be met by women outside a monogamous marriage BUT that inevitably this will result in sexual attraction. In all sincerity I must say to you that it appears to me that **Yahweh God did NOT intend ANY of these needs to be met outside marriage!**

Of necessity I must say to any woman who reads this, who is in a monogamous marriage and whose husband is in bondage to pornography and lust - ask YOURSELF the question, to what extent are YOU responsible for his sin and the resulting inner turmoil which curses his daily existence?

7. ONE NIGHT STANDS

Some years ago when, in my office as a prophet of God, I was sent to the leadership of a church where the pastor had been found out as having had a sexual relationship with one of the young woman in the congregation. I was required by the Lord to tell the leadership that instead of demanding that the pastor terminate the relationship they were to require him to take her as his second wife. Remarks were made to me to the effect that a protracted sexual relationship should be treated differently to a "one night stand". It was implied that somehow a "one night stand" could be tolerated but a long term relationship could not!

However, Deuteronomy 22:23-30 deals with this quite clearly:

23 *"If a young woman who is a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her,*

24 *"then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he humbled his neighbor's wife; so you shall put away the evil from among you.*

25 *"But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die.*

26 *"But you shall do nothing to the young woman; there is in the young woman no sin deserving of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him, even so is this matter.*

27 *"For he found her in the countryside, and the betrothed young woman cried out, but there was no one to save her.*

28 *"If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he **SEIZES** her and lies with her, and they are found out,*

29 "then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her [put her away] all his days.

30 "A man shall not take his father's wife, nor uncover his father's bed. (NKJ)

Surely verses 28 and 29 deal with a so-called "one night stand" quite clearly, **even where the girl does not consent**. The man must pay restitution and he may not divorce her all his days. Surely that is a simple message, there is no such thing as "sex before marriage", there is no such thing as experimenting to find the right partner. It is either marriage or it is fornication. There is nothing unclear about this. **Yet, in order to support Satan's false doctrine of enforced monogamy men and women in the church have created a false marriage rite in order to permit women who are not virgins to marry men who do not know the difference and both can go to HELL or at the very least have a part in the lake of fire and brimstone. Is this not an appalling abomination?**

I pray that by now you will have no doubt about the truth and that you will be starting to recognize the enormous eternal consequences of this false doctrine. There are millions, if not billions, of souls in Hell and millions, if not billions, of others who have a part in the lake of fire and brimstone as a consequence of this lie. Furthermore millions, if not billions, of lives have been destroyed in this life. Hundreds of millions, if not billions, of others including Moslems and Jews, knowing the truth about marriage have been totally persuaded that so-called Christianity is of the devil and, on this score, they have been ABSOLUTELY RIGHT!

A. A "ONE NIGHT STAND" WITH A VIRGIN IS MARRIAGE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD!

Supplementing this scripture, Exodus 22:16-17 states:

16 **"If a man *entices* a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife.**

17 **"If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins. (NKJ)**

So here we see that in the case of so-called "consenting adults" a one night stand still constitutes marriage but with the caveat that the father could object which, it might be argued, could apply also to Deuteronomy 22:28-29.

B. A FATHER CAN ANNUL A CLANDESTINE UNION THE DAY HE HEARS OF IT

This must be read in conjunction with Numbers 30:1-16:

1 *Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which the LORD has commanded:*

2 *"If a man vows a vow to the LORD, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.*

3 *"Or if a woman vows a vow to the LORD, and binds herself by some agreement while in her father's house in her youth,*

4 ***"and her father hears her vow and the agreement by which she has bound herself, and her father holds his peace, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement with which she has bound herself shall stand.***

- 5 **"But if her father overrules her on the day that he hears, then none of her vows nor her agreements by which she has bound herself shall stand; and the LORD will release her, because her father overruled her.**
- 6 "But if indeed she takes a husband, while bound by her vows or by a rash utterance from her lips by which she bound herself,
- 7 "and her husband hears it, and makes no response to her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her agreements by which she bound herself shall stand.
- 8 "But if her husband overrules her on the day that he hears it, he shall make void her vow which she vowed and what she uttered with her lips, by which she bound herself, and the LORD will release her.
- 9 "Also any vow of a widow or a divorced woman, by which she has bound herself, shall stand against her.
- 10 "If she vowed in her husband's house, or bound herself by an agreement with an oath,
- 11 "and her husband heard it, and made no response to her and did not overrule her, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement by which she bound herself shall stand.
- 12 **"But if her husband truly made them void on the day he heard them, then whatever proceeded from her lips concerning her vows or concerning the agreement binding her, it shall not stand; her husband has made them void, and the LORD will forgive her.**
- 13 "Every vow and every binding oath to afflict her soul, her husband may confirm it, or her husband may make it void.
- 14 "Now if her husband makes no response whatever to her from day to day, then he confirms all her vows or all the agreements that bind her; he confirms them, because he made no response to her on the day that he heard them.
- 15 **"But if he does make them void after he has heard them, then he shall bear her guilt."**
- 16 *These are the statutes which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, and between a father and his daughter in her youth in her father's house. (NKJ)*

It is clear that the father has the prerogative to overrule his daughter making a truly unwise match on the day that he hears that she has had sex with her lover, **not a day later.**

Note also that in the scripture above, the father bears her guilt. In other words, this is not something to be taken lightly, it seems that the father will be judged for the daughter's sin as though he was the guilty party! Is this not a direct shadow of our husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, dying to take our sin that we might live! Again the imagery is powerful! How can we persist with our false doctrines concerning "one night stands" when Jesus has died to set us free from our sin!

C. VIRGINITY LOST IN A ONE NIGHT STAND PRECLUDES MARRIAGE

Exodus 22:16-17, cited above is unclear whether that woman could subsequently remarry.

The fact that the man who took her virginity must pay the bride price would appear to indicate that the young woman would not be eligible to marry again. Keep in mind that, in the context of the above passages from Deuteronomy 22, if the thing is not found out and the man who took her by force does not marry her, the girl may never marry. The same applies to the girl who was enticed in Exodus 22.

Deuteronomy 22:13-21 states:

13 *"If any man takes a wife, **and goes in to her**, and detests her,
14 *"and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,'**

.....

20 *"But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman,
21 *"then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and **the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house; so you shall put away the evil from among you.****

Clearly a woman who has been involved in a "one night stand" will not pass this test. Keep in mind that once the seal of virginity is broken there is no way that any other man can know for certain whether the woman is free to marry or not. **Accordingly, in principle, it would appear that any father who refused to permit his daughter to marry the man who had seduced her would do so knowing that he (the father) would have to support his daughter for the rest of her days.**

D. JUDAH AND TAMAR AS AN EXAMPLE OF A "ONE NIGHT STAND"

The case of Judah and Tamar provides useful confirmation of these conclusions:

Genesis 38:6-30 reports:

6 *Then Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar.
7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him.
8 And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother."
9 But Onan knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother.
10 And the thing which he did displeased the LORD; therefore He killed him also.
11 Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "**Remain a widow in your father's house till my son Shelah is grown.**" For he said, "**Lest he also die as his brothers did.**" And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.
12 Now in the process of time the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died; and Judah was comforted, and went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.
13 And it was told Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep."
14 So she took off her widow's garments, covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place which was on the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife.
15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, because she had covered her face.
16 Then he turned to her by the way, and said, "Please let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. So she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"
17 And he said, "I will send you a young goat from the flock." So she said, "Will you give me a pledge till you send it?"
18 Then he said, "What pledge shall I give you?" So she said, "Your signet and cord, and your staff that is in your hand." Then he gave them to her, and **went in to her, and she conceived by him.***

- 19 *So she arose and went away, and laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood.*
- 20 *And Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her.*
- 21 *Then he asked the men of that place, saying, "Where is the harlot who was openly by the roadside?" And they said, "There was no harlot in this place."*
- 22 *And he returned to Judah and said, "I cannot find her. Also, the men of the place said there was no harlot in this place."*
- 23 *Then Judah said, "Let her take them for herself, lest we be shamed; for I sent this young goat and you have not found her."*
- 24 *And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry." So Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!"*
- 25 *When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "By the man to whom these belong, I am with child." And she said, "Please determine whose these are-- the signet and cord, and staff."*
- 26 ***So Judah acknowledged them and said, "She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son." And he never knew her again.***
- 27 *Now it came to pass, at the time for giving birth, that behold, twins were in her womb.*
- 28 *And so it was, when she was giving birth, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it on his hand, saying, "This one came out first."*
- 29 *Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, "How did you break through? This breach be upon you!" Therefore his name was called Perez.*
- 30 *Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand. And his name was called Zerah. (NKJ)*

Here we see that Judah had promised Tamar his widowed daughter-in-law that she would marry his third son when that son was old enough. However, he broke his vow. Since Tamar had no hope of marrying any other man but Judah's son, it appears that she took the desperate step of posing as a harlot in order to trap Judah and secure a covering for herself in her old age.

The key principle contained in this scripture is that, while the Word of God prevents a man from marrying his daughter-in-law, Judah, once he realised that he had had intercourse with Tamar accepted responsibility for her FOR LIFE! This principle is confirmed in the case of Jacob and Leah. **How different our society would be today if every many who had intercourse with a woman who was a virgin or a widow understood AND ACCEPTED that he was responsible for her well-being for life, even if he was drunk or she had intercourse with him while he slept or under false pretences!**

E. THE APPARENT DILEMMA OF SAMSON'S NIGHT WITH A HARLOT

Judges 16:1-4 reports:

- 1 ***Then Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her.***
- 2 *When the Gazites were told, "Samson has come here!" they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying, "In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him."*

- 3 ***And Samson lay low till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.***
- 4 ***Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.***
(NKJ)

Here we see Samson, a Judge of Israel, dedicated to God before His birth, anointed as a deliverer of Israel, with supernatural strength imparted by the Spirit of God, going in to a harlot, despite all that scripture says about adultery. Yet, when he left the Spirit of God had not left him. One almost get's the impression that God was not particularly concerned with Samson's sin.

However, remember that God is longsuffering. **Numbers 14:18 states:**

- 18 ***'The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.'*** (NKJ)

We see here that the Lord IS long suffering BUT he no means clears the guilty

**/

8. IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW COVENANT

It certainly seems to be the case under the Mosaic covenant that a woman who has lost her virginity, other than a widow of known origin or a divorcee where the divorce resulted from the sin of the husband, who is not a virgin, could never marry.

Under the New Covenant of the Lord Jesus Christ we are faced with the very real possibility of women coming to salvation having been sexually promiscuous previously. I do not think that there is any doubt that provided she is made aware of her sin and truly repents, she WILL be forgiven. Our experience in ministry however indicates that the Lord will still require her to be faithful to the man she was married to at the time she came to salvation. Whether this is the man who took her virginity or the man she is legally married to is something that only the Lord can determine, on a case by case basis. We have ministered to a woman, married to an unbeliever, who the Lord clearly led to divorce and then showed her that she had been seduced under hypnosis over twenty years ago by a man who was now a believer and who was still, in the sight of God, her husband. In other words, she had been legally married in the eyes of the church and the state but living in adultery in the sight of God for over twenty years AND had borne a child to the man she had called her husband.

As one comes to fully appreciate the enormous implications of this one instance, one must truly acknowledge that His ways are not our ways. **Isaiah 55:6-9 states:**

- 6 ***Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near.***
- 7 ***Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.***
- 8 ***"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.***
- 9 ***"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.*** (NKJ)

On the other hand, we have ministered to other women, some of whom have been trapped in sexual sin and fornication for years after coming to salvation, some as a consequence of demonic oppression and blood line curses carried into the New Life as a consequence of inadequate ministry and deliverance when they made a commitment, others simply out of ignorance of the principles set out in this document. It is truly alarming to discover how many deeply committed Christians really do not know the virginity is sacred and that sex equates to marriage. They find themselves in bondage, repeatedly trapped by their sexual needs and often by unsaved men who take advantage of their desperate need for sexual fulfillment in an agony of conviction and repentance followed by further sin. In such cases, once presented with the true scriptural facts and brought to true repentance our Lord extends bountiful mercy and grace.

On one occasion we ministered to a woman in her mid-twenties who had been sexually abused by a close relation at the age of fourteen and who had been in a variety of sexual relationships ever since. As she confessed her sins, repented, received forgiveness and prayed for the cutting off of all one-flesh bonds, person by person, she had a vision in which God showed her that he had restored her virginity. Sadly, with no Christian man willing to extend his covering to her, she fell back a few weeks later into a sexual relationship with an unbeliever. What her standing in the sight of God is today, I do not know, I do know that I was subsequently greatly convicted of my hardness of heart in not being willing to stand in the gap for her and take her as my wife!

In any case where a man is considering taking a woman who is not physically a virgin as his wife I would counsel careful prayer. This would be particularly important in our present social situation as it would be quite likely that the father tacitly accepted that there was a sexual relationship for some time before he confronted it and it seems clear to me that this is not the intent of this scripture.

9. MODERN COURTSHIP, PETTING AND THE LIKE BEFORE MARRIAGE WERE NOT ENVISAGED BY GOD

Clearly the above scriptures, taken with other comments elsewhere suggest that any significant form of dating or courtship as we know it today was NOT envisaged by Yahweh when He created mankind! Certainly any form of kissing or heavy petting would seem to be reserved for the wedding night. Not because He is unjust but because He intended that pleasure to be reserved for the marriage bed and He did NOT intend men and women to wait for years after they reached scripturally marriageable age for "mister right" or "miss right" or their "soul mate" or "life partner" to come along.

10. THE LORD'S TRUE INTENTION : MARRIAGE IS DESIGNED TO WORK

Can we other than conclude that the Lord's true intention for marriage was that he guaranteed it to work, as long as husband and wife were both believers and were both in submission to the TRUE Word of God.

He intended a woman to marry a man who was available and, in broad terms, suitable within the constraints of the requirements set out elsewhere in scripture, in particular that they should both be believers. Other than this, as long as they both understood that marriage was for life, that there was no performance pressure, that lust was not a consideration and that, should the relationship be incomplete, the husband was free to take additional wives, Yahweh, in His wisdom had provided the one flesh bond, soul ties and other spiritual functions to ensure that the marriage would work! Surely there are grounds in these scriptures to warrant a radical rethink in doctrine in virtually every area of teaching concerning marriage and relations between men and women in the body of Christ?

11. CRITICAL CONCLUSION : GOD'S DEFINITION OF ADULTERY ACCEPTS THAT A MAN MAY HAVE MORE THAN ONE WIFE BUT REQUIRES THAT A WOMAN MAY HAVE SEX WITH ONLY ONE MAN

I sincerely pray that after you have read the preceding chapter you will have no doubt that scripture permits a man to have more than one wife and that adultery is sexual intercourse with a woman who is not a virgin unless God has explicitly released her to marry another man as an act of Grace.

If you still have reservations, I pray that the following chapters will resolve your doubts. If you doubt the massive impact of adultery on the life of an individual in this life, presents a case history of a man who was trapped into adultery. It provides a chilling perspective on the long term consequences of adultery, even after repentance and truly demonstrates that adultery is indeed a sin against your own body.

CHAPTER 4: SCRIPTURAL DIVORCE

Having examined in great detail the scriptures on adultery and determined that much of what is currently regarded as divorce is not, it is necessary that we now more closely investigate God's definition of divorce. As we do this it is vital that we approach this subject NOT with a legalistic view but with a view to understanding God's HEART on the matter.

As I write, I am acutely aware that both my wife and I are divorced by the leading of the Holy Spirit and remarried by His guidance. In this section I will endeavour to assist readers to understand what seem to me to be some of the critical challenges relating to divorce within the Body of Christ in this age.

I must also stress that as you read further in this book you will come to realize that, as set out so eloquently in the passage "Wow! So that's how Jesus loves me!", reproduced in Appendix Q, God's plan for marriage is infinitely better than we know it to be and He has provided supernatural mechanisms to ensure that Godly marriage WILL WORK AND WILL BE GOOD. We must simply understand those mechanisms and learn how to apply them in our lives by the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is my prayer that by the time you have read Chapter 6, starting on page, which discusses numerous scriptures relating to marriage issues you will understand that there is a wealth of scripture which will assist you to achieve God's plan for your CURRENT marriage. Application of these scriptures requires that you and your spouse commit yourselves 100% to doing things God's way, to recognize that if things are not working it is because there is a problem on your side NOT with God. If you will tackle this wholeheartedly by FAITH with a commitment to God to work it out, I have no doubt that the marriage that will await you on the other side of this Jordan will truly be a land flowing with milk and honey! A land of great joy and blessing which will be a true witness to the people of God AND to the people of this world!

1. PUTTING AWAY VERSUS DIVORCE

Malachi 2:1-17 states:

- 1 *"And now, O priests, this commandment is for you.*
- 2 *If you will not hear, and if you will not take it to heart, to give glory to My name," says the LORD of hosts, "I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have cursed them already, because you do not take it to heart.*

- 3 *"Behold, I will rebuke your descendants and spread refuse on your faces, the refuse of your solemn feasts; and one will take you away with it.*
- 4 *Then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant with Levi may continue," says the LORD of hosts.*
- 5 *"My covenant was with him, one of life and peace, and I gave them to him that he might fear Me; so he feared Me and was reverent before My name.*
- 6 *The law of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and equity, and turned many away from iniquity.*
- 7 *"For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.*
- 8 *But you have departed from the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi," says the LORD of hosts.*
- 9 *"Therefore I also have made you contemptible and base before all the people, because you have not kept My ways but have shown partiality in the law."*
- 10 *Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another by profaning the covenant of the fathers?*
- 11 ***Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, for Judah has profaned the LORD'S holy institution which He loves: he has married the daughter of a foreign god.***
- 12 *May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who does this, being awake and aware, yet who brings an offering to the LORD of hosts!*
- 13 *And this is the second thing you do: **you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and crying; so He does not regard the offering anymore, nor receive it with goodwill from your hands.***
- 14 ***Yet you say, "For what reason?" Because the LORD has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you have dealt treacherously; yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant.***
- 15 ***But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.***
- 16 ***"For the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence," says the LORD of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."***
- 17 *You have wearied the LORD with your words; yet you say, "In what way have we wearied Him?" In that you say, "Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them," or, "Where is the God of justice?" (NKJ)*

This passage of scripture specifically states that God hates divorce, it also states that marriage to daughters of a foreign God, that is unbelievers, is an abomination in God's sight. It also condemns those who pervert the Word of God by saying that those who do evil are good in the sight of the Lord. There is much in this passage for the modern church to consider in the light of what is presented in this book.

In the King James Version, Malachi 2:16 states that God hates "Putting Away" rather than divorce:

16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth **putting away**: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously. (KJV)

Most other translations use the word "divorce" instead of "putting away". There is a difference in scripture. Appendix K, lists all scriptures in which the word "divorce" or it's derivatives is used in most translations but which the King James translates as "put away" or a derivative thereof. It is important to understand that there is a clear distinction between putting away (sending a wife away for a reason that is not scriptural) and divorce of a wife for scriptural reasons as set out below.

Matthew 19:9 in the King James Version summarizes our Lord's position on putting away succinctly:

19 "And I say unto you, Whosoever **shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.**" (KJV)

Thus we see that Jesus Himself declares putting away to be wrong in the sight of God and declares that those who put away for reasons other than fornication (physical or spiritual) on the part of the other partner will be committing adultery.

Mark 10:1-12 in the King James Version states:

- 1 And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.
- 2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to **put away his wife?** tempting him.
- 3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?
- 4 And they said, **Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.**
- 5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.
- 6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.
- 7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;
- 8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.
- 9 **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**
- 10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.
- 11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.
- 12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. (KJV)

This passage does not include the reference to porneia (fornication) contained in Matthew 5:32, Matthew 19:9, as grounds for divorce, however, it serves to place the discussion in its proper context. Note that in verse 2 the Pharisees ask Jesus "Is it lawful for a man to **put away** his wife". When Jesus asks in verse 3 what Moses commanded, they reply in verse 4 that "Moses suffered to write **a bill of divorcement**, and to put her away." This is a distortion of the scriptures, as Deuteronomy 24:1 clearly states :

1 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes **because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house,** (NKJ)

The key concept here is "uncleanness" comparable to "fornication" or "porneia" in Matthew. This is distinctly different to "putting away" which relates to sending the wife out of the house for little or no reason. It appears that in Jesus time the Pharisees had so corrupted the Word of God that uncleanness was being taken in its widest and most liberal sense. All Jesus did in Mark 10, Matthew 5 and Matthew 19 was to set the record straight about what the Mosaic Law ACTUALLY stated. In particular, in Mark 10:2, where the question specifically relates to putting away, the correct answer is that a man may NOT put away his wife, as reported. However, if there is fornication, a man may DIVORCE his wife.

We see the same distinction in 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 in the King James Version:

10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, **Let not the wife depart from her husband:**
11 **But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.**
12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.
13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.
14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.
15 **But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.** (KJV)

This passage refers to wives departing or husbands putting away their wives. Again, in such cases the woman is told that **she may NOT remarry**, she must remain single or else return to her husband. Clearly this is again referring to separation which is NOT related to fornication / porneia or uncleanness as discussed elsewhere in this chapter. On the other hand if an UNBELIEVING spouse departs the believing spouse is free to marry again BUT it is NOT for the believing spouse to depart UNLESS there is porneia!

A detailed discussion of adultery and porneia, the treachery which will give rise to a scriptural basis for divorce. Any "divorce" which does not result from porneia (fornication / treachery) is not divorce, it is "putting away". **The vast majority of so-called divorces in the world today are not divorce they are putting away and therefore the vast majority of those who consider themselves divorced and who have remarried are living in adultery and may well be on their way to a part in the lake of fire and brimstone for eternity.**

It should be clearly apparent to all readers that a man taking a second or additional wives is not porneia and is therefore not grounds for divorce. A woman who leaves her husband because he has taken another wife has no scriptural basis to do that and a man who leaves his wife because he has found another woman also has no scriptural basis. They are married in the sight of God and remain married after the husband has taken other wives.

As a consequence of the false doctrine of enforced monogamy it appears that millions, if not billions, of souls may well be on their way to experience a part in the lake of fire and brimstone and many well meaning pastors and church leaders may find themselves facing a severe judgment for preaching lies and causing many to stumble.

Mark 9:42-44 states:

42 ***"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.***

43 ***"If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched--***

44 ***"where 'Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'*** (NKJ)

2. SCRIPTURAL DIVORCE

The previous section defines the difference between putting away and divorce. In particular it is noted that a large number of the verses which in most translations refer to "divorce" in actual fact refer to "putting away". Accordingly, most of what is referred to as "divorce" in the church today is, in fact, putting away.

True scriptural divorce is defined in Deuteronomy 24:1-4:

1 ***"When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some **uncleanness** in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house,***

2 ***"when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's wife,***

3 ***"if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife,***

4 ***"then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. (NKJ)***

The word "uncleanness", Strong's number 6172 `ervah- is defined by Brown-Driver-Brigg's as:

nakedness, nudity, shame, pudenda, genitalia

a) pudenda (implying shameful exposure)

b) nakedness of a thing, indecency, improper behavior

c) exposed, undefended (figurative)

This is the same word translated "**nakedness**" throughout Leviticus 18 and 20 quoted in section with regard to sexual sin. This would seem to correlate closely with the word "porneia" used by Jesus in Matthew 19:9. In other words, in Matthew 19:9 and the other related scriptures in the "New

Testament", Jesus was simply confirming and elaborating on Deuteronomy 24:1 by saying that divorce is only permitted in the event of "uncleanness" or "porneia" and that putting away a wife under other conditions is not divorce it is putting away and therefore gives rise to adultery.

It seems clear to me that with this understanding much of the confusion about what constitutes scriptural divorce should be cleared up. Divorce is NOT permitted if a man takes another wife unless he fails to take care of the first wife as discussed with regard to Exodus 21:10 . It is also not permitted if either spouse decides they no longer love one another, as discussed in section with regard to Deuteronomy 21:15-17. It is only permitted in the case of significant and persistent unfaithfulness or treachery. In practice for the Christian and speaking from experience, it seems that Yahweh will only permit a Christian man or woman to divorce after many years of seeking to heal the marriage and fervent prayer and intercession for the sinning spouse. We have a "new and better covenant" (Hebrews 8:6):

*6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established on better promises. (NKJ)*

Surely more is expected of us in the area of marriage? We have the Holy Spirit dwelling within the temple of God within us, we have tongues and the gifts of the Spirit, we have the atoning sacrifice of Jesus for our sin's, we have the name of Jesus to use in our petitions to the Father and in taking authority over the forces of darkness. Overall, we surely have much more going for us than the people of "Old Testament" times and therefore more is expected of us.

Consider Luke 12:42-51:

42 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?"

43 "Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

44 "Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

45 "But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk,

46 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

*48 "But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. **For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.***

49 "I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

50 "But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!

51 "Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. (NKJ)

Surely it is clear "**For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more**", furthermore, Jesus says that He came to "send fire on the earth" and that He did NOT come to bring peace on earth!! Does this not tell us that being a Christian will be more demanding than being a Jew before the time of Jesus. Does it also not

tell us that Christians will be more severely judged? Can we not therefore infer that more will be required before Yahweh permits us to divorce?

I must most sincerely counsel any person considering divorce to reconsider their position carefully and only proceed with secular divorce if they are ABSOLUTELY certain that it is Yahweh's will for their lives. Likewise, it seems to me that people who are divorced in the sight of the state may not always be divorced in the sight of God. For example, a speeding ticket issued to a person who was not speeding can be squashed in court. In the same way, a certificate of divorce for which there is no scriptural basis may be squashed in the court of heaven! In such a case it could be conceivable that Yahweh would require the spouses to return to one another and confess and repent of their adultery!

Taking Deuteronomy 24:1 further, a Christian man who has God's permission to divorce may issue a "certificate of divorce" immediately although legally he would still need to go through the legal divorce process in order to remove all yoke's between himself and his former wife. It would appear that a woman seeking a divorce is likely to require to go through the full legal divorce process in order to obtain a certificate of divorce. How she would act if her husband refuses to give her a certificate of divorce but God tells her to divorce is uncertain - it would appear that she would have to walk by faith in this situation.

3. THE WIFE OF ONE'S YOUTH CONTRASTED WITH THE IMMORAL WOMAN

Proverbs 5:1-23 states:

- 1 *My son, pay attention to my wisdom; lend your ear to my understanding,*
- 2 *That you may preserve discretion, and your lips may keep knowledge.*
- 3 ***For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil;***
- 4 ***But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.***
- 5 ***Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of hell.***
- 6 *Lest you ponder her path of life-- her ways are unstable; you do not know them.*
- 7 *Therefore hear me now, my children, and do not depart from the words of my mouth.*
- 8 *Remove your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house,*
- 9 *Lest you give your honor to others, and your years to the cruel one;*
- 10 *Lest aliens be filled with your wealth, and your labors go to the house of a foreigner;*
- 11 *And you mourn at last, when your flesh and your body are consumed,*
- 12 *And say: "How I have hated instruction, and my heart despised correction!*
- 13 *I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me!*
- 14 *I was on the verge of total ruin, in the midst of the assembly and congregation."*
- 15 ***Drink water from your own cistern, and running water from your own well.***
- 16 ***Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets?***
- 17 ***Let them be only your own, and not for strangers with you.***
- 18 ***Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth.***
- 19 ***As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and always be enraptured with her love.***
- 20 *For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, and be embraced in the arms of a seductress?*
- 21 *For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He ponders all his paths.*
- 22 *His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, and he is caught in the cords of his sin.*

23 He shall die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray. (NKJ)

We see here a stark contrast between the impact of adultery or fornication OR unGodly so-called "remarriage" and marriage to the wife of one's youth about whom it is said "***As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and always be enraptured with her love.***"

Clearly the statements here with regard to the wife of one's youth assume that she is NOT an immoral woman otherwise Jesus is quite clear, the husband is entitled to divorce her and, in the light of the statements in this proverb, such a husband should have no difficulty in deciding that the marriage should come to an end. This same reverse principle of understanding the definition of an immoral woman, one who can (and should) be divorced can be applied to other scriptures.

Consider also Proverbs 7:1-27:

- 1 *My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you.*
- 2 *Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye.*
- 3 *Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.*
- 4 *Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your nearest kin,*
- 5 ***That they may keep you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words.***

- 6 *For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice,*
- 7 *And saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, a young man devoid of understanding,*
- 8 *Passing along the street near her corner; and he took the path to her house*
- 9 *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.*

10 And there a woman met him, with the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.

11 She was loud and rebellious, her feet would not stay at home.

12 At times she was outside, at times in the open square, Lurking at every corner.

13 So she caught him and kissed him; with an impudent face she said to him:

- 14 *"I have peace offerings with me; today I have paid my vows.*
- 15 *So I came out to meet you, diligently to seek your face, and I have found you.*
- 16 *I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of Egyptian linen.*
- 17 *I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.*
- 18 *Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; let us delight ourselves with love.*
- 19 *For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey;*
- 20 *He has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home on the appointed day."*

21 With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him.

22 Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,

23 Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would cost his life.

24 Now therefore, listen to me, my children; pay attention to the words of my mouth:

25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths;

26 For she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men.

27 Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death. (NKJ)

Clearly such a woman is anything but a virtuous wife, and is reasonably not the sort of woman that a man should or would want to remain married to.

By extension it would appear that a person of either gender married to a spouse who is an active, practising witch, wizard or Satanist would almost certainly be permitted by the Lord to divorce. Although, even in such cases I would counsel that the spouse concerned should seek the Lord's guidance. There are testimonies of believing spouses who have faithfully served their unbelieving spouses for decades with the love of God and have finally been rewarded by seeing their loved ones come to salvation, sometimes when one or other spouse is on their death bed. What treasure it must be to see the soul of a loved one in heaven for eternity in return for having laid down one's life in prayer and service. There can be no general rule, only God knows the heart of man and only He can determine the point at which a woman who is joined to a man can be separated.

4. CASES WHERE PUTTING AWAY IS PROHIBITED

In various sections of this book certain scriptures have been cited where a man may never "put away" his wife:

Deuteronomy 22:16-19 in the King James Version states:

16 And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;

17 And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him;

*19 And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; **he may not put her away all his days.** (KJV)*

A man who falsely accuses his wife of not being a virgin may never put her away.

Consider also Deuteronomy 22:28-29 in the King James version:

28 If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

*29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, **he may not put her away all his days.** (KJV)*

A man who takes the virginity of a woman may never put her away.

Clearly, in neither case does this prevent a man from DIVORCING a woman for fornication / porneia.

5. THE UNLOVED WIFE

One of the most difficult scriptures for the modern church to accept in the context of what is taught in these pages must surely be the provisions for an unloved wife:

Deuteronomy 21:15-17 states:

- 15 *"If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, both the loved and the unloved, and if the firstborn son is of her who is unloved,*
- 16 *"then it shall be, on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, that he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the true firstborn.*
- 17 *"But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his. (NKJ)*

Here we have another passage with explicit provision for a man to have two wives at least.

In addition, we have explicit provision for one of those wives to be **unloved!!!** Surely this must squash the idea of one perfect partner, the idealistic searching for wife after wife and husband after husband, scrapping each previous relationship in the process. Surely we are clearly taught by the scriptures recorded in these pages that once a man has married a woman they are married for life barring some very specific situations which permit divorce? **However those situations are such that the implication is that one partner is almost certainly irrevocably committed to spend eternity in Hell and is dragging the other partner down with them! In most other cases divorce is not an option and those that remarry after such a form of "divorce", in actual fact "putting away", are committing adultery. Surely the response of the disciples to Jesus in Matthew 19:10-11, rings true:**

- 10 *His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."*
- 11 *But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given: (NKJ)*

Perhaps it is better not to marry? It is certainly better not to marry lightly or hastily or for the wrong reasons.

It is certainly necessary before marriage that we search our hearts in order to be clear that we are indeed making a life-time commitment.

It is certainly critical that we pray diligently to the Father in the name of the Son in order to ensure that the person we intend to marry is, indeed, the person that Yahweh would have us marry and that the time for marriage is as we have understood it.

It is certainly vital that we "lean not to our own understanding", **Proverbs 3:5:**

- 5 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; (NKJ)*

that we "look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen", **2 Corinthians 4:18:**

18 *while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (NKJ)*

etc.

A hasty and ill-conceived marriage that is not of God but is borne out of lust or other wrong motive, may well be the most eternally dangerous thing that anyone can do!

A case history of a man who personally fell into the trap of a relationship, born out of wrong thinking and wrong teaching, which lasted for twenty five years before the Almighty Creator, in His mercy and His grace delivered him. He states that such a relationship is a hell that he would not desire for his worst enemy. **It is a hell borne out of false doctrine and wrong ideas resulting from the perverted teachings that Satan has infiltrated into the Christian church over nearly two thousand years. It is a hell which I pray those who read this book will start to take active steps in prayer and spiritual warfare to overturn.**

6. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF DIVORCE

Insofar as divorce in the sight of God is only permissible following serious treachery or spiritual unfaithfulness on the part of the offending spouse, those whom the Lord permits to divorce may well require considerable ministry with regard to spiritual, emotional and psychological healing.

Perhaps more importantly, the case history clearly highlights the need for certain specific actions on a spiritual level. These are discussed from a scriptural view point in subsequent sections.

Briefly the following minimum actions are required following divorce:

- a. A formal certificate of divorce must be issued by the husband, not necessarily a court order but a letter will suffice. However, for legal reasons a court divorce should be obtained if the couple are married by the church or state. If they became one flesh through sexual intercourse then a letter will suffice.

If the woman is the one seeking divorce this presents certain problems for which the guidance of the Holy Spirit should be sought. In some cases it may be acceptable for the wife to send a letter confirming a discussion, however I can envisage situations in which there may be problems. Since we have not ministered in all possible situations it is not possible to give more detailed guidance at this time although we have ministered in situations where the Lord has extended grace and treated relationships as terminated without any formal contact with the other party.

- b. The one flesh bond must be broken by prayer in agreement requesting the Lord to sever the tie by His Grace. This is not a demonic bond and cannot be cut and it cannot be renounced. It can only be severed IF the Lord has permitted the divorce. The Lord should be asked to sever the bond at both ends and to cover the resulting spiritual wound with the Blood of Jesus and to heal the wound.
- c. All marriage vows and promises must be renounced and cut off unless there are promises or vows which God requires to be fulfilled.
- d. The soul tie should be cut off at both ends.
- e. All blood line curses and demons which passed down or transferred through the male blood line to the female must be cut off.
- f. All curses spoken against the believing partner by the offending partner and associates must be regularly cut off. Note that curses are not necessarily Satanic or occultic. Any swear words or curses or bad statements made against you have spiritual force and will continue to operate against you until they are cut off.

- g. All demons transferred between the parties must be bound and cast out but first all sin which may give the demons the right to remain must be confessed and repented of. This is a complex subject and you are advised to consult with a prophetic minister gifted in deliverance. Note that in this day deliverance is a very specialised prophetic ministry and there are not many who have truly in depth knowledge and experience in this field.
- h. Any familiar spirits associated with the relationship must be bound and cast out.
- i. In the event of true divorce as a consequence of porneia it appears that God's agape love between the couple may be dead by the time God permits a divorce. In the case of adultery the individual concerned may find themselves in the same situation as the person in the case history, that is with the Agape love of God fixed in their heart towards the person with whom they committed adultery. In this case, according to my current understanding of scripture, there is no basis to cut off this bond of love. The only way to deal with this bond of love in this life is to direct that love to Holy Spirit inspired prayer for the good of the object of that love AND their rightful spouse. In other words pray for blessings on their marriage, healing to their marriage, etc. **Prayer that somehow that person may be released to marry you is VERY UNLIKELY to be the will of God, not matter how much you love them!**

7. MARRIAGE TO A DIVORCED WOMAN

A. CHALLENGES IN DETERMINING GOD'S WILL FOR MARRIAGE

Marriage to a divorced woman or, for that matter, any woman who is not a virgin is spiritually challenging. I pray that by now you will realise that there are numerous good reasons why as a man you would not want to consummate a relationship with a woman who is not a virgin. The case history should be more than sufficient to convince you of this. Equally, if you are such a woman I would hope that you would appreciate that there is no way that you want to join yourself to another man unless you are 100% certain that the Lord has permitted it.

My advice has to be, unless you are totally satisfied that it is God's perfect will AND His perfect time, do not even think about consummating a relationship with any person. In fact this applies just as much if the woman concerned is a virgin but there are much, much greater spiritual implications of getting it wrong if she is not.

As you consider this subject you will realize that it is an area that is ripe for religious, "Talmudic laws" designed to assist you make this decision. At the end of the day there are numerous principles contained in this document which will assist you to ascertain when it is probably NOT safe to consummate a relationship. But, since they all rely on the facts at your disposal and the completeness of the memory and the integrity of the woman involved, there is no absolute guideline other than ASK THE LORD TO SHOW YOU. Consider the cases of Jacob married to Leah, presented to him fraudulently and the case of the woman seduced under hypnosis who only discovered over twenty years later that she was married in the sight of God to a man she did not even remember ! Only The Holy Spirit knows the truth and only He can be trusted to guide you.

B. FLEECES AND SEEKING TO BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

This is an area where I truly believe the Lord expects you to ask Him for signs and expects you to lay out fleeces for him. By way of example, consider the sign that Eliezer requested in **Genesis 24:12-14**:
12 Then he said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham.

- 13 *"Behold, I stand here by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water.*
- 14 *"Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'-- let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master." (NKJ)*

Consider also the sign's requested by Gideon in Judges 6:36-40:

- 36 *So Gideon said to God, "If You will save Israel by my hand as You have said--*
- 37 *"look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said."*
- 38 *And it was so. When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water.*
- 39 *Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once more: Let me test, I pray, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only on the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew."*
- 40 *And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on all the ground. (NKJ)*

When I married my present wife I asked the Lord repeatedly for sign's. The most dramatic and most positive which I received a week before I married her was as follows:

- i. I knew that she was going to attend a church meeting at a venue which housed 5,000 people and where typically at least 3,000 people could be expected to attend. She did not know that I would be there.
- ii. I knew that I had attended that venue for some years and sometimes struggled to locate people, even if I knew they were at the meeting. Sometimes I would go for months and not see someone, then when I met them and asked them where they had been they would tell me they had been at every meeting.
- iii. I asked the Lord that if it was His will for me to marry her He would arrange for me to meet her in a way that I would know it was from Him and if it was not His will for me to marry her that he would ensure that I did not meet her.
- iv. When I arrived I was led to sit in my car for about ten minutes. Eventually I entered the service nearly ten minutes after it started and, as I was walking amongst a sea of people along a broad aisle, a person came towards me and forced me to step aside. As I did so a voice exclaimed my name in my ear. I looked down and then to the side and I was about ten centimeters from standing on the toe of my bride to be!
- v. Subsequently she told me that she had only been in that seat for about a minute!

As a consequence of this we both had a high level of confidence that it was the Lord's will for us to marry. Nevertheless we both prayed repeatedly for further signs in the days that followed and, before we consummated the marriage we knelt at the side of the bed and asked the Lord to show us if it was his will for us to marry or not. At that point the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the Power of God fell upon both of us and we consummated the marriage in His presence and under His anointing.

In considering what tests to lay before the Lord one should be wary of presumption or foolishness. Pray reverently and ask the Lord for guidance. Confess your own inability to discern His will in the matter and ask Him to show you what tests to apply. Generally a fleece needs to be something which in the natural is so unlikely to occur that it could only come about by God, this is a characteristic of all the tests given above. A young woman in Isaac's day would not normally give water to a stranger, let alone water his camels also. Dew does not normally fall only on a fleece or fall on everything other than a fleece. A person does not normally nearly walk into someone they are hoping to meet in a 5,000 seat auditorium without looking carefully.

Generally it is wise to ask for more than one indication, particularly in the case of marriage where the consequences of an error are potentially disastrous in this life AND the next.

It is vital not to pray out loud when you speak to the Lord about these things and it is also vital that you do not communicate or write down what you have asked Him.

Genesis 24:42-45 reports Eliezer as saying:

42 *"And this day I came to the well and said, 'O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go,*

43 *'behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw water, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,"*

44 *'and she says to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,"-- let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.'*

45 *"But before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew water. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' (NKJ)*

Clearly Eliezer spoke to the Lord **in his heart**, so should you. Recognize that the air is polluted with Satan's demons and fallen angels and that they will take notice of all that you say, all that you do and all that you write. I have personally experienced situations where I have foolishly stated something in an unsanctified atmosphere and seen a situation turn against me within hours. If you speak out your request to God for proof or you write it out, Satan is quite likely to provide you with a counterfeit sign to get you to sin. If you walk by faith and pray without doubting, God will answer you.

James 1:6-8 states:

6 *But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.*

7 *For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;*

8 *he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (NKJ)*

C. SOME SCRIPTURES ON BEING LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD

Following are a few relevant scriptures:

1 Thessalonians 3:11:

11 *Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, **direct** our way to you. (NKJ)*

2 Thessalonians 3:5:

5 *Now may the Lord **direct** your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ. (NKJ)*

John 16:13:

13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will **guide** you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. (NKJ)

Psalm 48:14:

14 For this is God, our God forever and ever; he will be our **guide** even to death. (NKJ)

Isaiah 49:10:

10 They shall neither hunger nor thirst, neither heat nor sun shall strike them; for He who has mercy on them will **lead** them, even by the springs of water He will guide them. (NKJ)

Isaiah 58:11:

11 The LORD will **guide** you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. (NKJ)

Romans 8:14-15:

14 For as many as are **led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.**

15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." (NKJ)

You can only be led by the Spirit of God to the extent that you are willing to humble yourself and admit that you do not know what His will is and to admit that you are utterly dependent on Him to help you avoid making a terrible mistake. Do not demand that He lead you. Ask in faith without doubting and be alert for supernatural events in your every day life which will surprise and encourage you.

Whatever you do DO NOT LEAN TO YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING (Proverbs 3:5) and DO NOT look at the things that are seen (2 Corinthians 4:18). Ask Him to open the eyes of your spirit to see what He is doing in the world around you by His Spirit!

8. CRITICAL CONCLUSION : GOD'S LAWS FOR DIVORCE NECESSITATE THAT A MAN IS PERMITTED TO TAKE MORE THAN ONE WIFE

From the preceding discussion I pray that you will see that God's plan for marriage is very different to that which is taught by the church today. At the same time, I pray that you will see that what is being taught by the church today regarding marriage is destructive and great heresy. There can be little doubt that we are in the last days of this age and that a new age is about to dawn.

Jeremiah 23:1-6 clearly states regarding the dawning of the new age:

- 1 "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the LORD.
- 2 Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the LORD.
- 3 "But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.
- 4 "I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking," says the LORD.

- 5 ***"Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.***
- 6 ***In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (NKJ)***

These are the same days that Isaiah 4:1 refers to. Truly these are days in which the truth of the Lord's perfect plan for marriage will be restored. As outlined in the article "Wow! So that's how Jesus loves me!", reproduced in Appendix Q, God's plan for the marriage of the church to His Son, The Lord Jesus Christ requires that we understand the fullness of His plan for marriage in our lives on earth. As we do this we will truly see heaven on earth as we learn to live in harmony and unity in Godly marriages where divorce is unheard of!

Remember Luke 18:27:

27 ***But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." (NKJ)***

Surely, Jeremiah 29:11, as over quoted and misapplied as it is, has relevance to that which is soon to come:

11 ***For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. (NKJ)***

If your marriage seems impossible take heart, He is able to turn it around. If you are in marriage to an unrepentant sinner, take heart, the Lord may see fit to deliver you soon. But, whatever your current marital situation, expect to see change. If you are a man, expect The Lord to call on you to extend your covering to a number of women. If you are a married woman, expect The Lord to require you to "share" your husband (remember he never belonged to you in the first place). If you are an unmarried woman, expect The Lord to provide a husband, only expect that he is likely to already have a wife.

If you will change your paradigm and humble yourself before Almighty God, expect to see GOOD THINGS. However, if you stubbornly insist in retaining your false doctrines and heresies, be ware the wrath of God is about to be unleashed on this earth as never before!

1 Peter 2:1-8 states:

- 1 *Therefore, laying aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,*
- 2 *as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,*
- 3 *if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*
- 4 ***Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,***
- 5 *you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*
- 6 ***Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."***
- 7 ***Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,"***
- 8 ***and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. (NKJ)***

CHAPTER 5 : IS MONOGAMY SCRIPTURAL?

1. DOES GOD ACTIVELY PERMIT A MAN TO TAKE MORE THAN ONE WIFE?

On a more direct note, does God actively permit a man to take more than one wife?

Exodus 21:10-11 clearly answers this question:

10 "If he takes another wife, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights.

11 "And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out free, without paying money. (NKJ)

Surely if God makes specific provision there really cannot be further doubt? At the same time it does appear clear that if he diminishes the food, clothing or marital privileges of an existing wife who is a servant, and therefore presumably of a free born wife, she may go free. Thus significant sustained deprivation would appear to constitute grounds for divorce.

2. DID THE PROVISIONS NOT CHANGE UNDER THE "NEW TESTAMENT"

There is a widely spread belief that the New Testament changed God's law with regard to marriage and introduced a dispensation of monogamy.

In order to give proper consideration to this belief it is important to consider a number of principles:

A. WHEN DID THE NEW COVENANT COME INTO EFFECT?

From the preceding discussions of covenant above it seems quite clear that a covenant cannot be cut without shedding of blood **Hebrews 9:18-20** states:

*18 Therefore **not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood.***

19 For when Moses 20 saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you." (NKJ)

Can there be any doubt that the covenant of Jesus with mankind or with the children of Abraham was cut with Jesus' blood at Calvary? At the last supper, Jesus is reported as saying:

Matthew 26:26-28:

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."

*28 "For this is **My blood of the new covenant**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (NKJ)*

Mark 14:22-24:

22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.

*24 And He said to them, "**This is My blood of the new covenant**, which is shed for many. (NKJ)*

Luke 22:19-20:

19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is **the new covenant in My blood**, which is shed for you. (NKJ)

1 Corinthians 11:23-27

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "**This cup is the new covenant in My blood**. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. (NKJ)

Can there be any doubt that Jesus was introducing the New Covenant the night before He went to Calvary? If this is the case must we not accept that most of what is reported in the Gospels relates to Jesus ministering as a prophet under the Old Covenant?

3. JESUS WALKED THE EARTH AS A PROPHET UNDER THE MOSAIC COVENANT

Jesus Himself refers to Himself as a prophet in Luke 13:31-35:

31 On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You."

32 And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.'

33 "Nevertheless **I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.**

34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!

35 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" (NKJ)

Surely there can be no doubt that in verse 33 Jesus is referring to Himself perishing in Jerusalem and is describing Himself as a prophet?

Accordingly we must surely accept that Jesus was bound by the Law of Moses until the moment that He died on the cross and was pierced with the spear. Then and then, and only then, as the fulfilment of the Law of Moses was the New Covenant fully consummated!

4. JESUS FULFILLED THE LAW

Jesus Himself said in Matthew 5:17-20:

17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. **I did not come to destroy but to fulfil.**

- 18 *"For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.*
- 19 *"Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*
- 20 *"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. (NKJ)*

Again, in Luke 24:36-48 AFTER HIS RESURRECTION Jesus says:

- 36 *Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."*
- 37 *But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.*
- 38 *And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"*
- 39 *"Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."*
- 40 *When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.*
- 41 *But while they still did not believe for joy, and marvelled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"*
- 42 *So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.*
- 43 *And He took it and ate in their presence.*
- 44 *Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.**"*
- 45 *And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.*
- 46 *Then He said to them, "**Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,***
- 47 *"and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*
- 48 *"And you are witnesses of these things. (NKJ)*

In Acts 24:10-16 it is reported of Paul:

- 10 *Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: "Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a judge of this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself,*
- 11 *"because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship.*
- 12 *"And they neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city.*
- 13 *"Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me.*
- 14 *"But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, **believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.***
- 15 *"I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.*

16 *"This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.
(NKJ)*

Can there be any doubt at all that Jesus came to fulfil the Law (of Moses, that is the Torah) and the Prophets? Surely it is foolish to suggest that He changed God's principles of marriage without telling us? Surely if He had made such a great change He would have made it very clear?

5. WHAT JESUS DID CHANGE

Furthermore, we see that Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses when, as a man who had walked without sin His entire life, as the fulfilment of the sacrificial requirements for a **"lamb without spot or blemish"** He died on the cross so that He could introduce the "New and better Covenant"?

Leviticus 9:1-3 states regarding the sanctification of the first High Priest and the Tabernacle:

- 1 *It came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel.*
- 2 *And he said to Aaron, "Take for yourself a young bull as a **sin offering** and a ram as a burnt offering, **without blemish**, and offer them before the LORD.*
- 3 *"And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying, 'Take a kid of the goats as a sin offering, and **a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish**, as a burnt offering, (NKJ)*

1 Peter 1:17-21 states:

- 17 *And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;*
- 18 *knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,*
- 19 *but with **the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.***
- 20 *He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you*
- 21 *who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (NKJ)*

Can there be any doubt that 1 Peter 1:17-21 is referring to the lamb without blemish referred to in Leviticus 9:3 and in many other passages of the Torah?

Accordingly we must surely conclude that the "New Covenant" only came into effect at the time of Jesus Crucifixion and not before and therefore anything reported in the Gospels took place under the "Old Covenant"? Surely, if Jesus changed the law of Moses with regard to marriage it must take place after the Gospel's?

None of this comment in any way diminishes who Jesus is or what He accomplished at Calvary. It simply places the correct perspective on the power and the weaknesses of the Mosaic Covenant and what was actually accomplished at Calvary. Hebrews 8, 9 and 10 seem to be clear:

Hebrews 7:11 to 8:10 and 9:1 to 10:21 state:

CHAPTER 7

- 11 *Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?*
- 12 ***For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law.***
- 13 *For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.*
- 14 ***For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.***
- 15 ***And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest***
- 16 ***who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life.***
- 17 ***For He testifies: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."***
- 18 ***For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness,***
- 19 *for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.*
- 20 *And inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath*
- 21 *(for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: "The Lord has sworn and will not relent, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek'"),*
- 22 ***by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.***
- 23 *Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing.*
- 24 *But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.*
- 25 *Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*
- 26***For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;***
- 27 ***who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.***
- 28 *For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.*

CHAPTER 8

- 1 ***Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,***
- 2 ***a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.***
- 3 ***For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer.***

- 4 *For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law;*
- 5 *who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."*
- 6 ***But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.***
- 7 *For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.*
- 8 ***Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah--***
- 9 ***"not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord.***
- 10 *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."*

CHAPTER 9

- 1 ***Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.***
- 2 *For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;*
- 3 *and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All,*
- 4 *which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;*
- 5 *and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.*
- 6 *Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services.*
- 7 ***But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance;***
- 8 *the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.*
- 9 ***It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience--***
- 10 ***concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.***
- 11 *But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.*
- 12 *Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.*
- 13 *For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,*

- 14 **how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**
- 15 **And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.**
- 16 For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.
- 17 For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.
- 18 Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood.
- 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,
- 20 saying, "**This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you.**"
- 21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.
- 22 **And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.**
- 23 Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.
- 24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;
- 25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another--
- 26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
- 27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
- 28 **so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.**

CHAPTER 10

- 1 **For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.**
- 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins.
- 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.
- 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.
- 5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.
- 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you had no pleasure.
- 7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come-- in the volume of the book it is written of Me-- to do Your will, O God.' "
- 8 Previously saying, "**Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law),**

9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second.

10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,

16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,"

17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, (NKJ)

Can there be any doubt that Jesus came to institute a new Priesthood in which the physical sacrifices of the old covenant were replaced with forgiveness obtained through confession and repentance with Jesus as the mediator who has purchased that forgiveness with His blood? But we must still confess and repent in order to obtain that forgiveness. This is accomplished by the Grace of God, not by our own efforts. Likewise can there be any doubt that He came to institute a new temple not built with human hands? **How is it possible to argue that Jesus came to change the law so that where a man could have more than one wife it now became a sin and where the law said that adultery was a sin leading to death it was now something which could be treated lightly? Is this not perverse and the most appalling abomination?**

6. OTHER COVENANTS

Furthermore, Genesis reports a series of Covenants between God and Adam, Noah, Abraham (at least two - referred to in sections and), Isaac and Jacob before He cut the "Old Covenant" with Moses and the people of Israel in Sinai after the Passover. He subsequently entered into various covenants throughout the Hebrew scriptures. Thus the Mosaic covenant was indeed the first covenant cut publicly with the children of Israel at Sinai and the second was cut in the flesh of the spotless Son of God at Calvary. Each covenant is explicit and unambiguous in terms of the terms and scope of the covenant. Why should the "Christian" covenant be any different?

7. "OLD TESTAMENT" VERSUS NEW TESTAMENT

In considering the question of whether God caused the laws concerning marriage to change in the "New Testament", we have already established that there seem to be solid grounds to state that the four Gospels are not part of the New Covenant, they are actually the closing chapters of the Old Covenant!

Should we not also consider the definition of Old and New Testament? The reality is that these happen to be divisions in every bound Bible that most Christians are likely to encounter. But remember, even in the time of the apostles, right through to John in Revelation, THERE WERE NO BOUND BOOKS! Each document was written on a separate scroll. Accordingly surely it is correct to conclude that the divisions in the modern Christian Bible are a convenient device INSERTED BY MAN! Therefore may I suggest to you that those divisions have no spiritual or scriptural relevance?

Surely the real division that those two pages signify is that those passages labelled as "Old Testament" are in fact the scriptures recorded in Hebrew and Aramaic and those labelled "New Testament" are those recorded in Greek? Surely that is the only significance of those dividing pages in your Bible? Surely then we would more correctly refer to those two sections of our Bibles as the "Hebrew Scriptures" and the "Greek Scriptures"?

BUT, WAIT, it goes beyond that. Some time ago, half way around the world in a small town in upstate New York the Lord led me to a small bookshop which had on sale a "Holy Bible from the Ancient Eastern Text : George M Lamsa's Translation from the Aramaic of the Peshitta" published by Harper Collins. This Bible, it is claimed, is based on Aramaic manuscripts of similar or greater antiquity to the Greek manuscripts used for most English translations. It is stated that these Aramaic texts have been in constant use in the lands East of Israel where they still speak Aramaic in certain areas. Furthermore, Mr Lamsa was a resident of those lands and Aramaic was his home language and furthermore, certain words quoted as being spoken by Jesus are Aramaic, still spoken today. Convincing arguments are presented to demonstrate that the so-called New Testament was originally recorded in Aramaic and then translated into Greek and that the Aramaic text, called the "Peshitta" is therefore a more original and more reliable source than the Greek texts! If this is the case, which I personally believe it is, then surely even the distinction made above is spurious and we cannot argue at all that there is any basis for putting any form of separator between Malachi and Matthew? Since this information is of such vital importance to every Christian I have taken the liberty of reproducing the preface and introduction to this Bible verbatim with certain passages emphasised, in appendix I. I encourage readers to read this text carefully. It provides information which should cause every Christian to examine carefully a wide variety of modern teachings which are called into question if Mr Lamsa's claims are correct, which, as stated above, I believe that they are!

Readers should also be aware that a visit to a Jewish book store is likely to result in you being offered the Torah, the Psalms (Tehillim), the Proverbs (Mishley), the Major and Minor Prophets (Nach), etc in a series of distinct, separately bound volumes. The Jews do not regard the books that we label as "Old Testament" as being one clump of books, they regard them as a number of very distinct collections of books to which they attach very different levels of spiritual authority. Thus the five books of Moses (the Torah), Psalms and Proverbs are accepted as being given by God directly through His prophets, primarily Moses, David and Solomon. Whereas the other books, while still accepted as scripture given by God, are not accorded the same status. Surely we would do well to recognize this distinction!?

Accordingly, may I respectfully suggest to you that any interpretation which lumps an argument into "Old Testament" versus "New Testament" is open to question? **May I also suggest to you that this seems to demonstrate quite clearly the extent to which mankind has had the audacity to impose their own boxes on God based on some arbitrary labels on some dividers in a bound volume! We should be very wary of developing doctrine based on these labels!**

8. WHY IS CHRISTIANITY VIEWED AS HERESY BY THE JEWS?

The preceding discussion raises some issues concerning the validity of many claims by Western Christians concerning the "New Testament" scriptures of the Bible being written in Greek. Many passages in this book call other teachings of the modern church into question and, I believe, clearly shows them to be at best misguided, at worst lies from the very pit of hell. At this point, it is perhaps instructive to consider what the Jews think of the Christians.

Some years ago as I became increasingly aware of the essential Jewishness of Jesus Christ I purchased a series of volumes of Jewish translations of the scriptures. In "The Living Nach, Later Prophets", "A New Translation Based on Traditional Jewish Sources", published by Moznaim Publishing Corporation, New York / Jerusalem, I encountered a number of statements in the commentary which caused me to really examine myself and the religious order of Christianity to which I claim to belong. I call Christianity a religious order because I believe that Jesus Christ did not come to create Christianity, He came to give us faith in the Living God, not a label. Be that as it may. This translation offers the following scriptures and accompanying commentary:

Ezekial 35:1-4 states:

- 1 *God's Word came to me:*
- 2 *Mortal, set your face against Mount Seir* and prophesy against it.*
- 3 *Say to it, The Lord God says: I am against you, Mount Seir. I will stretch My hand against you and make you totally desolate.*
- 4 *I will make your towns a ruin. You will be desolate, and you will know that I am God.*

The commentary states:

Mount Seir, east of the Dead Sea, home of the Edomites, who were descended from Esau and were traditionally Israel's enemies. The Rabbis identified Edom with Rome, and, by extension, with the Christian Church, who continued in their predecessors' hatred of Israel.

I pray that as you read the above that you will consider how it can be that Christians have come to be regarded as the enemies of Israel and to be considered to hate Israel. Israel is God's chosen people, He has said that He will never forsake them and yet they view the people who claim to have a personal knowledge of the Jews own Messiah as their enemies! I have encountered a number of Jews, all of whom know the extent to which Christians have turned from the principles of scripture to follow doctrines of demons including changing the Sabbath from the last day of the week (Saturday) to the first day of the week, reserved by the Romans for worship of the Sun (Sunday), legislating monogamy and many other heresies. If you care to ask and to listen, they will tell you of mass murder committed by the Christian crusaders in the Middle Ages in the name of Christ and many other atrocities which no man who knows the God of the Bible and fears Him would dream of committing. Devout Moslems could tell you similar things and you might care to ask yourself whether it is a coincidence that Mohammed came to prominence, with a number of wives some of who were Jewish and other Christian, at about the same time that the Roman Emperor Justinian, in the name of Jesus, declared it illegal for a man to have more than one wife!?

9. ARE BISHOPS, DEACONS AND ELDERS RESTRICTED TO ONE WIFE?

Three of the key scriptures on which the doctrine of monogamy is based and from which it is argued that Jesus changed the law, are those in Timothy and Titus:

1 Timothy 3:1-16 states:

- 1 *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.*
- 2 *A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;*
- 3 *not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;*
- 4 *one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence*
- 5 ***(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);***
- 6 *not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.*
- 7 *Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*
- 8 *Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,*
- 9 *holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.*
- 10 *But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.*
- 11 *Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.*
- 12 *Let deacons be the **husbands of one wife**, ruling their children and their own houses well.*
- 13 *For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*
- 14 *These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;*
- 15 *but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*
- 16 *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory. (NKJ)*

Titus 1:4-11 states:

- 4 *To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.*
- 5 *For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you--*
- 6 *if a man is blameless, the **husband of one wife**, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.*
- 7 *For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,*
- 8 *but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,*
- 9 *holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*
- 10 *For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,*

11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. (NKJ)

Surely this is definitive, these passages clearly state that a Bishop (or overseer), a Deacon and an elder must all be the husband of one wife?

However, if we consider the Greek word translated "one" we find that it is the word *mia* (mee'-ah) number 3391.

Strong Defines 3391 *mia* (mee'-ah);

irregular feminine of 1520; one or first:

KJV-- a (certain), + agree, first, one, X other.

Surely there is a great difference between "one" and "first". If we apply the latter interpretation does that not mean that the Bishop, Deacon or Elder must be the "**husband of his first wife**"? In other words, he should NOT BE DIVORCED or have put away his wife! Does this not, in turn, suggest that he should have the love of God shed abroad in his heart to the extent that, if necessary, he can love even a difficult wife through times of difficulty and tension and bring her out on the other side? Would such a man not be well suited to dealing with typical tensions and difficulties in the body of Christ?

Can this interpretation be confirmed?

Matthew 28:1:

*1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the **first** day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. (KJV)*

Here *mia* is applied to the **first** day of the week.

Matthew 26:69:

*69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and **a** damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. (KJV)*

Here we see another interpretation of *mia* "a" damsel, could we read the passages in Timothy and Titus to say that a Bishop, etc **should be the husband of "a" wife - in other words they must be married?** In other words, if a man does not know how to lead a family with a least one wife, he cannot lead a congregation?

Mark 12:42:

*42 And there came a **certain** poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. (KJV)*

There are several passages where *mia* is translated "certain". It certainly is not uniformly translated "one".

Luke 24:1:

*1 Now on the **first** day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. (NKJ)*

John 20:1:

1 On the **first** day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. (NKJ)

Acts 4:32:

32 Now the multitude of those who believed were **of one** heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. (NKJ)

In this case one is used to relate to a group of people who were "one". So it would appear that mia can also signify a group of people who are of one heart - surely this could apply to a man with several wives who are of "one" heart with him?

1 Corinthians 16:2:

2 On the **first** day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. (NKJ)

Titus 3:10:

10 Reject a divisive man after the **first** and second admonition, (NKJ)

Here we see two chapters further on in the SAME book of the Bible the translators have translated mia as "first" not one! **Can it not reasonably be argued that the translators filtered the translation through the doctrine of monogamy that prevailed at the time they translated the scriptures?** A complete set of scriptures containing the word "mia" are contained in Appendix F.

This interpretation of mia is supported by Vines with regard to "FIRST":

mia ^3391^, a grammatically feminine form of *heis*, "one," is translated "first" in certain occurrences of the phrase "on the first day of the week," e. g., <Luke 24:1; 1 Cor. 16:2>; cf. A, and see DAY; also in <Titus 3:10>, of a "first" admonition to a heretical man. See ONE.

D. Noun. (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

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Surely these words and these passages of scripture cannot be used to construct a doctrine of monogamy?

10. THE DISTINCTION IN SCRIPTURE BETWEEN WIFE AND WIVES, WOMAN AND WOMEN

Another aspect of answering the question regarding whether Jesus changed the law concerning marriage and instituted monogamy revolves around the word used to describe a wife or woman, singular or plural in scripture. The Hebrew word used for this purpose is "ishshah" of which Vines states:

'ishshah ^802^, "woman; wife; betrothed one; bride; each." This word has cognates in Akkadian, Ugaritic, Aramaic, Arabic, and Ethiopic. It appears about 781 times in biblical Hebrew and in all periods of the language.

This noun connotes one who is a female human being regardless of her age or virginity. Therefore, it appears in correlation to "man" (ish): "...she shall be called Woman, because she was

*taken out of Man" <Gen. 2:23>. This is its meaning in its first biblical usage: "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man ['adam], made he a woman, and brought her unto the man" <Gen. 2:22>. **The stress here is on identification of womanhood rather than a family role.** (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)*

Can there be any doubt from this that "ishshah" does not indicate the marital status of a woman?

The Greek word for woman, women, wife and wives is "gune", Strong's number 1135.

Strong's Definition of 1135 gune (goo-nay');

probably from the base of 1096; a woman; specially, a wife:

KJV-- wife, woman.

Thayer's Definition of 1135 gune-

1) a woman of any age, whether a virgin, or married, or a widow

2) a wife;

used of a betrothed woman

With regard to the Greek word translated WIFE, WIVES, Vines states:

*1. gune ^1135^ denotes (1) "**a woman, married or unmarried**" (see WOMAN); (2) "a wife," e. g., <Matt. 1:20; 1 Cor. 7:3,4>; in <1 Tim. 3:11>, RV, "women," the reference may be to the "wives" of deacons, as the KJV takes it.*

*2. gunaikeios ^1134^, an adjective denoting "**womanly, female,**" is used as a noun in <1 Pet. 3:7>, KJV, "wife," RV, "woman."#*

Note: In <John 19:25> the article stands idiomatically for "the wife (of)"; in <Matt. 1:6>, the article is rendered "her that had been the wife (of)."

(from Vine's, op cit)

With regard to the Greek word WOMAN, (there is no separate reference for Women since the same root is translated in both forms) Vines states:

*1. gune ^1135^, **for which see also WIFE, is used of a "woman" unmarried or married, e. g., <Matt. 11:11; 14:21; Luke 4:26>, of a "widow"; <Rom. 7:2>; in the vocative case, used in addressing a "woman," it is a term not of reproof or severity, but of endearment or respect, <Matt. 15:28; John 2:4>, where the Lord's words to His mother at the wedding in Cana, are neither rebuff nor rebuke. The question is, lit., "What to Me and to thee?" and the word "woman," the term of endearment, follows this. The meaning is "There is no obligation on Me or you, but love will supply the need." She confides in Him, He responds to her faith. There was loving-kindness in both hearts. His next words about "His hour" suit this; they were not unfamiliar to her. Cana is in the path to Calvary; Calvary was not yet, but it made the beginning of signs possible. See also <4:21; 19:26>.***

Appendix F contains more comprehensive analysis of both "gune" (Greek) and the Hebrew words for wife, wives, woman and women from Vines Expository Dictionary. From consideration of this text I hope that you will see that there is absolutely no basis on which to interpret any scripture with either

the word ishshah or the word gune as indicating singular or plural, married or unmarried unless other words in the context clearly make this visible.

If we apply this information to the earlier scriptures concerning "one" wife, we find the following to be possible:

1 Timothy 3:2

2 *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of [first wives / a wife] one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; (NKJ)*

1 Timothy 3:12

12 *Let deacons be the husbands of [first wives / a wife] one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (NKJ)*

Titus 1:6

6 *if a man is blameless, the husband of [first wives / a wife] one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (NKJ)*

Surely it is reasonable to apply such an interpretation to a society where it was common place for a man to have more than one wife? A more appropriate translation might then be "**still married to his first wives**", **if indeed the intention is not that a bishop, deacon or elder should be married and have AT LEAST one wife!**.

Appendix G contains a list of most, if not all the scriptures in which the Greek word Gune occurs. Readers are encouraged to consider the extent to which many of those passages in which the singular form "wife" is used could just as well be translated to read "wives" and also to recognize that in many, if not most cases where the words woman or women are used the word wife or wives could be substituted.

Consider Ephesians 5:22-33 as a particularly strong example of how a passage could be translated taking account of the true meaning of "gune":

22 **Wives**, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

23 *For the husband is head of the wife [wives], as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.*

24 *Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.*

25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,*

26 *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,*

27 *that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

28 *So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife [wives] loves himself.*

29 *For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.*

30 *For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.*

31 *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife [wives], and the two shall become one flesh." (Authors note: take account of the discussion of 1 + 1 = 1)*

32 *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

33 *Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife [**wives**] as himself, and let the wife [**wives**] see that she [**they**] respects her husband. (NKJ) (Authors note: "she" is a translators addition)*

As best I can determine, in Jesus day there was virtually no such thing as an adult woman who was not married unless she was a widow (seems to include those legitimately divorced) or a harlot. It would appear that a thirty year old virgin was to all intents and purposes unheard of. It seems that girls reached puberty at about twelve years old, at which time they were regarded as "virgins" - women ready for intercourse but not yet married. At this point they were betrothed and at age twelve and a half they were married. Since a man was permitted to have more than one wife there was absolutely no statistical reason for her not to marry and since marriages were arranged by the parents there was no emotional reason. **People were set free from having to earn marriage or prove themselves before marriage.** They made a life-time commitment to one another KNOWING that they had to make it work and knowing clearly what the role of husband and wife was. **This is a very different situation to what we encounter today and we must guard against measuring what God ordained against the understanding of our current age.**

Surely in the light of this it is not possible to argue that any passage based on the word "*gune*" in the Greek scriptures or on the word "*ishshah*" in the Hebrew and Aramaic can be taken to indicate that a man may only have one wife?

11. SOME OTHER "NEW TESTAMENT" SCRIPTURES

There are various other scriptures which confirm that the Greek scriptures did not change the provisions of the Torah with regard to marriage.

A. REGARDING AN APOSTLE BEING ACCOMPANIED BY ONE OF HIS WIVES

Regarding an apostle being accompanied by one of his wives, 1 Corinthians 9:5 states:

5 *Do we have no right to take along **a believing wife**, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? (NKJ)*

Surely "a believing wife" would be a very awkward way of saying "take along our wives" if each only had one wife. The implication here seems to be that some of the apostles were travelling in the company of one of their wives. Alternatively, in the light of preceding sections, it is possible that this scripture reads "their believing wives" where here the emphasis is on the wives being believers, not on the number of wives.

B. BROTHERS MARRYING DECEASED BROTHER'S WIVES

Jesus was specifically asked about what is commonly called "Levirate marriage", the principle whereby if a man died his brother should marry his wife and raise up children in his name. It seems reasonable to conclude that in general it would be very unlikely for a man's brother/s not to be married at the time that he died. Therefore, in order to give effect to this provision of the Torah it was necessary for most brothers to take the woman as wife in addition to however many wives he already had. Jesus reply is reported in **Matthew 22:23-30:**

23 *The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him,*

24 *saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.*

- 25 *"Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother.*
- 26 *"Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh.*
- 27 *"Last of all the woman died also.*
- 28 *"Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For **they all had her.**"*
- 29 *Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.*
- 30 *"For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. (NKJ)*

This same incident is reported almost verbatim in Mark 12:19-25 and Luke 20:27-36 which are included in Appendix H. Note that in the book of Ruth, verse 4:13, when Ruth married Boaz, in terms of this Torah principle there is also no indication that Boaz was unmarried, he almost certainly was already married.

It is instructive to consider the semantics of all three passages, they refer to "had" as indicating marriage, confirming the relevance of sexual intercourse and also confirming that marriage entails sexual intercourse. By implication it appears that where Jesus says *"in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven"* He is saying that there is no sexual intercourse and not that the relationship between the two people as brother and sister in Christ comes to an end. Rick Joyner in his book "The Final Quest" reports a vision in which he was transported to the third heaven and spoke to people there. From this it is clear that all relationships remain and grow, not only the relationship between people who were husband and wife. **This again serves to demonstrate the importance of not interpreting the Word of God based on our modern understanding of words and concepts. We must get back to God's meaning!**

C. A MAN HAVING SEX WITH HIS FATHER'S WIFE (NOT HIS MOTHER)

1 Corinthians 5:1 states:

- 1 *It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles-- that a man has **his father's wife!** (NKJ)*

This scripture clearly refers to a man "having" intercourse with "his father's wife". Surely this refers to a wife other than the man's mother otherwise it would state "a man has his mother"? By implication the man's father had at least two wives, whether both were married to him at the same time is unknown but it is quite possible.

D. A MAN MARRYING TEN VIRGINS AT ONE TIME

Matthew 25:1-13 reports Jesus as saying:

- 1 *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.*
- 2 *"Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*
- 3 *"Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,*
- 4 *"but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*
- 5 *"But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*
- 6 *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'*
- 7 *"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.*

- 8 *"And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'*
9 *"But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'*
10 *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*
11 *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'*
12 *"But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*
13 *"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*
(NKJ)

This text has been examined previously, but it bears revisiting. Jesus is surely drawing a parallel between when He will marry many millions of believers at the end of the age at the same time. Surely then this passage must be interpreted as indicating that the man concerned was planning to marry ten virgins at one feast and in one night. **It may totally blow our paradigm of what is acceptable behaviour but dare we consider inappropriate what our Lord Himself describes as appropriate?**

The fact that it is unlikely that many men would want to marry ten women, let alone ten at the same time, is not the issue, the fact is, scripture does not prohibit it!

E. BURNING WITH PASSION

1 Corinthians 7:8-9 states with regard to those who are unmarried:

- 8 *But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am;*
9 ***but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.*** (NKJ)

There is no reference to them finding an unmarried man. It simply states that where a man and an unmarried woman burn with passion for one another it is better that they should marry, or that where a man or a woman burns with passion, they should get married.

In 1 Corinthians 7:39-40, Paul goes on to state:

- 39 *A wife is bound to her husband by law as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she will, only [provided that he too is] in the Lord.*
40 *But in my opinion [a widow] is happier (more blessed and to be envied) if she does not remarry. And also I think I have the Spirit of God."*

Here we observe Paul expressing his personal opinion that a widow and presumably a legitimately divorced woman, will be happier if they remain single. The implication is clearly that there are women who will be happier in this state and therefore, by extension, it would seem that the principle of covering is not a rigid spiritual requirement.

We also observe a clear instruction that if she is to remarry the man she marries must also be a believer. This is a qualification inherent in the passages in Deuteronomy and Ruth cited earlier. Clearly Ephesians 5:22-33 can only apply if husband and wives are believers. Accordingly we must again deduce that all that we have studied here indicates the necessary implication that a woman must marry a believing man who already has a wife or wives rather than marry an unbeliever.

There is no indication of any limitation on whether the man is already married. 1 Corinthians 7:9 can, in fact, only be fulfilled if a man can take more than one wife as at all times in history it seems that there have been fewer men than women in the faith.

F. MARRIAGE OF WIDOWS

1 Timothy 5:9-14 states with regard to younger widows:

- 9 *Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man,*
- 10 *well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.*
- 11 *But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry,*
- 12 *having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith.*
- 13 *And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.*
- 14 *Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully. (NKJ)*

Again there is no indication of a constraint to the effect that a widow should only remarry if there is an unmarried man available. Presumably the same applies to a woman who is divorced because of the porneia of her husband.

12. RESPONSE TO SOME OTHER OBJECTIONS

A. "GENESIS 2:24 SAYS TWO THEREFORE IT DICTATES MONOGAMY"

On more than one occasion, in seeking to discuss this matter, I have been informed in no uncertain manner that Genesis 2:24 states that "the two shall become one" and that "this says two and not three or more".

Genesis 2:21-25 reads:

- 21 *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.*
- 22 *Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.*
- 23 *And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."*
- 24 *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and **they shall become one flesh.***
- 25 *And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (NKJ)*

This passage says "**they shall become one flesh**", not two, so the scripture reference is wrongly cited. Furthermore, some years ago I was led by the Lord to the "Sternberg Center for Judaism, 80 East End Road, North Finchley, N32SY, London, England (telephone, London 0181-349-4731 / 2568, fax 0181-343-2558) where I consulted with Dr Piet van Boxel, an authority on Jewish law and scripture, who informed me that there is absolutely no basis to suggest that Genesis 2:24 can be taken to indicate

that a man can only have one wife. He also provided me with further documentary evidence concerning the history of monogamy imposed on the world by the Roman church and the introduction of the Rabbinic decree with regard to monogamy.

Genesis 2:24 cited in Matthew 19:4-6 states:

- 4 *And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'*
- 5 *"and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and **the two shall become one flesh**'?"*
- 6 *"So then, **they are no longer two but one flesh**. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." (NKJ)*

Since this passage refers to one man and one woman it is postulated that it dictates that there are clearly two not three. However, this ignores one of the paradoxes associated with the way Yahweh works in this instance for when He says the two shall become ONE.

If we consider the stated arithmetic we find something which, at first glance, is not immediately apparent, that is:

$$1 + 1 = 1$$

if we then apply some basic algebraic notation to this formula we can substitute "(1 + 1)" for 1 and thus we see that:

$$(1 + 1) + 1 = 1$$

in other words, if a man is one flesh with one woman and he joins himself to another woman he and his first woman become one flesh with the second woman. By extension:

$$((((1 + 1) + 1) + 1) + 1) = 1$$

and therefore no matter how many women he joins himself to they are still ONE!

in strict algebraic terms we can state:

$$(1 + 1)^n = 1$$

that is, one man joined to "n" women is still **one** flesh with all of them!

In other words if by adding one to one the answer is one then no matter how many times you add one to one the answer is STILL one!

Clearly Matthew 19:4-6 says nothing about a man NOT having more than one wife, nor do any of the other scriptures which refer to "two become one". **In other words, no matter how many women are joined to the man they are still all one flesh.**

Consider also 1 Corinthians 12:12-14:

- 12 *For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, **being many, are one body, so also is Christ.***

13 *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.*

14 *For in fact **the body is not one member but many.** (NKJ)*

It seems quite clear in this case that in Christ many members are one body, so surely a man with many wives is also one body.

2 Corinthians 11:2 states:

2 *For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to **one husband**, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (NKJ)*

This passage, written to the whole church at Corinth, not one individual, makes it quite clear that all the members of the church at Corinth are betrothed to **one husband**, who is Jesus Christ.

B. ADAM AND EVE - THE IDEAL MARRIAGE

It is argued that since God created Adam and Eve before the fall, then monogamy must be His ideal state and therefore that is what we should strive for. That might be the case but we are not living in that ideal state and surely this is no basis to fabricate a doctrine of monogamy?

Equally, if we accept that Adam and Eve were the only two human beings that Yahweh created then their sons must, of necessity, have married their daughters. If this is the case must we then assume that the ideal state of marriage is for brothers to marry sisters? Surely this is not the case! Leviticus 18:9 states:

9 *'The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, whether born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover. (NKJ)*

Thus, while Yahweh apparently permitted a man to marry his sister in the time of Adam, or his half sister in the time of Abram, by the time of Moses, He prohibited it. Presumably by that time there were sufficient other women to choose from and therefore there would never again be a requirement for close inter marriage. By referring to this as a precedent, even if Yahweh created man and woman such that initially there were only enough women for each man to have one wife, by the time of Moses this was no longer the case.

C. DID ADAM REALLY ONLY HAVE ONE WIFE?

Some years ago, someone posed the question to me about Adam and Eve. I asked God about it and some time later purchased a book entitled "Revelations About Marriage" by Matityahu Glazerson published by the Leonard Himelsein Torah Fund (a Jewish book). On page 37 I found the following statement:

*"Lillit was the name of **Adam's first wife**, who was created before Eve (Heb., Chava). Lillit had another name, Chavya, which in Aramaic means 'snake'."*

I subsequently found a reference to Lillit as Adam's first wife in the New Bible Dictionary and also in "The Chronicles of Narnia" a series of children's books by C.S. Lewis, the widely acknowledged Christian author. This is not to state categorically that Lillit in fact existed but it is perhaps instructive to consider that Genesis 1:26-30 refers to the creation of man and Genesis 2:7 refers to the creation of Adam, Genesis 4:14 reports that Cain said to the Lord that *"anyone who finds me will kill me"*, rather a strange thing to say if, according to the widely accepted understanding, there were only three people

on the earth at that time, viz Adam, Eve and Cain whereas the wording of Cain's statement suggests that there were perhaps many others who would kill him and furthermore, in verse 4:17 reference is made to Cain's wife while there is no reference to Eve bearing any more children. No doubt a highly contentious point and one not central to the theme of this book, but it again highlights the fact that there are many verses of scripture which do not necessarily reconcile with the teachings that are widely accepted. Incidentally, an interpretation that there were two creations of men, one spiritual and one carnal, would resolve the difficulty of the Bible seeming to indicate that Adam and Eve were created approximately 5,000 to 6,000 years ago while there are archaeological records of man dating back at least 20,000 years. However, there are other scriptures which appear to contradict this interpretation and it is not something that I have felt inclined to enquire into further.

D. DID MOSES REALLY HAVE ONLY ONE WIFE?

Another argument that is advanced from time to time relates to an opinion that if Moses, "the man of God" only had one wife, surely that is the preferred state of marriage. Presumably the first response to this is simply that God does not require a man to have more than one wife, He simply permits it. However, having been asked this question I referred it to the Lord. Not long after this I was led into a Christian bookshop and picked up a copy of the "New Bible Dictionary" printed by Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, England and published by Tyndale House Publishers Inc, Wheaton, Illinois, USA, edited by J.D. Douglas, et al.

The book opened at the following passage:

ETHIOPIAN WOMAN

*Married by Moses, whom Aaron and Miriam then criticized (Nu. 12:1). As the last mention of Zipporah is just after the defeat of Amalek (Ex 17) when Jethro returned her to Moses (Ex 18), it is possible that she subsequently died. Moses then taking this 'Cushite woman' as his second wife, **unless Moses then had two wives.** 'Cushite' is usually taken as 'Ethiopian' (cf *CUSH, *ETHIOPIA); if so, she probably left Egypt among the Israelites and their sympathizers. It is also, perhaps, possible to derive 'Cushite' from Kushu and Heb. Cushan, associated with Midian (Hab 3:7); if so, this woman might be of allied stock to Jethro and Zipporah."*

I personally have no doubt that this was in response to my question of the Lord and that He has clearly shown me that Moses indeed had two wives. I did not buy the book, the next day I encountered the book again at a church that I had never previously visited where a cousin was visiting preacher. I felt impressed to purchase the book as a witness. **I have no doubt that Yahweh wants it known that Moses did, indeed, have two wives and that Yahweh approved.**

Numbers 12:1-16 reads:

- 1 Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman.**
- 2 So they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it.**
- 3 (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.)**
- 4 Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out.**
- 5 Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward.**

- 6 Then He said, "Hear now My words: if there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.
- 7 **Not so with My servant Moses; he is faithful in all My house.**
- 8 **I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"**
- 9 **So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed.**
- 10 And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper.
- 11 So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned.
- 12 "Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!"
- 13 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "Please heal her, O God, I pray!"
- 14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut out of the camp seven days, and after that she may be received again."
- 15 So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey on till Miriam was brought in again.
- 16 And afterward the people moved from Hazeroth and camped in the Wilderness of Paran. (NKJ)

There is certainly nothing in this passage to indicate that Moses only had one wife and equally there is nothing to indicate that if he indeed had two wives (or more for that matter) that Yahweh was in any way displeased with him. **Surely, if nothing else, this scripture should cause one to think very carefully about speaking out against a man of God who claims that Yahweh has permitted him to take more than one wife?**

E. YAHWEH MARRIED TO ISRAEL AND SAMARIA

Ezekial 23:1-49 states:

- 1 The word of the LORD came again to me, saying:
- 2 "Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother.
- 3 They committed harlotry in Egypt, they committed harlotry in their youth; their breasts were there embraced, their virgin bosom was there pressed.
- 4 Their names: Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister; they were Mine, and they bore sons and daughters. As for their names, Samaria is Oholah, and Jerusalem is Oholibah.
- 5 "Oholah played the harlot even though she was Mine; and she lusted for her lovers, the neighboring Assyrians,
- 6 Who were clothed in purple, captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses.
- 7 Thus she committed her harlotry with them, all of them choice men of Assyria; and with all for whom she lusted, with all their idols, she defiled herself.
- 8 She has never given up her harlotry brought from Egypt, for in her youth they had lain with her, pressed her virgin bosom, and poured out their immorality upon her.
- 9 "Therefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, for whom she lusted.

- 10 *They uncovered her nakedness, took away her sons and daughters, and slew her with the sword; she became a byword among women, for they had executed judgment on her.*
- 11 *"Now although her sister Oholibah saw this, she became more corrupt in her lust than she, and in her harlotry more corrupt than her sister's harlotry.*
- 12 *"She lusted for the neighboring Assyrians, captains and rulers, clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men.*
- 13 *Then I saw that she was defiled; both took the same way.*
- 14 *But she increased her harlotry; she looked at men portrayed on the wall, images of Chaldeans portrayed in vermilion,*
- 15 *Girded with belts around their waists, flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like captains, in the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity.*
- 16 *As soon as her eyes saw them, she lusted for them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea.*
- 17 *"Then the Babylonians came to her, into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their immorality; so she was defiled by them, and alienated herself from them.*
- 18 *She revealed her harlotry and uncovered her nakedness. Then I alienated Myself from her, as I had alienated Myself from her sister.*
- 19 *"Yet she multiplied her harlotry in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, when she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt.*
- 20 *For she lusted for her paramours, whose flesh is like the flesh of donkeys, and whose issue is like the issue of horses.*
- 21 *Thus you called to remembrance the lewdness of your youth, when the Egyptians pressed your bosom because of your youthful breasts.*
- 22 *"Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, I will stir up your lovers against you, from whom you have alienated yourself, and I will bring them against you from every side:*
- 23 *The Babylonians, all the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa, Koa, all the Assyrians with them, all of them desirable young men, Governors and rulers, captains and men of renown, all of them riding on horses.*
- 24 *And they shall come against you with chariots, wagons, and war-horses, with a horde of people. They shall array against you Buckler, shield, and helmet all around. 'I will delegate judgment to them, and they shall judge you according to their judgments.*
- 25 *I will set My jealousy against you, and they shall deal furiously with you; they shall remove your nose and your ears, and your remnant shall fall by the sword; they shall take your sons and your daughters, and your remnant shall be devoured by fire.*
- 26 *They shall also strip you of your clothes and take away your beautiful jewelry.*
- 27 *'Thus I will make you cease your lewdness and your harlotry brought from the land of Egypt, so that you will not lift your eyes to them, nor remember Egypt anymore.'*
- 28 *"For thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I will deliver you into the hand of those whom you hate, into the hand of those from whom you alienated yourself.*
- 29 *'They will deal hatefully with you, take away all you have worked for, and leave you naked and bare. The nakedness of your harlotry shall be uncovered, both your lewdness and your harlotry.*
- 30 *'I will do these things to you because you have gone as a harlot after the Gentiles, because you have become defiled by their idols.*
- 31 *'You have walked in the way of your sister; therefore I will put her cup in your hand.'*

- 32 *"Thus says the Lord GOD: 'You shall drink of your sister's cup, the deep and wide one; you shall be laughed to scorn and held in derision; it contains much.*
- 33 *You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, the cup of horror and desolation, the cup of your sister Samaria.*
- 34 *You shall drink and drain it, you shall break its shards, and tear at your own breasts; for I have spoken,' says the Lord GOD.*
- 35 *"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back, therefore you shall bear the penalty of your lewdness and your harlotry.' "*
- 36 *The LORD also said to me: "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations.*
- 37 *"For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols, and even sacrificed their sons whom they bore to Me, passing them through the fire, to devour them.*
- 38 *"Moreover they have done this to Me: They have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and profaned My Sabbaths.*
- 39 *"For after they had slain their children for their idols, on the same day they came into My sanctuary to profane it; and indeed thus they have done in the midst of My house.*
- 40 *"Furthermore you sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and there they came. And you washed yourself for them, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments.*
- 41 *"You sat on a stately couch, with a table prepared before it, on which you had set My incense and My oil.*
- 42 *"The sound of a carefree multitude was with her, and Sabeans were brought from the wilderness with men of the common sort, who put bracelets on their wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads.*
- 43 *"Then I said concerning her who had grown old in adulteries, 'Will they commit harlotry with her now, and she with them?'*
- 44 *"Yet they went in to her, as men go in to a woman who plays the harlot; thus they went in to Oholah and Oholibah, the lewd women.*
- 45 *"But righteous men will judge them after the manner of adulteresses, and after the manner of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands.*
- 46 *"For thus says the Lord GOD: 'Bring up an assembly against them, give them up to trouble and plunder.*
- 47 *'The assembly shall stone them with stones and execute them with their swords; they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn their houses with fire.*
- 48 *'Thus I will cause lewdness to cease from the land, that all women may be taught not to practice your lewdness.*
- 49 *'They shall repay you for your lewdness, and you shall pay for your idolatrous sins. Then you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.'" (NKJ)*

Note that in this passage Yahweh refers to two sisters, Israel and Samaria who were His. The imagery that is used seems to clearly suggest that He is referring to them as wives. **If God Himself can describe Himself as having two wives, how can any person who claims to fear God suggest that monogamy is the only form of marriage that is of God or that a man having more than one wife is sin?**

F. THE PROBLEMS OF LEAH AND RACHEL

In the scriptures concerning Jacobs' marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29 to Genesis 31 we see a number of difficulties between the two women. It could be argued that this results from more than one wife, however, there was an issue of deception and various other factors which are surely more likely to be at the root of the strife than the issue of Jacob having multiple wives.

What is more notable about this instance is that from Genesis to Revelation there are only a very few instances of strife between wives. Sarah and Haggar in Genesis 16 to Genesis 21 and Hannah and Peninnah the wives of Elkanah the father of Samuel the prophet in 1 Samuel 1:1-2 are two further cases. Rather than using these cases to support monogamy should we not marvel at the fact that although reference is made to men with more than one wife throughout scripture from Genesis to Revelation, there are so few instances of strife reported. **Since this is so, should we not rather look to the work of Satan in more recent generations to understand why marriages with several wives have problems and should we not be more honest about the extent of the problems in monogamous marriages?**

CHAPTER 6: SOME OTHER SCRIPTURES ON MARRIAGE ISSUES

Following are a few further scriptures which have some bearing on the subject of this discourse:

1. THE VIRTUOUS WIFE

Proverbs 31:10-31 defines a virtuous wife as follows:

10 Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.

11 The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain.

12 She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.

13 She seeks wool and flax, and willingly works with her hands.

14 She is like the merchant ships, she brings her food from afar.

15 She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants.

16 She considers a field and buys it; from her profits she plants a vineyard.

17 She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms.

18 She perceives that her merchandise is good, and her lamp does not go out by night.

19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hand holds the spindle.

20 She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.

21 She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet.

22 She makes tapestry for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple.

23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.

24 She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants.

25 Strength and honor are her clothing; she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness.

27 She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.

28 Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

29 "Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all."

30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but **a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.**

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates. (NKJ)

It seems clear from this passage that a virtuous wife is one who conducts herself responsibly, brings honour to her husband, is God fearing AND conducts her own business enterprises. Thus it would seem that the "woman's liberation" movement which has demanded greater freedom for women to become involved in commerce, etc are fully justified, Yahweh Himself has ordained such for a virtuous wife. Thus it would seem that the idea of a "kept woman" frequently associated with Western Christianity is not scriptural. In fact many Christian wives who complain that their husbands do not keep them in the manner to which they wish to become accustomed should examine themselves carefully, perhaps their husbands are not generating sufficient revenue to the family purse precisely because the wife should be helping him materially to support the family?

2. THE ONE FLESH BOND

Genesis 2:24 in the Amplified Bible states:

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall become united and cleave to his wife and they shall become **one flesh**. (AMP)

Matthew 19:5-6 in the Amplified Bible states:

5 And said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be united (**joined inseparably**) to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?

6 So they are no longer two, but **one flesh**. What therefore God has joined together, **let not man put asunder** (separate). (AMP)

It is particularly important to note the amplification "joined **inseparably**" in the above passage. Taken together with the phrase "**let not man put asunder**" this starts to reveal the full extent of the one flesh bond as an unbreakable spiritual bond granted by God in order to bind husband and wife together. As the bond intensifies through repeated sexual encounters, so will love also intensify if both parties give themselves to one another in accordance with scripture. 1 Corinthians 6, quoted below clearly reveals that multiple one flesh bonds can coexist. Matthew 19:5-6 clearly indicates that the one flesh bond cannot be broken by man.

A. A MAN CAN BE "ONE FLESH" WITH MORE THAN ONE WOMAN

1 Corinthians 6:15-20 states:

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!

16 **Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."**

17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

18 **Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.**

19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

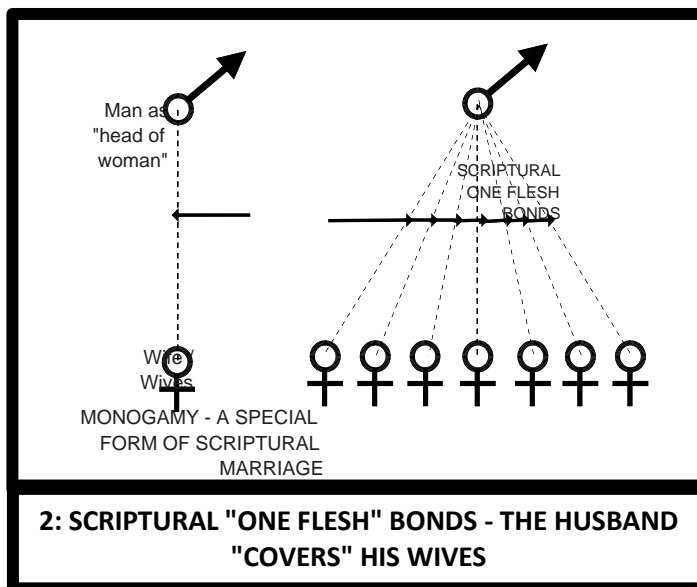
20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (NKJ)

Here we surely see confirmation that many men can become one flesh with a harlot and that a man can become one flesh with more than one woman. We also see the direct correspondence between the sexual act between husband and virgin wife and the new birth resulting in the born again believer becoming one spirit with the Lord Jesus Christ. We also see that becoming one results from sex and not from marriage vows and we see no indication that it is a transitory or reversible state.

B. THE ONE FLESH BOND SUPPORTS AN ORDERLY HIERARCHY OF GOVERNANCE BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

Diagram 2 illustrates the scriptural forms of the one flesh bond. From this it is apparent that a man married to one or more women provides a "covering" and that a man married to several women represents a state of spiritual order which is entirely consistent with the manner in which Yahweh has ordered many things in His word. For example, in Exodus 18:21 it is stated:

"Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. (NKJ)



Throughout scripture one finds reference to hierarchies of this nature instituted by God. Should we not therefore accept that a similar hierarchy is envisaged for marriage? Should we not also recognize the potential instability of monogamy implied by the diagram? A man who is the head of several wives is underpinned by a number of women who are one flesh with him and who intercede for him and assist him to accomplish all that God has called him to do. He is no longer reliant on other men's wives and other strangers to perform tasks which are critical to his mission, he can rely on his own body to assist him.

C. THE HUSBAND AS HEAD OF THE WIFE

Ephesians 5:23-24 states:

23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (NKJ)

1 Corinthians 11:3-15 states:

3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head.

5 But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved.

- 6 For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered.
- 7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.
- 8 For man is not from woman, but woman from man.
- 9 Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.
- 10 For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.
- 11 Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.
- 12 For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.
- 13 Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?
- 14 Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him?
- 15 But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. (NKJ)

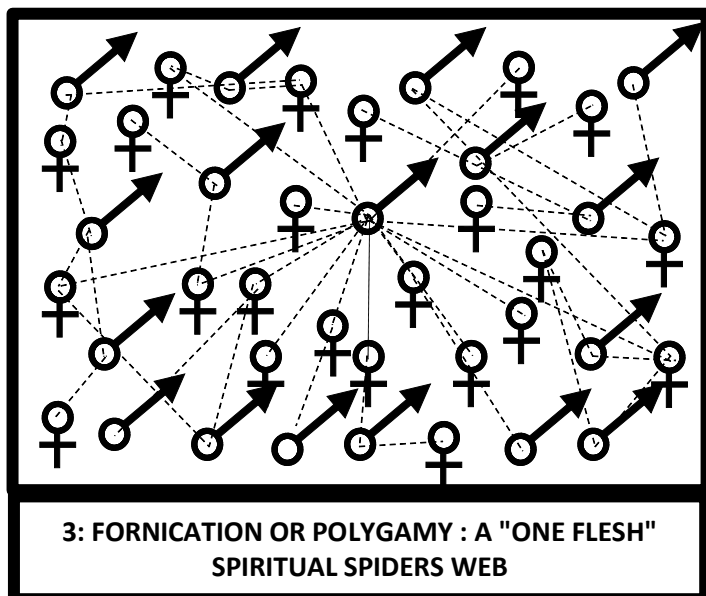
These passages are an extension of **Genesis 3:13-16**:

- 13 And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."
- 14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.
- 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."
- 16 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." (NKJ)

In this last verse we gain greater insight as to why Satan is so determined to have wives rule over their husbands through feminism and enforced monogamy. If a man is limited to one wife he has no recourse to an alternative if that wife seeks to dominate him.

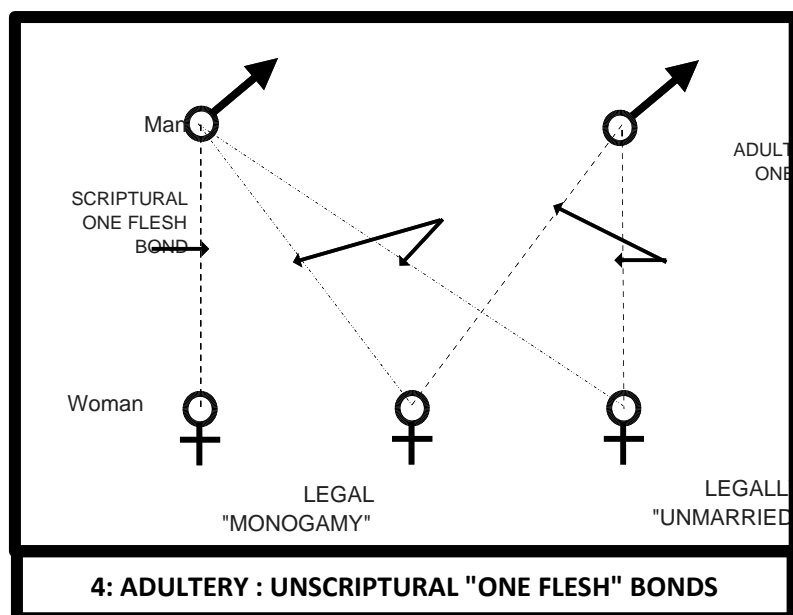
D. THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNGODLY OR UNFULFILLED ONE FLESH BONDS

For as long as a person has one flesh bonds with past sexual partners (whether heterosexual or male-male) that person is caught up in a spiritual spiders web which causes confusion, conflict and torment and which opens the door wide for Satan to attack that person. This is shown diagrammatically in diagram 3. In biological terms this is "polygamy", sexual intercourse of many males with the same group of many females. Paul says that fornication is a sin against your own body and, as you gain an appreciation for the strength of the one-flesh bond you will understand why.



A case history of a man with intense personal experience regarding the one flesh bond. After an extra-marital affair while back slidden and away from God in a traditional church he was eventually brought back from the brink of destruction by God in His Grace and given an opportunity to repent and truly serve Him. After a year and half of intense prayer, much conflicting counsel and general uncertainty the Lord showed him about the one flesh bond through the scriptures cited above and through the book "One Flesh" by Bob Yandian. It is a spiritual bond formed during sexual intercourse, seemingly a spiritual emission in concert with the physical emission. Fully developed it is an incredibly strong, near telepathic, bond which will keep sexual partners together against separation. As far as I have been able to determine it is a bond which cannot be broken by man, it can only be broken by heartfelt, humble petition to Almighty God to extend mercy and grace and break the bond since we are told that no man should put asunder. Perhaps Matthew 19:6 actually signifies that no man is able to put asunder? Unless the bond to be broken results from a failed marriage in an ungodly environment or from adultery or fornication, it seems unlikely that it will be broken under normal circumstances. In this man's experience and in our experience ministering to others, humble petition in the name of Jesus is the only way and then only when there are grounds for the petition which are acceptable in the sight of God. In such a case the person concerned must pray with a humble and a contrite heart with someone praying in agreement.

As far as I have been able to determine this is a very specific prayer and very different to any other prayer that one might pray. Having confessed any sin associated with the one flesh bond, repented of it and received forgiveness, one should then pray along the lines *"Father I acknowledge that I cannot break this one flesh bond with [name]. I ask you in the name of Jesus, by your mercy and your grace, to cut this one flesh bond at my end and at [name]'s. I thank you Lord for setting me free. In Jesus name. Amen."*

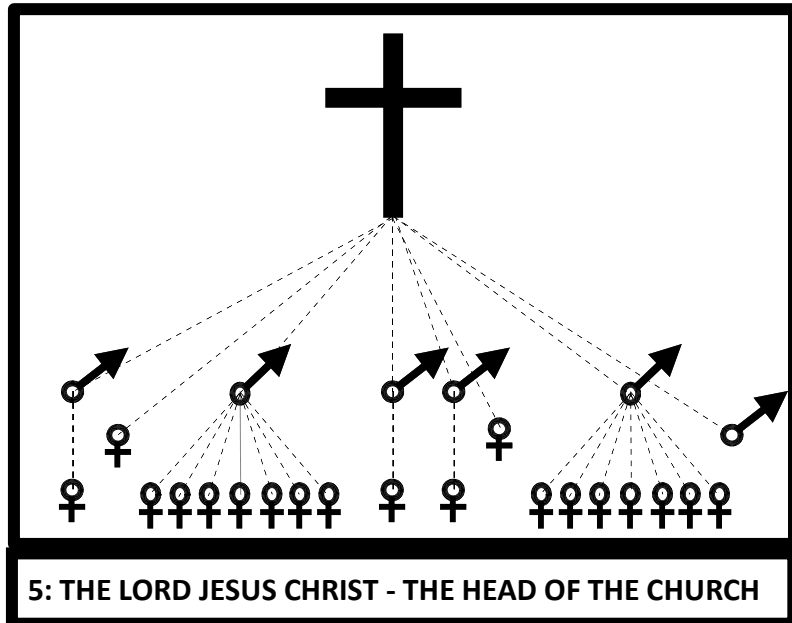


Accordingly, the one flesh bond is a bond that in cases other than true divorce, can only be broken when it has come into existence through sin. clearly demonstrates the basic one flesh network which develops when a woman has sexual intercourse with more than one man. As promiscuity (fornication) increases, the spiders web shown in develops. A person who has had sexual encounters with others and lost contact with them may have grounds for the breaking of this bond. However, a man who has taken the virginity of a woman and then moved on may find that Yahweh requires him to fulfill his scriptural obligation to that woman and take her as wife. If she has subsequently remarried and had children then it may be that she is de-facto divorced and it is possible that Yahweh will release them but it seems that there are also instances where Yahweh may require the wife to return to the man who took her virginity. We have ministered in a situation where after over twenty years of marriage God showed a woman that her marriage was adulterous after He had taken her out of the marriage

and brought her original lover back into her life. In such a situation, unless the one flesh bonds are broken, the woman will never be able to give herself wholeheartedly to her husband and she constantly find herself pulled away in different directions. The same will happen to a man who has one flesh bonds with women who are not living with him as his wives.

A woman who has been promiscuous, an adulteress or a harlot will find herself caught in a spiritual spiders web, enmeshed with every man she has ever had intercourse with and, in turn, enmeshed with all the others each of those has had intercourse with. By extension, men become one flesh with

other men as illustrated in and . This is an abomination in the sight of our Holy and Uncompromisingly Righteous God. People in this situation identify strongly with a metaphor of having invisible elastic ropes attached to them which constantly pull them in every direction and cause them to feel incomplete. Typically it appears that this feeling of incompleteness drives them to constantly seek "love" from new faces, thus compounding the situation.



E. WHY THE ONE FLESH BOND DOES NOT REQUIRE LOVE OR LUST TO BE FORMED

The one flesh bond is an incredibly powerful spiritual force that Yahweh has give mankind to bind husband and wives. A man who takes a wife and has regular intercourse with her, both giving themselves to the other without restraint or qualification, will find that love will grow and become more intense with time to a point where they cannot live without one another and feel incomplete when separated. **This is the one flesh bond, an example of the power of love and Yahweh's wisdom. A marriage consummated without love but entered into with a total commitment on the part of both parties not to withhold anything and to consider only the other party, will become a marriage of intense love.**

Thus love is NOT a prerequisite for marriage. Marriage with a wholehearted commitment to give all that is scriptural to the spouse in marriage IS A PREREQUISITE FOR TRUE LOVE IN MARRIAGE! In fact, it seems to me that so-called "love" between a man and a woman before marriage is never true marital love as Yahweh intended it and, in fact, it may be little better than lust!

F. THE ONE FLESH BOND CREATES A SPIRITUAL UNDERPINNING FOR THE HUSBAND

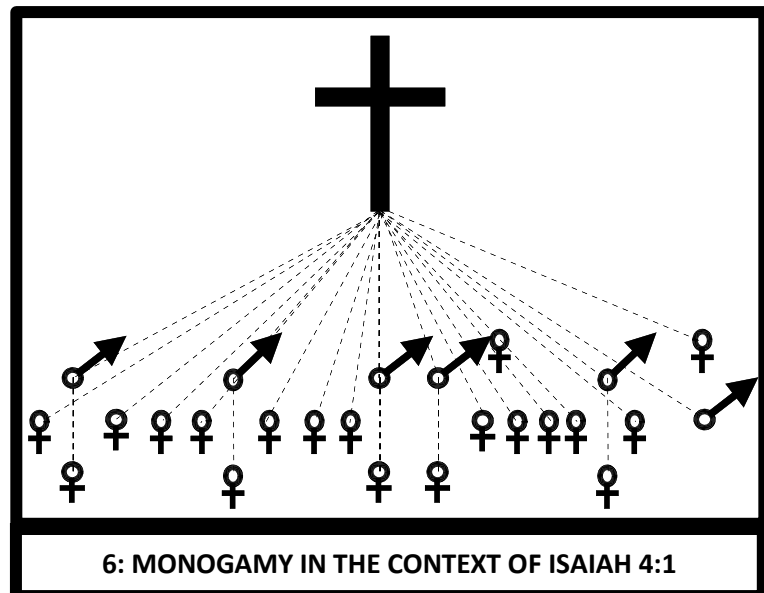
Note also that several women joined with one flesh bonds to one man will be in a state of spiritual balance and harmony. In a sense, the wives of a man are the pillars of his house. 1 Timothy 3:15 states: *15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (NKJ)*

The implication here is that the church (which is a plural entity) is the pillar on which the truth (which is Jesus) rests. Again the imagery would seem to be powerful. A man underpinned by several wives

will be more stable than one standing on a single pillar. As each wife has different God given attributes, so she underpins her husband in a different area of his life and ministry as implied in figure.

Conversely, a man joined to a woman who is joined to other men will find himself experiencing a form of spiritual dislocation and jealousy, exemplified by, which he will be unable to explain.

Furthermore, the one flesh bond creates a spiritual unit or house which, if it is divided, cannot stand. Thus, if a man is not living with a woman with whom he is one flesh his house will be divided and my own experience indicates, is likely to suffer continuous financial lack.



G. ONE FLESH IN MARRIAGE CORRESPONDS TO ONE BODY IN CHRIST

Ephesians 5:31-32, also cites Genesis 2:24 in the context of the relationship between Christ and the church:

31 *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."*

32 *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (NKJ)*

We must surely conclude that the one flesh bond between husband and wife has tremendous spiritual significance!

Consider Romans 12:4-5:

4 *For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,*
5 *so we, being many, are one body in Christ, (NKJ)*

1 Corinthians 10:16-17:

16 *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*

17 *For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread. (NKJ)*

1 Corinthians 12:11-31:

11 *But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.*

12 *For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.*

13 *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.*

14 *For in fact the body is not one member but many.*

- 15 *If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?*
- 16 *And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?*
- 17 *If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?*
- 18 *But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.*
- 19 ***And if they were all one member, where would the body be?***
- 20 ***But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.***
- 21 *And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."*
- 22 *No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.*
- 23 *And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,*
- 24 *but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,*
- 25 *that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.*
- 26 ***And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.***
- 27 ***Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.***
- 28 *And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.*
- 29 *Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?*
- 30 *Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?*
- 31 *But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way. (NKJ)*

Is it not significant that this passage immediately leads into 1 Corinthians 13, which describes in detail the agape love of God? Does this scripture also not make it very clear that God, in His wisdom created people different to perform different functions in the body of Christ? Is it therefore not likely that God has created women different to perform different functions in the "one flesh" of the man? Would this not explain the extent to which men become dissatisfied with the "short comings" of their wives and enter into relationships with other women only to find that they have other shortcomings. Is this not what gives rise to the myth of the ideal "life partner" which God supplies and which pastors preach about and conduct lengthy counselling sessions to assist couples to determine whether they are the ideal fit for one another. If one accepts the scriptural principles contained in this document, surely one must accept that if a man has a need that is not met by his first wife that is to be expected, it is no reflection on his first wife, it simply reflects that God never intended one woman to necessarily complement one man. The response to this problem is therefore merely to take another wife, particularly in the present age where Isaiah 4:1, quite clearly indicates that there will be seven times more women than men in the Body of Christ and that these women will desire to marry and will be willing and able to supply their own food and clothing:

And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach."

Does this not remove the "performance pressure" from women constantly fearing being compared with other women and rejected because of some imaginary greater perfection. Does it not remove the competition and jealousy which occurs between so many women? How can a woman truly submit to and reverence her husband when she lives in constant fear of being compared with other women and being rejected at any time because monogamy forces her husband to choose. How can a woman extend the agape love of God to an unmarried sister in Christ if she constantly fears that that woman may steal her husband instead of considering the possibility of extending the covering of her husband to that woman with the prospect of them becoming best friends? I pray that by now you can see that God's plan for marriage is so radically different and better from anything that you have been taught!

3. SOUL TIES

The one flesh bond is NOT a soul tie, a soul tie is something completely different.

In 1 Samuel 18:1-4 it is reported:

- 1 *Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, **the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.***
- 2 *Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore.*
- 3 *Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, **because he loved him as his own soul.***
- 4 *And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt. (NKJ)*

The word knit in 1 Samuel 18:1 is the word qashar, Strong's number 7194:

Strong defines 7194 qashar (kaw-shar') as:

a primitive root: to tie, physically (gird, confine, compact) or mentally (in love, league):

KJV-- bind (up), (make a) conspire (-acy, -ator), join together, knit, stronger, work [treason].

While its usage is diverse it certainly refers to a very strong joining or binding of the soul's of David and Jonathan.

The soul tie can be formed between any two people of either gender. It does not require sexual congress. It is not a contract or a vow, it is a deep empathy and bond borne out of Godly love and respect. It occurs in marriage as a consequence of the attraction between husband and wife but it can occur between any man and woman who are deeply attracted to one another or who are simply really good friends. In some cases the soul tie will be inappropriate and must be renounced and cut off. After divorce or after repentance from adultery the soul tie with the former spouse or lover must also be renounced and cut off.

As best I can determine the soul tie is not a necessary prerequisite for marriage although there is likely to be a soul tie by the time of marriage or shortly thereafter. However, it would seem possible that in a marriage where there is no love or even mutual respect or empathy a soul tie would not necessarily be formed.

4. THE BLOOD LINE

Throughout scripture reference is made to genealogies, the so-called "blood line". The blood line carries curses from generation to generation. It also seems that it has some spiritual dimension in a similar vein to the one flesh bond. In fact, it would appear that the sexual sins identified in Leviticus

18 and Leviticus 20, may correspond to comparable spiritual confusion in the blood line to that described for the one flesh bond as resulting from fornication and adultery.

5. MARRIAGE TO EMPLOYEES

Exodus 21:1-11 states:

- 1 *"Now these are the judgments which you shall set before them:*
- 2 *"If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing.*
- 3 *"If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him.*
- 4 *"If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.*
- 5 *"But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,'*
- 6 *"then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.*
- 7 *"And if a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do.*
- 8 *"If she does not please her master, **who has betrothed her** to himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt deceitfully with her.*
- 9 *"And if he has betrothed her to his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters.*
- 10 *"If he takes another wife, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights.*
- 11 *"And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out free, without paying money. (NKJ)*

In this passage, which deals with servants or slaves, it is apparent that the employer is free to marry his unmarried female workers, provided he does not do so at the expense of those to whom he is already married. **Surely we must conclude that it is acceptable in the sight of God for a man to marry his unmarried secretary or other employee, even if he is already married?**

We further see that even in the case of a slave or servant, if a man takes a second or subsequent wife **"he shall not diminish her [the first wife's] food, her clothing, and her marriage rights"**. Presumably the same applies to a wife who was not originally a servant. Accordingly it appears that this passage does provide a guarantee for a first wife when her husband takes further wives that the conditions agreed to at the time of her marriage or in common practice before the taking of subsequent wives, shall not be diminished. Clearly this is a constraint that any subsequent wives must be made aware of and agree to before marriage and it surely creates a challenge for any man in our society who married monogamously and wants to take another wife.

Surely we must conclude that only where God gives guidance should a man in this age consider taking further wives, unless of course he already has additional wives through so-called "extra marital" relations and which he now realizes he is required before Yahweh to acknowledge and act on.

6. A WIFE IS A GOOD THING

Proverbs 18:22 states:

- 22 *He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD. (NKJ)*

Lamsa's translation of Proverbs 18:22 states:

22 He who finds a good wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD. And he who puts out a good wife, puts out a good thing from his house.

Proverbs 19:14 states:

*14 Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, but **a prudent wife is from the LORD.** (NKJ)*

Are two of a number of scriptures which indicate that marriage is a blessing from the Lord. There is nothing to indicate that this is restricted to the first wife or to "wife", singular.

7. ROTTENNESS IN THE BONES AND CONTENTION

Some other scriptures which have a bearing include Proverbs 12:4:

*4 An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but **she who causes shame is like rotteness in his bones.** (NKJ)*

In considering this scripture, remember Genesis 2:23-24:

*23 And Adam said: "This is now **bone of my bones** and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."*

*24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become **one flesh.** (NKJ)*

We therefore see that a woman who is one flesh with a man is called bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh - truly they are one. Accordingly a wife who causes shame brings about a sensation which can be likened to "rotteness in his bones". I have experienced this with a wife who is in strife and division with her husband, it is like something inside is rotten and pulling apart. God created man to walk in unity with his wives and a wife who does not walk in unity will have a materially negative effect on her husband. Conversely a wife who is in harmony and unity with her husband will buoy him up and he will achieve great exploits for his God in such a situation and will also accomplish much more for his family. Clearly this requires that the husband is seeking to serve God faithfully.

Proverbs 21:9:

9 Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman [wife]. (NKJ)

Proverbs 25:23-24:

23 The north wind brings forth rain, and a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.

24 It is better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman [wife]. (NKJ)

Proverbs 27:15-16:

15 A continual dripping on a very rainy day and a contentious woman [wife] are alike;

16 Whoever restrains her restrains the wind, and grasps oil with his right hand. (NKJ)

Noting that the Hebrew words for woman and wife are the same, it is apparent that Yahweh has expressed Himself clearly about the implications of a wife who dishonours her husband and brings shame to him and a wife who is contentious and argumentative. Surely we must see this as a type of

the rebellious and argumentative Christian who does not submit to Jesus as their Lord and King? There is much that we have to learn including women learning that it is not their place to argue with and demand of their husbands and husbands learning to become like Jesus so that their wives can indeed love them as they ought.

1 Peter 3:1-2 provides a stark contrast to the contentious wives cited above:

1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. (NKJ)

Can there be any doubt that God does not intend a wife to harass or nag her husband but to submit to him and love him and pray for him if he does get out of the will of God or into error?

8. RIGHTEOUS ANGER OF A BETRAYED HUSBAND

Consider that if Yahweh becomes angry with his wives in Ezekial 16 and 23, should not a husband be angry when a wife deals treacherously?

Consider also Proverbs 6:23-35:

23 For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life,

24 To keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress.

25 Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids.

26 For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.

27 Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

28 Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared?

29 So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent.

30 People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving.

31 Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold; he may have to give up all the substance of his house.

32 Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul.

33 Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away.

34 For jealousy is a husband's fury; therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

35 He will accept no recompense, nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts. (NKJ)

Clearly there is a place for righteous anger on the part of a husband who has been betrayed by his wife.

In this context, it is interesting to consider that Esther 1:1-22 reports an event which would seem to be of some relevance:

1 Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus (this was the Ahasuerus who reigned over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India to Ethiopia),

2 in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the citadel,

- 3 *that in the third year of his reign he made a feast for all his officials and servants-- the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces being before him--*
- 4 *when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the splendor of his excellent majesty for many days, one hundred and eighty days in all.*
- 5 *And when these days were completed, the king made a feast lasting seven days for all the people who were present in Shushan the citadel, from great to small, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.*
- 6 *There were white and blue linen curtains fastened with cords of fine linen and purple on silver rods and marble pillars; and the couches were of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of alabaster, turquoise, and white and black marble.*
- 7 *And they served drinks in golden vessels, each vessel being different from the other, with royal wine in abundance, according to the generosity of the king.*
- 8 *In accordance with the law, the drinking was not compulsory; for so the king had ordered all the officers of his household, that they should do according to each man's pleasure.*
- 9 *Queen Vashti also made a feast for the women in the royal palace which belonged to King Ahasuerus.*
- 10 *On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus,*
- 11 *to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she was beautiful to behold.*
- 12 *But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command brought by his eunuchs; therefore the king was furious, and his anger burned within him.*
- 13 *Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times (for this was the king's manner toward all who knew law and justice,*
- 14 *those closest to him being Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who had access to the king's presence, and who ranked highest in the kingdom):*
- 15 *"What shall we do to Queen Vashti, according to law, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus brought to her by the eunuchs?"*
- 16 *And Memucan answered before the king and the princes: "Queen Vashti has not only wronged the king, but also all the princes, and all the people who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.*
- 17 *"For the queen's behavior will become known to all women, so that they will despise their husbands in their eyes, when they report, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in before him, but she did not come.'*
- 18 *"This very day the noble ladies of Persia and Media will say to all the king's officials that they have heard of the behavior of the queen. Thus there will be excessive contempt and wrath.*
- 19 ***"If it pleases the king, let a royal decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it will not be altered, that Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she.***
- 20 ***"When the king's decree which he will make is proclaimed throughout all his empire (for it is great), all wives will honor their husbands, both great and small."***
- 21 *And the reply pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to the word of Memucan.*

22 *Then he sent letters to all the king's provinces, to each province in its own script, and to every people in their own language, that each man should be master in his own house, and speak in the language of his own people. (NKJ)*

If one accepts that Yahweh indeed inspired the book of Esther and that He inspired the chain of events which led to Esther becoming queen, must we not conclude that the actions of King Ahasuerus have some scriptural basis in line with the scripture cited earlier? Does this scripture not indicate clearly that in the days of that the Proverbs were recorded wives showed more respect to their husbands?

9. VIRGIN DAUGHTERS

1 Corinthians 7:25-40 states:

25 *Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy.*

26 *I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress-- that it is good for a man to remain as he is:*

27 *Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.*

28 *But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you.*

29 *But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,*

30 *those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess,*

31 *and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away.*

32 *But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord-- how he may please the Lord.*

33 *But he who is married cares about the things of the world-- how he may please his wife.*

34 *There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world-- how she may please her husband.*

35 *And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.*

36 *But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry.*

37 *Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well.*

38 *So then he who gives her in marriage does well, but he who does not give her in marriage does better.*

39 *A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.*

40 *But she is happier if she remains as she is, according to my judgment-- and I think I also have the Spirit of God. (NKJ)*

Overall these verses give some guidance with regard to recommendations by Paul, which he stresses are not necessarily inspired by the Holy Spirit, regarding virgins and it is apparent that his thoughts

regarding widows changed between writing the first letter to the Corinthians and writing 1 Timothy 5:9-14, referred to in section where he commands them to marry.

Verses 36 to 38 are somewhat problematic in most, generally available translations. Lamsa, cited in section, interprets these verses from the Aramaic, as follows:

36 If any man thinks that he is shamed by the behavior of his virgin daughter because she has passed the marriage age and he has not given her in marriage and that he should give her, let him do what he will and he does not sin. Let her be married.

37 If he has sincerely decided and is not forced by circumstances, but has determined and decreed in his heart to keep his virgin daughter single, he does well.

38 So then he who gives his virgin daughter in marriage does well; and he who does not give his virgin daughter in marriage does even better. (Lamsa)

This seems to be a more logical interpretation and removes some challenging ambiguities present in most other translations.

10. THE HUSBAND PROVIDES A "COVERING" TO HIS WIFE

Ruth 2:1-4:22 records:

CHAPTER 2

1 *There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech; his name was Boaz.*

2 *So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."*

3 *Then she left, and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.*

4 *Now behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they answered him, "The LORD bless you!"*

5 *Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?"*

6 *So the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered and said, "It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.*

7 *"And she said, 'Please let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came and has continued from morning until now, though she rested a little in the house."*

8 *Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women.*

9 *"Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn."*

10 *So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?"*

11 *And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before.*

12 *"The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge."*

- 13 *Then she said, "Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants."*
- 14 *Now Boaz said to her at mealtime, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your piece of bread in the vinegar." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back.*
- 15 *And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her.*
- 16 *"Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her."*
- 17 *So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.*
- 18 *Then she took it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. So she brought out and gave to her what she had kept back after she had been satisfied.*
- 19 *And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz."*
- 20 *Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!" And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives."*
- 21 *Ruth the Moabitess said, "He also said to me, 'You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'"*
- 22 *And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field."*
- 23 *So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.*

CHAPTER 3

- 1 *Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?"***
- 2 *"Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.***
- 3 *"Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.***
- 4 *"Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do."***
- 5 *And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do."*
- 6 *So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her.*
- 7 *And after Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain; and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.*

- 8 Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet.**
- 9 And he said, "Who are you?" So she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative."**
- 10 Then he said, "Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich.**
- 11 "And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman.**
- 12 "Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I.**
- 13 "Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you-- good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the LORD lives! Lie down until morning."**
- 14 So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor."**
- 15 Also he said, "Bring the shawl that is on you and hold it." And when she held it, he measured six ephahs of barley, and laid it on her. Then she went into the city.**
- 16 So when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "Is that you, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her.**
- 17 And she said, "These six ephahs of barley he gave me; for he said to me, 'Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'"**
- 18 Then she said, "Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day."**

CHAPTER 4

- 1 Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, "Come aside, friend, sit down here." So he came aside and sat down.**
- 2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down.**
- 3 Then he said to the close relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.**
- 4 "And I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but**

- if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you." And he said, "I will redeem it."*
- 5** *Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance."*
- 6** *And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."*
- 7** *Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel.*
- 8** *Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself." So he took off his sandal.*
- 9** *And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi.*
- 10** *"Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position at the gate. You are witnesses this day."*
- 11** *And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.*
- 12** *"May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman."*
- 13** *So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife; and when he went in to her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son.*
- 14** *Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a close relative; and may his name be famous in Israel!"*
- 15** *"And may he be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him."*
- 16** *Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her bosom, and became a nurse to him.*
- 17** *Also the neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed. He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.*
- 18** *Now this is the genealogy of Perez: Perez begot Hezron;*
- 19** *Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab;*

20 Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon;

21 Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed;

22 Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David. (NKJ)

Ruth 3:9 in the Amplified Bible reads in part:

"..... And she answered, I am Ruth your maidservant. Spread your wing (of protection) over your maidservant, for you are next of kin." (AMP)

The context of this verse is one of Ruth, a Moabite woman who had married a Hebrew sojourner in her land. Her husband, his father and his brother all die and Ruth is left a widow with her mother-in-law Naomi and returns to Israel with her, declaring that "your people shall be my people and your God my God" (Ruth 1:16). This acceptance by Ruth of the God of Israel and the people of Israel, thus forsaking her gentile inheritance is a clear type of any person accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as saviour and wholeheartedly adopting the Christian faith. From other verses we gather that Ruth had not made a shallow decision but an uncompromising decision to "go all the way". She left her family and native land and adopted and complied with the social practices of her adopted faith and land. In fact, Ruth is so esteemed in the sight of God that she became the mother of Obed, the father of Jesse the father of King David and her name is explicitly recorded for eternity in the genealogy of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 1:5:

5 Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, **Boaz begot Obed by Ruth**, Obed begot Jesse, (NKJ)

On this basis, we must accept that the steps taken by Ruth, a widow, to seek the protection of Boaz, a "near kinsman" are entirely appropriate and correct in the sight of God. She was not being forward when she approached Boaz, she was acting in accordance with laid down scriptural protocol in accordance with Deuteronomy 25:5-10.

The interpretation of this verse of scripture is very eloquently presented by William Schnoebelen in his book "Masonry, Beyond the Light". I quote verbatim from pages 230-232:

"HEADSHIP

"Paul teaches that the 'head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man' (1 Corinthians 11:3). This is how men and women are created by God. Two other key verses in this passage tell us:

'But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as is she were shaven...For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.

1 Corinthians 11:5, 8-10

"Although this is a rather deep passage, it is not too deep that it cannot be interpreted by turning to the Bible itself for help. The first part is clearer. The husband is to be the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. Paul clarifies this principle elsewhere, telling us:

'For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

Ephesians 5:23-26

"It is not a question of the husband 'lording it over' the wife as much as it is the husband giving himself up for his wife, laying down his life for her as Jesus did for the church. This is not a permit for abusive behaviour on the part of husbands in any way, shape or form. The wife must be submitted to the husband, but the husband must be Christ-like in his care and devotion to the wife. He must be the channel through which the Holy Spirit can 'sanctify and cleanse' his wife.

"TO SPREAD YOUR COVERING

"The last part of the passage quoted above is the most puzzling. What does 'For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels' mean? This verse, and the ones preceding it, have often been interpreted with total literalness, to the extent that women have felt obliged to wear veils or hats to church.

"However, the word here is 'power', which obviously means more than a veil. If we stand aside and let the Bible interpret this passage, it all becomes clear. In Ruth 3:8-9, we find the elegant Hebrew custom to which Paul is referring:

'And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid: for thou are a near kinsman.

"Ruth is asking Boaz, her near kinsman, to marry her out of obligation to his dead relation, Mahlon, her former husband. For him to cover her with his skirt was a way of saying that he would marry her, taking her under the mantle of his protection, even as we, the church, are under the mantle of Jesus' protection.'

"When a Godly man marries a woman, he takes 'power' over her because of the angels. Which angels are being referred to is unclear. Some say they are not good angels, but fallen angels, which might attack or tempt the wife, Others say they are good angels who are scandalized by seeing a wife out from under the authority of her husband.

"Although we cannot be certain, I prefer the first explanation, especially since there are two other places in scripture which seem to indicate that fallen angels might be very dangerous to unprotected women (Genesis 6:2, Jude 6-7). Thus, it is the duty of the man to provide a spiritual covering for his wife.

"Why is this? Because it is the way the Lord made the marriage relationship. It is the way men and women are put together, In a good, Christian marriage, the husband is the covering for the wife -- her shepherd, her 'lightning rod', if you will. He takes all the flak for her, even as Jesus did for us. He should be both a unique font of blessing for her and her strong protector from attack, whether spiritual or physical."

I have no doubt that the above interpretation is substantially correct, I have independently encountered a teaching by Benny Hinn on "Demons and Devils" which makes a related point about Genesis 6:2-6 referring to fallen angels taking on their human form and having sexual intercourse with women, thus giving rise to the race of giants of which Goliath was one of the last.

It is these same angels which are referred to in Jude 1:6:

6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; (NKJ)

and 2 Peter 2:4:

4 *For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgement.*

Genesis 6:1-8 reads:

- 1 *Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them,*
- 2 *that the **sons of God** saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.*
- 3 *And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."*
- 4 *There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.*
- 5 *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*
- 6 *And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.*
- 7 *So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."*
- 8 *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. (NKJ)*

It seems that there are a reasonably large number of believers who accept that the term "sons of God" refers to angels and that the passage above therefore refers to fallen angels marrying women. One teaching holds that since Satan realized that the only way that God could regain dominion over the earth legally was for the Messiah to be born of a woman and that, by instructing his fallen angels to marry as many women as possible, he could corrupt the blood line so completely that it would not be possible for a sinless man to be born of woman.

Genesis 3:14-16 states:

- 14 *So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.*
- 15 *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and **her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.**"*
- 16 *To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." (NKJ)*

It is widely accepted that the woman's seed referred to here is the singular seed which was Jesus Christ born of a woman that He might crush the head of the serpent, that is Satan.

Revelation 20:1-3 states:

- 1 *Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*
- 2 ***He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;***

3 *and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. (NKJ)*

It therefore appears that for Jesus Christ to be born of a woman and to be sinless it was necessary for there to be a woman whose blood line descended from Adam WITHOUT the contamination resulting from contamination by sexual intercourse of women with fallen angels. According to this interpretation Noah and his sons were the only remaining men on earth who were genetically and spiritually uncontaminated by this impregnation, hence the need for the flood to destroy all other humans. Apparently one or more of Noah's sons wives was not pure and that was how the giants propagated after the flood and why Israel had to completely destroy them when they came out of Egypt and why David's victory over Goliath was so significant.

According to this interpretation, once an angel has sinned by having intercourse with a human woman he is cast into chains for the day of judgement as referred to in Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4. As a consequence, Satan's compliment of angels was seriously diminished and he could not afford to again try this avenue. Presumably this does not prevent him from trying again at the end of the age should he conclude that there is benefit to be gained. Something like this may be a prerequisite for the birth of the "beast" of Revelation but this is outside the scope of this book.

In this light, the responsibility of Christian men to provide covering to Christian women in these last days becomes of greater significance if we take account of the level of deception that is expected to accompany the end of the age.

General observation of daily occurrences also indicate that many unmarried Christian women become desperate about not having a husband and often fall into the trap of marrying unsaved husbands who frequently abuse them. This leads to immense suffering, sometimes to backsliding and often to divorce. Others fall victim to their sexual needs and find themselves repeatedly succumbing to the advances of men who take advantage of their vulnerable position. Many Christian women in this situation become desperately unhappy.

In continuing with our analysis of Ruth, it is important to note that at no point is there an indication whether Boaz already had a wife and it will be apparent from Exodus 21:10 that this is not a relevant question. Since scripture explicitly permits a man to take more than one wife there was no need for Boaz to be unmarried and, in fact, careful analysis of the passage indicates that Boaz was considerably older than Ruth, he refers to the "young men" and this further indicates that it is highly unlikely that he was unmarried.

We should furthermore note that there was another man who was a closer kinsman than Boaz but that he declined to marry Ruth because she was a Moabitess, prohibited by Deuteronomy 23:3 & 4. From this we observe a degree of discretion on the part of the person who was technically the first in line who, on the grounds of a scriptural constraint, chose to decline to perform the required service. Note that Deuteronomy 25:5-10 lays down a serious reproach for the man who declines to perform this duty without scriptural grounds:

5 *"If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.*

- 6 *"And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.*
- 7 ***"But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.'***
- 8 *"Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him; and if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,'*
- 9 ***"then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.'***
- 10 *"And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.' (NKJ)*

Clearly, refusing to marry such a woman is not a decision to be taken lightly.

As a counterpoint, it is apparent that the application of these scriptures in these days would be difficult to be taken entirely literally, after all there is nowhere that such a woman could go to find a group of elders who would currently stand by while she spat in her late husband's brothers face! That does not necessarily mean that this is not what she is entitled to do.

Keep in mind that 1 Timothy 5:9-15 states:

- 9 *Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man,*
- 10 *well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.*
- 11 *But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry,*
- 12 *having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith.*
- 13 *And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.*
- 14 ***Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.***
- 15 *For some have already turned aside after Satan. (NKJ)*

We see the same principle, with the same implication of entry for Satan carried into the New Covenant, again with no indication that Paul foresaw the possibility of there not being enough unmarried men to go round. **The implication again being that the fact that a man was already married did not prevent him from marrying a widow in order to give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.**

Surely then, by implication, the current marriage practices of the church are giving the adversary (Satan) enormous opportunity to speak reproachfully! Of what great judgment will those be subject who resist the truths presented in this book?

The bottom line must surely be that any unmarried Christian woman whether a virgin, a widow or a scripturally legitimately divorced woman who is earnestly seeking God for a husband, has a

prerogative to approach the man whom God has shown to her and ask him to extend his covering to her. It would seem that the only basis for him to refuse to marry her would be if he is quite certain that the approach is not of God! This requires a major change in paradigm by all concerned. The Christian woman is entitled to a covering and the Christian man is obliged to provide it if God has allocated the responsibility for that woman to him, no matter how many wives he may already have!

11. FINANCIAL LACK RESULTING FROM A DIVIDED HOUSE

We have already seen that the one flesh bond between husband and wives brings about a spiritual unity which corresponds to the house of the husband.

In Matthew 12:25 we read:

*25 But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or **house divided against itself will not stand.** (NKJ)*

Luke 11:17 confirms this:

*17 But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and **a house divided against a house falls.** (NKJ)*

We have also seen that contention and shameful conduct by a wife bring about a condition which can be likened to rottenness in the bones.

Furthermore, 1 Pet 3:1-7 states:

- 1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,*
- 2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.*
- 3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward-- arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel--*
- 4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*
- 5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,*
- 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.*
- 7 **Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.** (NKJ)*

The practical implication of these scriptures is that if a man's house is divided it will not stand and his prayers will be hindered. The author knows an individual who has experienced this on several occasions and has also seen how, when husband and wife come into agreement sudden breakthroughs are experienced.

In ministering to others we have encountered numerous instances where a man has had one flesh bonds with women with whom he is not living, either because he abandoned the woman or women in question or for other reasons. In such cases, particularly where the man concerned is seeking to serve God, Satan has taken maximum advantage of the situation to destroy that man's finances. In

several cases I have had to tell the man concerned that until he restores his wife or wives to right relationship he will remain in poverty and where he has no scriptural basis for divorce he must resolve his differences with his wife. This situation is compounded where a wife sets demands on her husband before he can return or where she was the one who instituted the separation in the first place.

Women with one flesh bonds in comparable situations may also find themselves in lack but, the most extreme cases that I have encountered have been men who have been financially destitute. No matter what they put their hand to Satan comes and kills, steals and destroys until the opportunity is utterly eliminated.

In other cases, women who intuitively understand this principle use it to manipulate their husbands. The author knows of a case where a woman, seeking to control her husband, systematically came into agreement with him until his business picked up dramatically and then ruthlessly entered into controversy with him causing spiritual forces to destroy the new found opportunity, purely as some form of power play to demonstrate that she was in control of the marriage.

Modern marriage guidance within the church frequently identifies this principle as a factor in financial lack but then proceeds to tell the husband to come into agreement with his wife! Clearly this is directly contradictory to 1 Peter 3:1, quoted above, where wives are told to submit to their husbands. A marriage in which the wife calls the shots, sometimes because a man truly loves God and has no hope of taking a second wife because he thinks it is against the Word of God, is an abomination in the sight of God!

12. ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE WIFE FOR THE HUSBAND

As an extension of the principle of the husband being the head of the wife or ruling over her, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the wife is not "responsible" for the husband. Accordingly, should the wife become aware that her husband is sinning or in error, she presumably has a responsibility to inform him of this in an appropriate fashion. However, since he is her "head" it seems reasonable to conclude that she is not responsible if he does not listen to her. In particular, she should not strive with him or get into dispute or disagreement with him on this point. Rather it would seem that she is enjoined to submit to him in all that is according to the Word of God and to pray for Yahweh to show him his error.

In this regard it is important to take account of the fact that *"a house divided against itself cannot stand"*. Therefore a situation in which the wife is striving against the husband opens the house to division and destruction. This is not to say that the wife should accept or agree to participate in unGodly or unscriptural actions but it does seem to suggest that she should not continuously argue with and oppose her husband in a manner which exacerbates the division. It would seem that she should rather apply the principles of 1 Corinthians 13 regarding Love.

This thought is supported by 1 Corinthians 14:34-36 which states:

34 Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says.

35 And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.

36 Or did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached? (NKJ)

Again this is a difficult scripture but it is certainly in the "New Testament".

1 Peter 3:1-7 states:

- 1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,**
- 2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.**
- 3 *Do not let your adornment be merely outward-- arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel--*
- 4 *rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*
- 5 *For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,*
- 6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.**
- 7 *Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, **that your prayers may not be hindered.***
(NKJ)

While the idea of a wife calling her husband "Lord" in this day and age may seem extremely offensive to most, it is nevertheless scriptural. What would appear to be more important than the use of the Word "Lord" however, is that which is in the "hidden person of the heart" and the conduct of the wife whereby even if the husband does not obey the Word of God he may be won by the conduct of his wives.

Furthermore, this scripture reinforces the impact of a divided house by exhorting husbands to dwell with their wives with "understanding" that "your prayers may not be hindered". From personal experience, if a man and his wife are not in agreement their prayers and daily activities will be constantly obstructed or hindered and they will suffer great loss as a consequence of spiritual forces which are mobilized against them as a consequence of division. **This same hindering will occur where a man is joined to another woman with whom he is not living. This will apply to previous wives, mistresses, prostitutes or any other woman that he has joined himself to and with whom he has a "one flesh" bond that has not been cut off.** We have repeatedly witnessed this phenomenon in people we have ministered to.

13. THE LOVE BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIVES (AN EXTENSION OF EPHESIANS 5:33)

At this point, there are still many aspects of the marriage relationship which have not been dealt with, in this section we will seek to better understand the full implications of scripture with regard to the intimate aspects of the relationship between husband and wives.

A. A WIFE SHOULD REVERENCE HER HUSBAND

Ephesians 5:33 states:

- 33 *Nevertheless let each one of you in particular **so love his own wife [wives] as himself, and let the wife [wives] see that she respects her husband.** (NKJ)*
(the word [wives] added by the author)

The Amplified Bible states:

- 33 *However, let each man of you (without exception) **love his wife [wives] as [being in a sense] his very own self; and let the wife see that she respects and reverences her husband -- that she***

notices him, regards him, honours him, prefers him, venerates and esteems him; and that she defers to him, praises him, and lives and admires him exceedingly. (AMP)

(the word [wives] added by the author)

Interestingly, husbands are told to agapao (love) their wives while wives are told to reverence their husbands. Some years ago, The Lord led me to Dake's commentary on Ephesians 5:33 which states the following with regard to the word reverence:

Greek phobeo, to strike with fear; to frighten. It is translated reverence only here; be afraid 29 times; and fear 61 times (Revelation 1:17; 2:10, etc). She is to reverence him as her head (verses 23-24; 1 Corinthians 11:3)

This is certainly a very difficult statistic to assimilate and apply, it makes more sense in the context that we are told to reverence or fear God, this is a Godly respect, awe or fear NOT a Satanic terror as the word fear has come to mean in English. Nevertheless, this is a difficult scripture to fully comprehend within our paradigm of marriage and must surely emphasise the need for Christian husbands to be Godly men who fear God for it may be that it is only if a man fears God that his wife can feel secure to reverence him. Such is the total collapse of our society from true Bible based values that most Christian women would probably find it almost inconceivable that they should reverence their husbands as this interpretation implies that they must. But, nevertheless, that is what the Word of God says and both men and women should seek for this ideal. At the same time it reinforces the view that a man who is not committed to this ideal is not the man that a sincere Christian woman should choose as a husband. She would surely be far better advised being the second or subsequent wife of a man who truly is committed to seeking God to change him to become more like Jesus so that his wives can submit to and reverence him with ease.

1 Peter 3:1-7 states:

- 1 *Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,*
- 2 *when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.*
- 3 *Do not let your adornment be merely outward-- arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel--*
- 4 *rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*
- 5 *For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,*
- 6 ***as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.***
- 7 *Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife [wives], as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. (NKJ)*

(the word [wives] added by the author)

Clearly there is a deep love and reverence implied on the part of the wife against the Love of God manifest in the husband.

B. THE DESIRE OF A WIFE SHOULD BE FOR HER HUSBAND

Genesis 3:13-16 reads:

- 13 *And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*
- 14 *So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.*
- 15 *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."*
- 16 *To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; **your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.**" (NKJ)*

C. SPOUSES SHOULD NOT WITHHOLD FROM ONE ANOTHER SEXUALLY

1 Cor 7:1-5

- 1 *Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*
- 2 *Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.*
- 3 *Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.*
- 4 *The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.*
- 5 *Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (NKJ)*

D. A WIFE SHOULD BE UNINHIBITED IN HER RELATIONSHIP WITH HER HUSBAND

By implication of the points taking account of Genesis 3:16 which states that the desire of the wife should be for her husband, it seems apparent that the wife should love her husband in a very deep sense, second only to Jesus and also that she should have an intense desire for him.

Arguably love-making in marriage is a type and shadow of praise and worship and, by implication, the wife should take the initiative and love making should be uninhibited (consider David's praise and worship in 2 Samuel 6:12-23:

- 12 *Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness.*
- 13 *And so it was, when those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, that he sacrificed oxen and fatted sheep.*
- 14 ***Then David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod.***
- 15 *So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.*
- 16 ***Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.***

17 So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

18 And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.

19 Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house.

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!"

21 So David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the LORD.

22 "And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor."

23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death. (NKJ)

Here we see perhaps the ultimate example of uninhibited praise and worship of God by David, "a man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22). Does this not indicate that a wife should be uninhibited in the manner in which she makes love to her husband?

Do we not find from careful consideration of all we may know about praise and worship that God requires us to come to Him to worship Him, He is there, always ready and waiting to receive our worship, if we will but come to Him. Does not experience with praise and worship teach us that it is only when we lose sight of those around us and worship God with all our hearts, all our minds, all our soul and all our strength that we really come into His presence? Surely it is the same in the wife's role in marriage?

E. A WIFE SHOULD BE SKILLED AND TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN LOVE MAKING

Esther 2:1-18 records:

1 After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what had been decreed against her.

2 Then the king's servants who attended him said: "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king;

3 "and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the citadel, into the women's quarters, under the custody of Hegai the king's eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given them.

4 "Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This thing pleased the king, and he did so.

5 In Shushan the citadel there was a certain Jew whose name was Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite.

6 Kish had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been captured with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

- 7 *And Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman was lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.*
- 8 *So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at Shushan the citadel, under the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women.*
- 9 *Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best place in the house of the women.*
- 10 *Esther had not revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal it.*
- 11 *And every day Mordecai paced in front of the court of the women's quarters, to learn of Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.*
- 12 *Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women.*
- 13 *Thus prepared, each young woman went to the king, and she was given whatever she desired to take with her from the women's quarters to the king's palace.*
- 14 *In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who kept the concubines. She would not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and called for her by name.*
- 15 Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.**
- 16 So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.**
- 17 *The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.*
- 18 *Then the king made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king. (NKJ)*

At the risk of offending you, let me point out a few aspects of this story:

- i. Esther waited at least a year to go to King Ahasuerus.
- ii. Therefore King Ahasuerus had at least 365 concubines BEFORE Esther.
- iii. Esther only had one night to please the King and therefore be in the place that God intended her to be in order to deliver her people.

- iv. If Esther had not distinguished herself in some notable way during the night that she was with the King she would have gone to the house of the concubines and never been sent for again and she would not likely be the subject of a book of the Bible!
- v. Esther only took with her to her night with the King that which was recommended, in other words by implication she took less than most of those who went before her.
- vi. It seems safe to assume that since the women went to the King as virgins and left as concubines, that he had sexual intercourse with each and every one of them.
- vii. Therefore we must surely conclude that Esther was particularly pleasing to the King not only in terms of her beauty, personality and intellect but also in terms of her sexual responsiveness and initiative in pleasing him?

From this can we not at least partially conclude that God intended woman to be uninhibited sexually in pleasing her husband? We can at least safely conclude that the King did not feel obliged to coach each of his concubines personally until their sexual performance was pleasing to him. Surely there is a message to be gleaned from this storey which correlates with the experience of the world with men constantly seeking a woman who will make uninhibited love to them and take the initiative, as evidenced in so much secular writing and pornography. Is the church not in error if it teaches young women that it is the husband's responsibility to make love to them? Surely they must "praise and worship" their husbands through their uninhibited love making?

Esther 4:12-14, relating to the situation following the edict to destroy the Jews, states:

12 So they told Mordecai Esther's words.

13 Then Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews.

*14 "For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. **Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"** (NKJ)*

From this can we not conclude that Yahweh specifically created this opportunity so that Esther came to the kingdom to deliver her people from Satan's plans to destroy the Jews in some way or another. Furthermore, one school of thought seems to suggest that King Cyrus of Persia who ordered the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem in Ezra 1:1-4 was the daughter of Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus:

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying,

2 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.

3 Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem.

4 And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem. (NKJ)

While this is uncertain at this time it does seem to make some degree of sense, the timing of the seventy years from the start of exile would be about right for Cyrus to be the son of Esther.

Irrespective of whether this is the case, the fact is that Esther did, indeed, come to the kingdom for that time to deliver her people and it seems certain that Yahweh arranged matters such that this would be the case. In this case we must surely conclude that Yahweh quite deliberately permitted a situation to develop whereby Esther came to be queen, at least in part because of the manner in which she made love to the King! **And since God created man and woman as sexual beings and created their sexual potential, must we not also conclude that He intended the sexual experience between husband and wives to be the most sublime experience possible and one which permits them to reach their full sexual potential. Surely the sexual potential which is so massively abused in pornography was created by God to be used in the marriage chamber?**

If this is the case, is it any wonder that men turn to harlots and desert wives who are sexually inhibited and expect the man to take the initiative and make love to the woman? Is that not the sexual framework that the church in fact teaches - the man should worship the woman, not the other way round? It seems that way to me, perhaps your experience has been different?

F. THE HUSBAND MUST SEEK TO BECOME LIKE JESUS

The above conclusions are all good and well, but they are difficult for a wife to put into practice with a husband who consorts with harlots, idolizes the national rugby team, cricket team, tennis players, pastor and others and devotes little or no time to the Word of God and seeking to dwell with her with understanding. It is apparent that the conduct of the husband is not a precondition for the conduct of the wife, 1 Peter 3:1 makes this quite clear. But it also should make it quite clear to any God fearing Christian woman who is currently unmarried in the sight of God, whether she is a virgin, a widow or one whom God has permitted to divorce, that she should not think of getting married to any man that she is not one hundred percent certain is the man that God has chosen for her. Furthermore, it should be clear from all that has preceded this section that the question of whether or not he is married should not be a consideration. In fact, if he has one or more wives who can testify that he is indeed a husband who can love her in the manner that she has been designed by God to need, this should be a recommendation.

14. THE IMPLICATIONS OF ISAIAH 4:1

Isaiah 4:1 states:

1 And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach."

Surely, insofar as there are increasing indications that there is enormous tribulation, persecution and hardship imminent for the church throughout the world, it is now time for men to accept their God given responsibility to care for those women who are in the Body of Christ but unmarried? Surely it is time for women to renounce their heretical claims to solely own their husbands and to reach out in agape love to those who are without a husband and offer to extend the covering of their husbands to them?

I can find no scripture to convince me otherwise and I must suggest to any person who finds this suggestion offensive that they should re-examine their heart towards the Word of God! IF GOD IS REALLY FIRST IN YOUR LIFE, how can you refuse what He has foretold in Isaiah 4:1?

It has been suggested to me that this is not "God's best". How do we presume to know God's best when we do not accept His Word? Consider that it is widely accepted that seven (7) is regarded as the scriptural number of completeness and / or perfection. There are seven churches in Revelation 1, there are Seven Spirits of God in Revelation 1; 3; 4 and 5, there are seven lamps in Revelation 4:5 and seven lamps to the lampstand in the tabernacle in Exodus 25:37; 37:23; Numbers 8:2 and Zechariah 4:2, the Sabbath is the seventh day (Exodus 31:15 and numerous others), etc. Surely it would be presumptuous to suggest that Yahweh does not place particular significance in the number seven. Consider therefore why he would designate through Isaiah that there would be seven women to one man if this was also not something that He considered important?

Consider equally that six (6) is the number of man and carnality.

Revelation 13:18 states:

*Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate **the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.** (NKJ)*

Surely if Yahweh considered more than one wife to not be His "best" He would have specified six instead of seven in Isaiah 4:1, thereby warning us that this was something of man that He did not really approve of? Surely He is able to arrange matters to ensure that this would be the situation? Surely we must conclude that Yahweh is telling us that there is something we do not know? That possibly marital perfection could lie in the same perfect number as He has designed so many other things to harmonize around?

Incidentally there is significant management and presentation theory that would suggest that the optimum number of direct report subordinates to a manager for maximum effectiveness is about seven! Praendex Incorporated, a human resource company in the United States which offers a personality profiling tool classifies eight major personality profile types. It seems to me that there may be an implication that a family of a man and seven wives might optimally embody one member from each classification with each family member being uniquely equipped to perform a specific role, some being extrovert and others task oriented, some fast paced and others calm and methodical, some assertive and some cooperative, some detail focussed and others more interested in the broad brush strokes of the "big picture". If these same eight people represented a diversity of intellectual and technical interest, is it not possible that such a family unit could live together in harmony while at the same time complementing one another to such an extent that the family unit would be capable of great achievements. Is it not possible that a man supported by such a team of wives could be highly effective in serving God? I don't know! But since Yahweh uses the number seven in Isaiah 4:1 it seems to me that if we truly trust His wisdom as being infinitely greater than ours we should surely not exclude the possibility that He has designed us with this in mind?

On a slightly different note, some years ago I was praying about this subject and the Lord clearly indicated to me that many of His servants would not have fallen if they had had several wives interceding for them and they would also not have been nearly as susceptible to being snared by a harlot or adulteress as has been the case with several prominent Christian personalities. In the spiritual context there are also a variety of spiritual gifts, just as there are a variety of personality traits. Consequently it seems possible that a man married to seven women selected by Yahweh would find himself in a family unit with the appropriate combination of spiritual gifts to support him in his ministry.

It would certainly seem that a family unit such as this would never face the prospect of any member feeling lonely and not having any one to talk to, the problem of who to talk to when the husband was away on business would simply not arise. Equally, the variety of interactions would be such that the likelihood of any member of the family unit becoming bored would be minimal. Reasonably different wives would also have different physical attributes and recreational interests with the overall effect that there would likely be absolutely no likelihood of any member looking outside the marriage for companionship, friendship, etc - the unmet needs which so often result in a spouse going outside a marriage in a monogamous situation.

Overall, while you may regard the above as being highly speculative, it does seem that there are good grounds to expect that God knows better than we do and therefore this is not beyond the bounds of possibility. Should we not therefore conclude that a man complemented by seven wives selected by Yahweh to complement and complete him in every area of his personality, skills AND calling will be a formidable force for the Kingdom of God? Is it not possible that the heart of man AND woman seek this completeness resulting in the constant tide of dissatisfaction and "divorce" which characterises so many monogamous marriages?

15. HUSBAND'S AS THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF FELLOWSHIP FOR THEIR WIVES

There is a body of social thinking which is frequently espoused by the church to the effect that it is the responsibility of the husband to provide fellowship to his wife. It is further suggested that a husband who works long hours or is away from home on business on a regular basis is not fulfilling his obligations to his wife and children. It seems to me that if you carefully consider all the scriptures that you have read thus far you will see that this does not appear to be a scriptural requirement and, in fact, when translated into a set of criteria against which the acceptability of a husband is measured, is entirely contrary to scripture. The sections that follow examine a number of specific cases:

A. ACCEPTABLE WORKING HOURS

There seems to be an almost universal view in the Christian community in which I live that appears to state that a man who spends more than eight hours a day at work is incompetent and that a husband who works twelve hours a day has something seriously wrong with him to a point where one gains the impression that many people would seem to consider that to be grounds for serious objection, if not divorce.

Consider Matthew 20:1-16 (Jesus speaking):

- 1 ***"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out **early in the morning** to hire laborers for his vineyard.***
- 2 *"Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.*
- 3 *"And he went out **about the third hour** and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,*
- 4 *"and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went.*
- 5 *"Again he went out **about the sixth and the ninth hour**, and did likewise.*
- 6 *"And **about the eleventh hour** he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?'*
- 7 *"They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.'*
- 8 *"So **when evening had come**, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.'*

- 9 *"And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius.*
- 10 *"But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius.*
- 11 *"And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner,*
- 12 *"saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.'*
- 13 *"But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?*
- 14 *'Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.*
- 15 *'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?'*
- 16 *"So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen." (NKJ)*

It is important to note that Jesus is telling this parable as an indication of the fact that length of service alone does not afford a believer any greater reward in the Kingdom of Heaven.

In modern day terms the land owner in the parable went out early in the morning, presumably at close to sunrise which in Israel would be approximately 06h00 and recruited labourers, he returned about the third hour of the day (09h00), the sixth hour of the day (12h00, midday), the ninth hour (15h00, 3 in the afternoon) and the eleventh hour (17h00, 5 in the afternoon) and in the evening, one hour after the eleventh hour, that is 18h00 (6 in the evening) he paid them off. In other words, the first casual workers were in the market place seeking work not later than six in the morning and they were paid off at six in the evening having worked a full twelve hour day.

It seems likely that they left their homes not later than about 05h30 or perhaps 05h45 to arrive at the market in time to be hired and that they returned home not earlier than 18h15 if not 18h30 having been away from home for at least twelve and a half hours. If we take account of the custom of the men assembling at the gate of the city it is possible that they may have assembled at the gate of the city for a while before returning home.

Furthermore, scripture quite clearly instructs us that we are to work six days of the week:

Consider Exodus 20:8-11:

- 8 *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*
- 9 *Six days you shall labor and do all your work,*
- 10 *but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.*
- 11 *For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. (NKJ)*

Exodus 23:12:

- 12 *"Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed. (NKJ)*

Exodus 34:21:

21 *"Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. (NKJ)*

Leviticus 23:3:

3 *'Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings. (NKJ)*

Deuteronomy 5:13-14:

13 *Six days you shall labor and do all your work,*

14 *but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall not do any work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you. (NKJ)*

Luke 13:14:

14 *But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day." (NKJ)*

Can there be any doubt that Yahweh intended man to work a 72 hour working week as opposed to the 40 hour working week which is regarded as acceptable today? This being the case, is it not reasonable to conclude that a man who works about 72 hours a week is not necessarily out of the will of God and is therefore not in any way neglecting his scriptural responsibilities to his family? Does this not necessitate a rethink of the role of husband and wife which may well be influenced by a domestic arrangement in which an extended family, including parents and grandparents but also additional wives, collectively provide the fellowship and logistical support to the husband.

If we take account of the description of a virtuous wife in Proverb 31, then it seems apparent that the role of the husband is not necessarily as a bread winner either. He has tasks to perform which have much to do with defending his family and participating in the government of his community AND doing the work of the Lord!

It is particularly interesting to recall Genesis 2:18 at this point:

18 *And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." (NKJ)*

1 Corinthians 11:8-9 confirms this:

8 *For man is not from woman, but woman from man.*

9 *Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. (NKJ)*

Surely from this we must conclude that woman was created to help man and that man was not created to provide fellowship and companionship and support for woman? Surely scripture teaches us that a man and his wives are an integrated, harmonious team working together for the overall good of the family in accomplishing what God has called the family unit, through the husband, to accomplish as

their calling. Surely we must conclude that God intended the wives to provide fellowship and support to their husband AND to one another rather than requiring the husband to provide fellowship to his wives. This does not in any way imply that the husband should sit back and be waited on by his wives, but it does require that he busy's himself with the work that God has given him to do both in the Kingdom of God and in his secular occupation while his wives support him by running the household and to some measure the household enterprises which do not require interaction with other men or that they travel away from the household.

B. HUSBAND'S WHO ARE REGULARLY AWAY FROM HOME

It is not uncommon to hear message preached which have the effect of suggesting that a husband who is regularly away from home is not necessarily in the will of God since the family is God's plan for man. Let us consider what scripture has to say about this.

2 Samuel 11:1-5 reports:

- 1 *It happened in the spring of the year, **at the time when kings go out to battle**, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.*
- 2 *Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold.*
- 3 *So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"*
- 4 *Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house.*
- 5 *And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I am with child." (NKJ)*

1 Chronicles 20:1 confirms this:

- 1 *It happened in the spring of the year, **at the time kings go out to battle**, that Joab led out the armed forces and ravaged the country of the people of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. And Joab defeated Rabbah and overthrew it. (NKJ)*

It is clear that it was a frequent occurrence for kings and their armies to go out to battle. There are teachings which suggest that it was common for kings to go out to war for about six months every year. I have on several occasions heard messages preached about David's error in taking his ease at home and not going out to battle and then on other occasions the same preachers preach against husbands who do not devote sufficient time to the wives and families. Let us consider some other scriptures:

1 Samuel 11:7 records regarding Saul:

- 7 *So he took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hands of messengers, saying, "Whoever does not go out with Saul and Samuel to battle, so it shall be done to his oxen." And the fear of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out with one consent. (NKJ)*

Joshua 1:11-16 records:

11 *"Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'"*

12 *And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua spoke, saying,*

13 *"Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.'*

14 ***"Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them,***

15 ***"until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He gave you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD'S servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise."***

16 *And they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you command us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. (NKJ)*

Here we see the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh being expressly commanded by God's anointed leader in the name of God to leave their families, probably for several years. By implication we also see the women mandated to run family affairs in the absence of their husbands, keep in mind that Joshua and Caleb were the only men over forty years old who came out of the wilderness so there were not even any grandfathers to assist the women to raise their children, look after the livestock and run the farms!

1 Corinthians 9:5 states:

5 *Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? (NKJ)*

Surely this clearly indicates that a man is entitled to take one or more of his wives with him on his travels and, by implication, to leave other wives at home to look after his domestic affairs?

Mark 10:29-31 records:

29 *So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's,*

30 *"who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time-- houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions-- and in the age to come, eternal life.*

31 *"But many who are first will be last, and the last first." (NKJ)*

Here we see our Lord and Saviour Himself saying that it is acceptable for a man to leave his house and family to serve God if God so requires it. This report is confirmed in Matthew 19:29 and also in Luke 18:29. Jesus does NOT indicate that a wife should leave her husband. It is hard to envisage that this entails a man abandoning his family but it is relatively easy to envisage that this entails a man leaving for foreign fields for many years at a time with little or no contact with his family and his family having to fend for themselves.

Genesis 37:12-17 states:

- 12 Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.
- 13 And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." So he said to him, "Here I am."
- 14 Then he said to him, "Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me." So he sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem.
- 15 Now a certain man found him, and there he was, wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, "What are you seeking?"
- 16 So he said, "I am seeking my brothers. Please tell me where they are feeding their flocks."
- 17 And the man said, "They have departed from here, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan. (NKJ)

Here we see a clear example of men taken away from home on a regular and lengthy period in order to attend to their business affairs, in this case looking after the sheep.

Luke 2:8-20 records regarding the birth of Jesus:

- 8 Now there were in the same country **shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.**
- 9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.
- 10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.
- 11 "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.
- 12 "And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."
- 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:
- 14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"
- 15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."
- 16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.
- 17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.
- 18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.
- 19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.
- 20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. (NKJ)

In our society much is made at "Christmas" with regard to the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night in the fields - with the implication that they were not at home with their families and were probably away from home most of the time, particularly when they had to travel further afield in search of grazing.

Thus we see throughout scripture that it was common place for men to travel away from home on business or the Lords work for months or years at a time and that many times this was as a consequence of a commandment of the Lord through those He had designated to lead the people. Surely we must conclude that the continuous presence of the husband at home, as much as it is desirable and pleasant for both husband and family, is not a scriptural prerequisite for a marriage to succeed and is certainly NOT a basis for a wife to entertain adultery or divorce. In fact, to the contrary, we Proverbs we see this specific situation addressed:

Proverbs 7:1-27 states:

- 1 *My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you.*
- 2 *Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye.*
- 3 *Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.*
- 4 *Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your nearest kin,*
- 5 *That they may keep you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words.*
- 6 *For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice,*
- 7 *And saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, a young man devoid of understanding,*
- 8 *Passing along the street near her corner; and he took the path to her house*
- 9 *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.*
- 10 *And there a woman met him, with the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.*
- 11 *She was loud and rebellious, her feet would not stay at home.*
- 12 *At times she was outside, at times in the open square, Lurking at every corner.*
- 13 *So she caught him and kissed him; with an impudent face she said to him:*
- 14 *"I have peace offerings with me; today I have paid my vows.*
- 15 *So I came out to meet you, diligently to seek your face, and I have found you.*
- 16 *I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of Egyptian linen.*
- 17 *I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.*

18 Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; let us delight ourselves with love.

19 For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey;

20 He has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home on the appointed day."

- 21 *With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him.*
- 22 *Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,*
- 23 *Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would cost his life.*
- 24 *Now therefore, listen to me, my children; pay attention to the words of my mouth:*
- 25 *Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths;*
- 26 *For she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men.*
- 27 ***Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death. (NKJ)***

Here we clearly see that this women has resorted to adultery because her husband has gone on a long journey and that this one chance liaison with adultery commits this young man to hell.

I urge all readers to consider carefully the implications of their current beliefs in this area. We may not like the implications but if our objective is to store up treasure in heaven

Mark 10:21 reports:

21 *Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." (NKJ)*

This is confirmed in Matthew 19:21 and Luke 18:22. Likewise, if we desire to hear those words "Well done, good and faithful servant" we must surely revise our thinking on many of these issues.

Matthew 25:1-34 reports Jesus as saying:

- 1 *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.*
- 2 *"Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*
- 3 *"Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,*
- 4 *"but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*
- 5 *"But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*
- 6 *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'*
- 7 *"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.*
- 8 *"And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'*
- 9 *"But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'*
- 10 *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*
- 11 *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'*
- 12 *"But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*
- 13 *"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*
- 14 *"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.*
- 15 *"And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.*
- 16 *"Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents.*
- 17 *"And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.*
- 18 *"But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.*
- 19 *"After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.*
- 20 *"So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'*
- 21 *"His lord said to him, '**Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.**'*
- 22 *"He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'*
- 23 *"His lord said to him, '**Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.**'*

- 24 *"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.*
- 25 *'And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'*
- 26 *"But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.*
- 27 *'So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.*
- 28'Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.**
- 29'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.**
- 30 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'**
- 31 *"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.*
- 32 *"All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.*
- 33 *"And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.*
- 34 *"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (NKJ)*

Luke 19:17 repeats the story of the faithful servants. Is it not interesting that the parable of the foolish and faithful servants is juxtaposed with the parable of the ten virgins? Surely we must take account of the prospect of being cast into outer darkness which accompanies both parables. **Surely any person who has access to the Bible today in such a diversity of translations must see themselves as a person to whom many talents of knowledge have been entrusted. Dare we be like the foolish servant who buries the truth in the ground and refuses to acknowledge and broadcast that truth to those who need it. I challenge every person who reads this book to ask themselves whether they can hope to ignore the implications of the scriptures contained herein and think for a moment that they will not face the most severe judgment foretold in the passage above!**

16. BETROTHAL

In our society an engagement to be married is an occasion for rejoicing. But increasingly it is regarded as one further tentative step towards determining whether the proposed spouse is, indeed, the ultimate life partner. The person who will meet all expectations and with whom it can be expected that one can live "happily ever after". However, the prospect of breaking off an engagement has, over time, become less and less daunting till today, it would appear, that many young people regard an engagement as something experimental.

Can we determine from scripture whether this practice is, in fact, scriptural and, if it is scriptural what it's significance is?

To start with, let us consider Matthew 1:18-25:

- 18 *Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: **After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.***

- 19 *Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, **was minded to put her away secretly.***
- 20 *But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.*
- 21 *"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."*
- 22 *So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:*
- 23 *"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*
- 24 ***Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,***
- 25 ***and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.***
(NKJ)

In considering this scripture it is important that we recall the previous discussion with regard to the word "gune" signifying wife, wives, woman and women . From consideration of the explanation in this section it is apparent that the use of the term wife in this passage could just as well read betrothed woman or unmarried woman according to context. Accordingly, there is no basis to allege that a betrothed woman is the wife of a man.

Likewise, the word "husband" in Matthew 1:19 does not in fact describe a marital state. This word in the Greek is "aner", Strong's number 435 of which Thayer says:

435 aner-

- 1) *with reference to sex*
 - a) used of a male
 - b) used of a husband
 - c) used of a betrothed or future husband
- 2) *with reference to age, and to distinguish an adult man from a boy*
- 3) *any male*
- 4) *used generically of a group of both men and women*

Further references with regard to the word "aner" are presented in Appendix J.

The word translated "betrothed" in Matthew 1:18 is the word "mnesteuo", Strong's number 3423 which Strong defines as follows:

3423 mnesteuo (mnace-tyoo'-o);

from a derivative of 3415; to give a souvenir (engagement present), i.e. betroth:

KJV-- espouse.

Thus it appears that betrothal is associated with the giving of a gift. The Lamsa translation of Matthew 1:18 makes this much clearer:

*18 The birth of Jesus Christ was in this manner. While Mary His mother **was acquired for a price for Joseph**, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.*

Thus we see that, based on the interpretation of this scripture by a man who grew up in a community where it is alleged that many practices still conform to those of bible times, refer appendix I, a girl was "acquired for a price". As best I can determine, betrothal was a legal contract between the parents of the girl and the would be husband or his parents, depending on the age of the man and the agreement was secured by some form of dowry or other financial payment or gift from the parents of the man. The girl was then betrothed and this brought about a particular standing in the community.

This is demonstrated clearly in the account of Abraham procuring a wife for his son Isaac.

Genesis 24:1-67 reports:

- 1 *Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.*
- 2 *So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please, put your hand under my thigh,*
- 3 *"and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell;*
- 4 *"but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."*
- 5 *And the servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?"*
- 6 *But Abraham said to him, "Beware that you do not take my son back there.*
- 7 *"The LORD God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land,' He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there.*
- 8 *"And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be released from this oath; only do not take my son back there."*
- 9 *So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.*
- 10 *Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, for all his master's goods were in his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor.*
- 11 *And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water.*
- 12 *Then he said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham.*
- 13 *"Behold, I stand here by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water.*
- 14 *"Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'-- let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master."*

- 15 *And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder.*
- 16 *Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up.*
- 17 *And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher."*
- 18 *So she said, "Drink, my lord." Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink.*
- 19 *And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking."*
- 20 *Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.*
- 21 *And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.*
- 22 *So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels of gold,*
- 23 *and said, "Whose daughter are you? Tell me, please, is there room in your father's house for us to lodge?"*
- 24 *So she said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah's son, whom she bore to Nahor."*
- 25 *Moreover she said to him, "We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge."*
- 26 *Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the LORD.*
- 27 *And he said, "Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."*
- 28 *So the young woman ran and told her mother's household these things.*
- 29 *Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well.*
- 30 *So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, "Thus the man spoke to me," that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well.*
- 31 *And he said, "Come in, O blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels."*
- 32 *Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him.*
- 33 *Food was set before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told about my errand." And he said, "Speak on."*
- 34 *So he said, "I am Abraham's servant.*
- 35 *"The LORD has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.*
- 36 *"And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has.*
- 37 *"Now my master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell;*
- 38 *'but you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.'*
- 39 *"And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me.'*

- 40 *"But he said to me, 'The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house.*
- 41 *'You will be clear from this oath when you arrive among my family; for if they will not give her to you, then you will be released from my oath.'*
- 42 *"And this day I came to the well and said, 'O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go,*
- 43 *'behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw water, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,"*
- 44 *'and she says to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,"-- let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.'*
- 45 *"But before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew water. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.'*
- 46 *"And she made haste and let her pitcher down from her shoulder, and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels a drink also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels a drink also.*
- 47 *"Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the nose ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists.*
- 48 *"And I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son.*
- 49 *"Now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."*
- 50 *Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing comes from the LORD; we cannot speak to you either bad or good.*
- 51 *"Here is Rebekah before you; take her and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken."***
- 52 *And it came to pass, when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he worshiped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth.***
- 53 *Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother.***
- 54 *And he and the men who were with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master."*
- 55 *But her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us a few days, at least ten; after that she may go."*
- 56 *And he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master."*
- 57 *So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally."*
- 58 *Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go."*
- 59 *So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men.*
- 60 *And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: "Our sister, may you become the mother of thousands of ten thousands; and may your descendants possess the gates of those who hate them."*
- 61 *Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.*

- 62 Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South.
- 63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming.
- 64 Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel;
- 65 for she had said to the servant, "Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?" And the servant said, "It is my master." So she took a veil and covered herself.
- 66 And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.
- 67 Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. (NKJ)**

This report clearly demonstrates that in verses 51-53, at the point that the agent of Abraham reached agreement with Rebekah and her family that she would marry Isaac, gifts were exchanged and it can reasonably be argued that at this point she was betrothed to Isaac. In verse 67, Isaac "took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her". There is no indication of any wedding ceremony or other preparation, they went into his mothers tent, Isaac "took", that is had sexual intercourse with, Rebekah and she became his wife.

We must therefore conclude that betrothal is a contract between the husband to be or his family and the bride to be and / or her family in terms of which an agreement is entered into that the man and the woman will marry. This agreement is secured by a gift or dowry which in Abrahams day was a substantial consideration if measured in monetary terms. Once this agreement had been entered into the virgin contractually belonged to the man and he was at liberty to make whatever arrangements might be agreed to with regard to the marriage ceremony. There is further discussion with regard to the Jewish tradition in terms of which, having betrothed a woman, the man would return to his fathers house to prepare a place for her where after he would return for her at any time of the day or night as soon as his preparations were complete and she was expected to be ready and waiting for him whenever he came. Just as we are expected to prepare ourselves and be ready and waiting for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to return for us at any time!

Can we have any doubt that the significance of betrothal has largely been lost in our society? Can we also have any doubt that marriage, arranged by wise parents, assisted by the Holy Spirit of God, is God's intended plan for choosing life partners NOT the process of random, lust driven, selection that is common in our society today? Is it any wonder that so many marriages end in divorce? Is it not a tragedy that those who style themselves as leaders in the church today teach principles which so comprehensively ignore the truths of scripture? Are they not, indeed, heaping up great wrath for themselves on the day of judgement?

17. DURATION OF BETROTHAL

Our society and the church in particular advocate lengthy engagements "to make sure". What sort of betrothal is it if one get's betrothed "to make sure"? Surely that is a reflection of our perverted understanding of vows and of marriage? Surely one a man and woman are betrothed that is an irrevocable statement of intention to get married. Can one draw any other conclusion from the scriptures quoted in these pages?

As best as one can determine in the case of Isaac and Rebekah as reported in **Genesis 24:51-67** reports:

51 "Here is Rebekah before you; take her and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken."

52 And it came to pass, when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he worshiped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth.

53 Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother.

54 And he and the men who were with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master."

55 But her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us a few days, at least ten; after that she may go."

56 And he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master."

57 So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally."

58 Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go."

59 So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men.

60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: "Our sister, may you become the mother of thousands of ten thousands; and may your descendants possess the gates of those who hate them."

61 Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.

62 Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South.

63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming.

64 Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel;

65 for she had said to the servant, "Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?" And the servant said, "It is my master." So she took a veil and covered herself.

66 And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

67 Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. (NKJ)

As best we can determine, the day after the betrothal "by arrangement" and sight unseen, Rebekah packed her bags and after a journey of probably a week or two came to Isaac. As best we can determine the marriage was immediately consummated with little fuss or celebration. There is no passage in scripture that I can identify that prescribes a lengthy waiting period after a decision has been taken to marry.

18. MARRIAGE FEASTS

Close examination of scripture reveals a number of references to marriage feasts and "the marriage supper of the lamb" but no reference to a ceremony with an officiating officer or priest. The form of ecumenical marriage practiced today is a ceremony derived from pagan practice which may have been instituted as little as five hundred years ago! This is discussed later in this document.

A few examples of marriage feasts in scripture include:

Genesis 29:20-30 describes the wedding of Jacob and Leah:

- 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her.
- 21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her."
- 22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast.
- 23 Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her.
- 24 And Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid.
- 25 So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?"
- 26 And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.
- 27 "Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."
- 28 Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also.
- 29 And Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid.
- 30 Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years. (NKJ)

It is significant that Jacob did not realize that he had married Leah until the next morning. In other words, he consummated the marriage in the dark or with a woman who was veiled. There is no indication of any vows or "marriage ceremony" before he took her to bed. **After a SEVEN DAY FEAST he consummated a marriage with a woman who was not the woman he was contracted to marry and yet he still accepted that he was married!**

Judges 14:1-20 describes the marriage of Samson:

- 1 Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines.
- 2 So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife."
- 3 Then his father and mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well."
- 4 But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD-- that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.
- 5 So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him.
- 6 And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.
- 7 Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.
- 8 After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion.
- 9 He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.

- 10 So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so.
- 11 And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.
- 12 Then Samson said to them, "Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.
- 13 "But if you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing." And they said to him, "Pose your riddle, that we may hear it."
- 14 So he said to them: "Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet." Now for three days they could not explain the riddle.
- 15 But it came to pass on the seventh day that they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband, that he may explain the riddle to us, or else we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us in order to take what is ours? Is that not so?"
- 16 Then Samson's wife wept on him, and said, "You only hate me! You do not love me! You have posed a riddle to the sons of my people, but you have not explained it to me." And he said to her, "Look, I have not explained it to my father or my mother; so should I explain it to you?"
- 17 Now she had wept on him the seven days while their feast lasted. And it happened on the seventh day that he told her, because she pressed him so much. Then she explained the riddle to the sons of her people.
- 18 So the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down: "What is sweeter than honey? And what is stronger than a lion?" And he said to them: "If you had not plowed with my heifer, you would not have solved my riddle!"
- 19 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes of clothing to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father's house.
- 20 And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man. (NKJ)

Again we see a seven day feast but no indication of any formal marriage ceremony.

Esther 2:18 describes the feast given by King Ahasuerus after he had consummated his relationship with Esther:

- 18 Then the king made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king. (NKJ)

John 2:1-11 describes the wedding feast at which Jesus turned water into wine:

- 1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.
- 2 Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.
- 3 And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."
- 4 Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."
- 5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."
- 6 Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.
- 7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim.

- 8 *And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.*
- 9 *When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.*
- 10 *And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"*
- 11 *This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. (NKJ)*

Matthew 25:1-13 describes a wedding feast:

- 1 *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.*
- 2 *"Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.*
- 3 *"Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them,*
- 4 *"but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*
- 5 *"But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.*
- 6 *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'*
- 7 *"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.*
- 8 *"And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'*
- 9 *"But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'*
- 10 *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*
- 11 *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'*
- 12 *"But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*
- 13 *"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming. (NKJ)*

At this wedding, ten virgins, a type of the body of Christ, apparently prepare to marry the same man at one time. It is notable that there is no indication of the exact time at which the wedding feast will commence.

Matthew 22:1-14 speaks of another wedding feast:

- 1 *And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said:*
- 2 *"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,*
- 3 *"and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.*
- 4 *"Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding."'*
- 5 *"But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business.*
- 6 *"And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.*
- 7 *"But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.*

- 8 *"Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.*
 9 *'Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'*
 10 *"So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.*
 11 *"But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.*
 12 *"So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.*
 13 *"Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*
 14 *"For many are called, but few are chosen." (NKJ)*

Again it appears that there was no prior notification of the exact time at which the wedding feast would commence. It seems that once the bridegroom and his family were ready he would go and fetch the bride and the guests were expected to drop everything and come!

Revelation 19:6-9 describes the ultimate wedding supper:

- 6 *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!*
 7 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."
 8 *And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*
 9 *Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." (NKJ)**

Significantly this passage states that *"His wife has made herself ready"*, thus we see the thought of some of the previous marriage feasts carried through. The wife made herself ready and expectantly waited for the bride groom. If we consider the false doctrines and heresies unveiled in this book can we truly say that the bride is ready at this time?

Thus we see that our modern paradigm of a society wedding, scheduled months in advance, generally to suit the brides preferences with regard to date and venue, seems to be a far cry from the wedding feast of scripture. It has no legal standing, there is no "wedding ceremony" with an officiating officer and even if the bridegroom gets into bed with the wrong woman he is still married to her, but he is free to marry the correct woman at his convenience!

19. CONSUMMATION OF MARRIAGE

In our society today there is an overwhelming belief that marriage consists of a series of vows administered by a licenced officer in front of witnesses. Is this supported by scripture?

Genesis 24:67 quoted above reports:

- 67 *Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. (NKJ)*

In this case it seems clear that Isaac had sexual intercourse with Rebekah and she became his wife. Let us consider a few other scriptures:

Genesis 4:19:

19 Then Lamech **took for himself two wives**: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. (NKJ)

Genesis 6:2:

2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they **took wives** for themselves of all whom they chose. (NKJ)

Genesis 11:29:

29 Then Abram and Nahor **took wives**: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. (NKJ)

Genesis 25:1:

1 Abraham again **took a wife**, and her name was Keturah. (NKJ)

Genesis 26:34:

34 When Esau was forty years old, he **took as wives** Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. (NKJ)

Genesis 38:6:

6 Then **Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn**, and her name was Tamar. (NKJ)

Strong defines the word "took", Strong's number 3947 laqach (law-kakh');

a primitive root; to take (in the widest variety of applications):

KJV-- accept, bring, buy, carry away, drawn, fetch, get, infold, X many, mingle, place, receive (-ing), reserve, seize, send for, take (away, -ing, up), use, win.

Consider also that Deuteronomy 22:13-19, discussed elsewhere in this book is quite clear:

13 "If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and detests her,

14 "and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,'

15 "then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the evidence of the young woman's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate.

16 "And the young woman's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her;

17 'now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, "I found your daughter was not a virgin," and yet these are the evidences of my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 "Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him;

19 *"and they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days. (NKJ)*

Deuteronomy 22:28-29, extends this to include the case of a man who seizes a young woman:

28 *"If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out,*

29 *"then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce [put away] her all his days. (NKJ)*

In this case can there be any doubt that the act of sexual intercourse has brought about a state of marriage? In other words, sexual intercourse with a virgin who is not betrothed IS MARRIAGE. This argument is consistently supported by much that appears in this book, clearly established the blood covenant of marriage is cut in the flesh of the virgin bride through the perforation of the hymen.

This principle finds practical application in Judges 21:15-23:

15 *And the people grieved for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a void in the tribes of Israel.*

16 *Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who remain, since the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?"*

17 *And they said, "There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel.*

18 *"However, we cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the children of Israel have sworn an oath, saying, 'Cursed be the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.'"*

19 *Then they said, "In fact, there is a yearly feast of the LORD in Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah."*

20 *Therefore they instructed the children of Benjamin, saying, "Go, lie in wait in the vineyards,*

21 *"and watch; and just when the daughters of Shiloh come out to perform their dances, then come out from the vineyards, and every man catch a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh; then go to the land of Benjamin.*

22 *"Then it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, that we will say to them, 'Be kind to them for our sakes, because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; for it is not as though you have given the women to them at this time, making yourselves guilty of your oath.'"*

23 *And the children of Benjamin did so; they took enough wives for their number from those who danced, whom they caught. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and they rebuilt the cities and dwelt in them. (NKJ)*

Our society today may call this thing "barbaric", however it is in scripture and it is according to scripture. The bottom line is that once a man has taken a virgin sexually she is his wife!

20. MARRIAGE OF CONVERTS TO SPOUSES WHO DO NOT CONVERT

21. SOME CONTROVERSIAL QUESTIONS

Quote from notes on World Aflame on laws not in scripture page 130 the freedom to do what is not specifically banned. God wants us to use our own judgment- Hermeneutics and Pharisaism

Quote also from Barclay

While, in principle I would hope that by this time many questions have been answered, there are further questions which are likely arise to which certain individuals will desire an answer. Unfortunately some of these questions deal with issues which you may find offensive. If this is the case I would urge you to skip over the following sections, however, they deal with issues which are very real in the lives of many millions of people and therefore they are deserving of answers.

A. DIVISION OF SEXUAL ACTIVITY BETWEEN WIVES

One of the immediate objections that is offered to the idea of a man having more than one wife is that the existing wife will be short changed of her sexual favours. To the contrary, limited information at my disposal from speaking to several men who have more than one wife the indications are that a man's libido increases when he has more than one woman and that he is indeed able to satisfy his wives.

This also gives rise to a situation where a wife who does not desire to fall pregnant can manage the timing of her sexual contact with her husband to periods of the month where the probability of pregnancy is reduced. Since there are other wives she can do this without concern for short changing her husband.

B. MASTURBATION

Masturbation is a subject on which most Christian teachings are divided. It is alleged that scripture is silent on this topic. However, consider Leviticus 15:16-19:

16 'If any man has an emission of semen, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening.

17 'And any garment and any leather on which there is semen, it shall be washed with water, and be unclean until evening.

18 'Also, when a woman lies with a man, and there is an emission of semen, they shall bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

19 'If a woman has a discharge, and the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening. (NKJ)

Surely since there is no reference to how the emission comes about it is reasonable to assume that self stimulation could give rise to the emission referred to. In fact, practical experience would tend to suggest that, in general, a man does not have an emission of semen unless there is some form of masturbation.

Furthermore, verse 18 deals with an emission of semen during sexual intercourse, presumably preferring to any semen which does not remain within the woman's body but which is discharged onto either of their bodies or flows out of her body after withdrawal. Surely this is likely to be a routine occurrence where a man has sexual intercourse with his wife, in other words, such emission is not sinful, it is simply a routine emission which brings about a state of uncleanness in the sight of our Holy God which precludes the people concerned from participating in certain rites of temple worship.

Note further that verse 19 deals with the menstrual discharge of a woman which, in terms of the way in which God created woman, she is obliged to experience every month for a period of approximately seven days. Therefore, while scripture declares her unclean during this period it does not in any way suggest that she has sinned or done wrong in the sight of God.

From this passage of scripture it must appear that Yahweh does not necessarily regard seminal emission on the part of the man in response to self stimulation when he is not able to release his sexual tension with his wife as being unacceptable. It would seem that the issue of whether masturbation on the part of the male is acceptable in the sight of God hinges more on the reasons and the thoughts that accompany it. Jesus made it quite clear in Matthew 5:28:

28 "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (NKJ)

On the basis that the word woman in this context almost certainly refers to a woman who is another man's wife we must surely conclude that masturbation while looking at pornography or fantasizing about a woman who is not one's wife is indeed sin. However, there does not appear to be any scripture that prevents a man who is away from home and has a sexual need from fantasizing about his wife or wives. A man who is well known to me claims that he has had experience in terms of the one flesh bond where such fantasy has been fulfilling and brought him seemingly spiritually closer to the woman in question. Whether or not this is technically the case in the spiritual realm it does appear that there is absolutely no reason why a man should not masturbate provided his thoughts are directed at his wife and it is not something which becomes an idol in his life or a substitute for sex.

Insofar as it appears that most women are capable of orgasm by clitoral stimulation and insofar as the clitoris is readily accessible for self stimulation without requiring vaginal penetration and therefore damage of the hymen in virgins one most presumably conclude that there is no reason why a woman who is not with her husband should not release sexual tension by self stimulation of her clitoris. Again the caveat must presumably be that she should not fantasize or think about any man other than her husband.

C. OTHER HUSBAND - WIFE SEXUAL CONTACT

By extension of the thoughts in the previous section it would appear that there is absolutely no scriptural reason why a husband and wife or wives should not participate in mutual sexual stimulation including masturbation to orgasm and ejaculation.

By further extension, there appears to be no scripture which prevents a woman from orally stimulating her husband or from bringing him to climax in her mouth and conversely there is no scripture to prevent her husband from orally stimulating her vulva and clitoris and bringing her to climax in this way. Whether they do so in practice is a matter of personal taste and preference and there is not any scripture that I have been able to identify which prohibits such contact.

Taking this one step further we find a challenging concept in Leviticus 18:22:

22 'You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. (NKJ)

This is confirmed in Leviticus 20:13:

13 'If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them. (NKJ)

Clearly this refers to homosexual contact between two men which, I am told, generally involves anal penetration of the one male by the other. This must surely be the sense of both the above scriptures. Reference to other scriptures in which the same Hebrew word "shakab", here translated "lie" indicates that it refers to carnal intercourse or copulation. This raises the challenging extension that if scripture says that man should not copulate with a man as he copulates with a woman and since man does not have a vagina, the reference must be to anal penetration. The extension would seem to suggest that scripture does not prevent anal penetration of a woman by her husband. Insofar as there are secular writings which indicate that many men and women do, indeed, enjoy anal penetration of the woman as a sexual derivative and form of contraception, it would seem that this is not against scripture.

Again, as offensive as one may find this suggestion, we must surely abide by the prerequisite that if we cannot support our opinion with scripture we should be cautious about imposing our opinions on others. I am not advocating that men should penetrate their wives anally but I am stating that should a man and wife choose to experiment this way or include this in their sexual repertoire, as far as I can determine, there is no scripture to prevent it. In considering this statement, consider also that Yahweh, who knows all things, has seen fit to create man and woman such that anal penetration of the wife by the husband is mechanically possible and such that some women in particular claim to find such penetration pleasurable. Is it possible that this is a form of contraception that God intended from the start? I do not wish to enter into this speculation, only to say we do not know and, unless someone can find a scripture which clearly prohibits such conduct, we should refrain from condemning any person.

D. SEXUAL CONTACT BETWEEN WIVES

It is noted that there is no scripture which prohibits the wives of the same man from being sexually intimate with one another. Today this is generally labelled "lesbianism" but it appears that lesbianism may include the connotation of two women living together as "husband" and "wife" with one of the women being termed "butch" and playing a pseudo male role. It would seem that this is, indeed an abomination in the sight of God but there is no real scripture to confirm this other than perhaps what is referred to in Romans 1:24-32:

- 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,*
- 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*
- 26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.*
- 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.*
- 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;*
- 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,*
- 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,*
- 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;*
- 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. (NKJ)*

Overall, however, it would appear that there is no scripture which prevents two women, married to the same man, from being sexually intimate with one another, either alone or in the presence of their husband, there is also no scripture which prevents a man from being sexually intimate with two or more wives simultaneously.

There are, however, some scriptures which suggest that sexual exposure between women may have been quite accepted in Bible times.

Consider Genesis 30:1-5:

- 1 *Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"*
- 2 *And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"*
- 3 *So she said, "**Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her.**"*
- 4 *Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her.*
- 5 *And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. (NKJ)*

Furthermore, history suggests that in Bible times many people lived in single room houses. This seems to be supported by Luke 11:5-10:

- 5 *And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves;*
- 6 *'for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him';*
- 7 *"and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, **and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'**?"*
- 8 *"I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.*
- 9 *"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*
- 10 *"For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. (NKJ)*

Presumably, if the man's children are in bed with him, so is his wife or wives? By implication real privacy may have been somewhat restricted in such a dwelling place. I have not researched this but it would seem that this situation must still persist in billions of low income dwellings around the world where the entire family dwells in a single space. In such circumstances it could well be difficult for a man to have intercourse with one wife without any other wives witnessing the act and therefore it would seem not unreasonable to conclude that they might participate?

Again, I am not seeking to be contentious but the reality is that there are millions of men and women in the world who regularly participate in sexual situations in which more than one woman participates in sexual intercourse with one man at the same time. If such people are to become Christians and there is no scriptural prohibition on a form of sexual activity that they are accustomed to and enjoy, surely it is incumbent on all of us not to set hurdles in their way in the name of Christ by telling them that Christ has prohibited such conduct if we do not have robust scriptural evidence to support this view? I know a man who claims to have asked God about this specific issue and who claims that he

received a vision from God in which God led him to a specific magazine in a specific shop to demonstrate to him that, in the sight of God, there was no objection to a man being sexually intimate with two wives at the same time and that God had no objection to those two wives being sexually intimate in the absence of their husband. Such a situation fully accommodates the sexual needs of a man's wives when he is absent from home and removes sexual tension on the part of the wives as a justification for adultery or divorce. If this is the case we would all be well advised not to preach or teach against such conduct between a husband and his wives.

22. THE SCRIPTURAL AGE OF WOMEN AT MARRIAGE

While dealing with some of the more directly controversial aspects of current doctrine at the level of individual conduct, let us consider again the question of the age at which Yahweh intended men and women to marry which has already been touched on in previous sections.

In this specific regard some years ago I was led by the Lord to pick up a copy of "The Talmud, The Steinsaltz Edition, Volume IX, Tractate Ketubot, Part III dealing specifically with the following passages of scripture as set out in the "Introduction to Chapter Three":

"And if a man seduces a virgin who has not been betrothed and lies with her, he shall surely make her his wife. If her father will surely refuse to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins." (Exodus 22:15-16.)

"If a man finds a virgin na'arah who has not been betrothed, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are found, then the man who lay with her shall give to the father of the na'arah fifty pieces of silver, and she shall be his wife, for he has humbled her. He cannot let her go all his days." (Deuteronomy 22:28-29.)

The opening commentary states:

"The laws concerning the seducer or the rapist of a girl between twelve and twelve-and-a-half years old are stated explicitly in the Torah. However, because these laws are written in a very terse style, many questions demanding practical Halakhic solutions remain open."

Subsequently, under the heading "Concepts" the following statement is made:

"And from when she produces two pubic hairs until she becomes mature. The Halakhah defines legal majority in terms of sexual maturity. Hence it is signalled by the growth of pubic hair ("two hairs"). Although this sign usually appears close to the age of adolescence (thirteen for a boy, twelve for a girl), it is merely the beginning of a process, which continues for a certain time until the child has indeed attained full sexual maturity (not, however, the completion of his or her physical or spiritual growth). According to the Halakhah, we assume that this period lasts no longer than six months. During the transitional stage children, especially girls, have a special Halakhic status. The girl is called a na'arah, and her father retains some authority over her, as when she was a minor. special laws (regarding rape, or sexual promiscuity) also apply to the na'arah to with respect to her sexual status. After six months have elapsed, the girl becomes mature and is entirely independent, and the laws applying to adult women apply to her."

The Talmud goes into great detail regarding the interpretation of these scriptures at a level of detail which is not relevant to this discussion. Much of this detail is also, as best I can determine, legalistic and not inspired by the Spirit of God as it seems to give rise to distinctions which defeat what seems

to me to be the Spirit of the Word of God as I have understood it and set out to record it in these pages. This is not to say that there is not other material in the Talmud pertaining to this subject which may be relevant. For example there is a ruling to the effect that sexual intercourse with a girl under three years old "*is not considered true intercourse for any legal purpose*", a statement that I have to admit to having great difficulty with. Sexual intercourse with a girl above the age of three years old IS considered Halakhically significant. Again, while most of us find the idea of sexual intercourse with a girl over three years and under twelve years highly offensive it is important that we realize that the body of learning of the Jews dating back to the days of Jesus clearly indicate that the age of sexual, spiritual and legal maturity of a girl is twelve and a half years.

A further reference is obtained from a document entitled "The Gospel of the Birth of Mary" published in a volume entitled "The Lost Books of the Bible published in New York on January 1, 1926, which I obtained from the Library of the University of South Africa. The document is alleged to have been referenced by Jerome and to date back to about the fourth century. I have not way of validating this claim and it is not central to my reason for quoting the extract that follows. Equally, it is clear that the document is NOT inspired of God and is, at best, a fanciful fairy tale which contains much which is not scriptural. However, recognizing that it is a work of some antiquity it seems to me that the following passage is of some significance. In chapter V, verses 3 and 4, the following is reported:

*So that when at length she arrived to her **fourteenth year**, At that time the high-priest made a public order. That all virgins who had public settlements in the temple, and were come to this age, should return home, and **as they were now of a proper maturity, should, according to the custom of their country, endeavour to be married.***

We thus have a second independent source of some antiquity which indicates that an age of not more than fourteen years was the age at which a girl should marry.

As with much in this document which readers may find offensive, it is important that we understand why this is relevant. May I suggest the following:

- i. If God designed a girl to marry at twelve and a half, the age at which she becomes sexually aware, then to impute bad morals to a girl of this age or older who develops an intense interest in sex, as happens typically when a girl is between twelve and fifteen, is to be extremely unjust.
- ii. Assuming that the Talmud is accurate, which I truly believe that it is, then according to God's plan is that as soon as a girl becomes sexually aware she will be married.
- iii. In such a situation all her sexual energy and interest will, from the beginning, be focused on her husband and she will devote herself entirely to pleasing him.
- iv. Assuming that, in general, the husband would be several years older, a point which I will develop shortly, it would be relatively easy for such a young girl, whose personality was still being formed and who had no worldly experience, to reverence and submit to her older and more experienced husband in accordance with scripture.
- v. Under such a dispensation the idea of a teenage woman dating numerous boys, flirtations, crushes, "puppy love" and numerous other phenomena which we today take for granted as part of growing up would not occur. There would further be no need for parents to concern themselves with girls getting involved in "french kissing", petting and other activities which

could place their emotions and their virginity at risk. All such energy and experimentation and emotion would be singularly focused on the husband of their youth.

- vi. Can there be any doubt that a marriage consummated under such circumstances would have a much better prospect of success, particularly within a culture of scriptural orthodoxy which considered marriage for life to be a commitment expected of both husband and wife?
- vii. Again, the clear caveat is that the husband and the wife should be true believers and that the husband should be a relatively mature man of God who was truly seeking to become like Jesus.

I have no doubt that the above interpretation is substantially correct and that, accordingly, those who constantly condemn the sexual tendencies of the youth should stop and carefully examine who is responsible for the condition in which the youth find themselves. If in fact it is the adults of this generation who are imposing a perverse and unscriptural doctrine which they, in their youth found to be burdensome, is it not time that the doctrine was brought into line with scripture?

23. THE SCRIPTURAL AGE OF MEN AT MARRIAGE

Having made the above points about women it is relevant to consider the age that scripture indicates for a man to marry.

In the first instance there are a number of examples of men who married for the first time at forty:

Genesis 25:20 states:

*20 Isaac was **forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife**, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian. (NKJ)*

Genesis 26:34 states:

*34 **When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives** Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. (NKJ)*

Careful reading of scripture would seem to indicate that Moses was about forty years old when he married Zipporah in Midian. As best I understand it, David was probably in his fifties or sixties when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and took her as his wife. Accordingly there is reasonable scriptural basis to indicate men in their forties and older marrying twelve year old virgins!

There are a significant number of scriptures which refer to men above the age of twenty as being effectively adult:

Exodus 38:25-26 states:

*25 And the silver from those who were numbered of the congregation was one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary:
26 a bekah **for each man** (that is, half a shekel, according to the shekel of the sanctuary), for everyone included in the numbering **from twenty years old and above**, for six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty men. (NKJ)*

Numbers 1:1-3 states:

1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying:

- 2 *"Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, **every male individually,***
- 3 ***"from twenty years old and above-- all who are able to go to war in Israel. You and Aaron shall number them by their armies. (NKJ)***

Numbers 14:28-32 states:

- 28 *"Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you:*
- 29 *'The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, **from twenty years old and above.***
- 30 *'Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in.*
- 31 *'But **your little ones,** whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised.*
- 32 *'But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. (NKJ)*

In all of these passages it appears that God attaches particular significance to the age of twenty for a male. Those above the age of twenty are "able to go to war", those less than twenty years old are not accountable and are classified as "little ones" in Numbers 14:31. It would therefore appear that Yahweh regards a male of twenty years old as being fully mature and accountable for his actions, presumably this would suggest that he is also ready for the responsibility of a wife and children?

If this is the case we see the minimum age gap between husband and wife envisaged by God as being approximately seven and a half years, a gap which would ensure that the husband was sufficiently mature and sufficiently older than his young wife that she would have no difficulty in accepting him as her head, in looking up to him, reverencing him and submitting to him as scripture requires. Do we not create a recipe for disaster in current social practice which generally sees both husband and wife in their early twenties with little or no age gap between them and the wife every bit as worldly and experienced as her husband? **How can we realistically expect a wife in such a situation to respect her husband and reverence him? How can we expect him to command her respect? And then the church perverts the Word of God to apply worldly principles to "marriage counselling" directed at making this ungodly recipe work in practice! Surely this is a stench and an abomination in the nostrils of the Most High God?!**

24. A MENSTRUATING WOMAN IS IMPURE

Leviticus 20:18, quoted in section with regard to God's definition of sexual sin, states:

- 18 ***'If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people.***

Ezekial 18:5-9 states:

- 5 ***But if a man is just and does what is lawful and right;***
- 6 ***If he has not eaten on the mountains, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, nor defiled his neighbor's wife, **nor approached a woman during her impurity;*****
- 7 ***If he has not oppressed anyone, but has restored to the debtor his pledge; has robbed no one by violence, but has given his bread to the hungry and covered the naked with clothing;***
- 8 ***If he has not exacted usury nor taken any increase, but has withdrawn his hand from iniquity and executed true judgment between man and man;***

9 *If he has walked in My statutes and kept My judgments faithfully-- he is just; he shall surely live!"*
Says the Lord GOD. (NKJ)

Surely this is quite clear, a man who approaches a woman during her impurity is not just and is not keeping the Lord's statutes AND WILL DIE or at least NOT surely live!

Leviticus 15:26-27 states:

26 *'Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity.*

27 *'Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. (NKJ)*

A husband is not so much as to touch whatever his wife sits on, let alone touch his wife! I wonder how many men and women are breaking this commandment? Do you think that this would happen to the same extent if those men had more than one wife? **Why is the church not teaching that sex during menstruation is not acceptable in the sight of God?**

In addition to the scriptures quoted above, consider Ezekial 22:10:

10 *"In you men uncover their fathers' nakedness; in you they violate women who are set apart during their impurity. (NKJ)*

Consider further Ezekial 36:17:

17 *"Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity. (NKJ)*

Can there be any doubt that Yahweh requires men and women to respect the period of separation for a menstruating woman?

25. THE UNLOVED WIFE

One of the most difficult scriptures for the modern church to accept in the context of what is taught in these pages must surely be the provisions for an unloved wife:

Deuteronomy 21:15-17 states:

15 *"If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, both the loved and the unloved, and if the firstborn son is of her who is unloved,*

16 *"then it shall be, on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, that he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the true firstborn.*

17 *"But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his. (NKJ)*

Here we have another passage with explicit provision for a man to have two wives at least.

In addition, we have explicit provision for one of those wives to be **unloved!!!** Surely this must squash the idea of one perfect partner, the idealistic searching for wife after wife and husband after husband,

scrapping each previous relationship in the process. Surely we are clearly taught by the scriptures recorded in these pages that once a man has married a woman they are married for life barring some very specific situations which permit divorce?

At the same time, this should not be cause for dismay on the part of such an unloved wife. Prayerful consideration of the contents of this book and particularly the scriptures presented in this section and the vision of marriage presented under the title "Wow! So that's how Jesus loves me!", reproduced in Appendix Q will reveal the steps that are necessary for an unloved wife to become loved. The case history clearly teaches that if a woman gives herself totally to a man, submits to him and meets his every sexual need, he CANNOT help but love her. God's recipe of simple loving reverence and submission is far more powerful than anything that Satan can throw at you. But, if you are an unloved wife, you may have to change your attitude to your husband AND to love making, dramatically. You should take particular note of the comments made in section on the love between husbands and wives.

God's plan for marriage is infinitely better than we know it to be and He has provided supernatural mechanisms to ensure that Godly marriage WILL WORK AND WILL BE GOOD.

CHAPTER 7: THE TRADITION OF THE ELDERS AND OTHER HERESIES

1. THE TRADITION OF THE ELDERS

On one occasion I was engaged in lengthy telephone discussion with a pastor and evangelist, who never having met me, opened his first telephone call to me by referring to me as a pervert for subscribing to what is set out in this book. Eventually, after repeatedly questioning him on why he called me a pervert, on the assumption that he must have some robust scriptural basis for such a harsh opinion, he finally conceded that he could not find a single scripture to refute me and that my knowledge on the matter was much greater than his.

His final response was that he must "*stand by the tradition of the elders*".

Unfortunately, the tradition of the elders does not stand up to scrutiny. Time does not permit a detailed discussion but the references are available. There are a number of books available which trace the decline of true Christian principles, based on the acceptance of the entire Word of God, as given to the Jews over several thousand years before Christ and consummated and completed in the Crucifixion of our Lord that completely and thoroughly refute "The Tradition of the Elders".

add sections and extracts

In simple terms, monogamy was a Roman practice around the time that Jesus walked the earth. The marriage customs in Rome were very similar to those in our world today. Men and women were divorcing on the slightest pretext, extra-marital affairs were common place and publicly accepted and

fornication was the order of the day. In reality it was these very practices to which Jesus was referring in Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:3-9 and Mark 10:2-12 (cited elsewhere) when he spoke of putting away and divorce. Is it not ironic that Jesus' very teachings against this practice are used to justify the false doctrine of monogamy today? Is that not heresy, if not blasphemy, of the worst kind?

details and quotes

Furthermore, monogamy was first officially promulgated by Justinian in about 600 AD, after he had married a reformed prostitute (could one argue that since she was denied a multitude of men she sought to deny her husband more than one wife? - it appears that she was a very dominant woman. Monogamy was officially instituted in the Jewish faith in about 900 AD, seemingly as a response to persecution by the so-called "Christian church". There is plenty of documentation on this whole subject and it's history available to those who will seek, yet it seems that the majority of those who call themselves by the name of Christ are not prepared to seek. It seems that they would rather stand on "the tradition of the elders" thereby condemning others to eternal damnation and themselves to harsh judgment.

Casual investigation will reveal that most Jews, certainly those who are reasonably well schooled in the Word of God, know these basic facts and **regard the "Christian doctrine of monogamy" as one of the key reasons why Jesus Christ cannot be the Messiah**. Most Moslems also know these truths and, again, the false doctrine of monogamy is one of the major reasons why they regard Christianity as a heretical religion, they have much greater reverence for the Word of God than most who call themselves "Christians". In fact, it seems possible that one of the reasons that Mohammed had such a following was in response to the extreme and ungodly actions of those who claimed to be Christians at the time that Mohammed lived. **We cannot regard the Moslems as heretics and unbelievers until we own, confess and repent of the unbelievable atrocities and heresies committed through the ages by those who have called themselves "Christian"**.

Is it not time to depart from the "heresies of the elders" and stop hiding behind "tradition"? Did not Jesus Himself, in Matthew 15:6 and Mark 7:13, state that the Pharisees made the Word of God of no effect by their traditions? Do you not fear the judgment of Jesus on your life for living the life of a Pharisee if you do not repent of your belief in the heresy of monogamy and speak the truth?

It is now time to depart from doctrines of demons and from forbidding those who would marry from marriage. Now is the time to speak the truth, to encourage those who have more than one wife to acknowledge their other wives and take them under their covering. Now is the time for those who have put away wives against the Word of God and who have remarried into adultery to recognize their sin, confess their sin and repent, returning to the husbands and wives that they married at first or at the very least to seek Yahweh to extend His grace to cover their past sin - but do not bank on it, we are judged on the Word of God, not our humanistic attempts to cover up our sin!

Consider Ezra 10:1-44:

- 1 Now while Ezra was praying, and while he was confessing, weeping, and bowing down before the house of God, a very large assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept very bitterly.*
- 2 And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra, "We have trespassed against our God, and have taken pagan wives from the peoples of the land; yet now there is hope in Israel in spite of this."*

- 3 **"Now therefore, let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these wives and those who have been born to them, according to the advice of my master and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.**
- 4 *"Arise, for this matter is your responsibility. We also are with you. Be of good courage, and do it."*
- 5 *Then Ezra arose, and made the leaders of the priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear an oath that they would do according to this word. So they swore an oath.*
- 6 *Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib; and when he came there, he ate no bread and drank no water, for he mourned because of the guilt of those from the captivity.*
- 7 *And they issued a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the descendants of the captivity, that they must gather at Jerusalem,*
- 8 *and that whoever would not come within three days, according to the instructions of the leaders and elders, all his property would be confiscated, and he himself would be separated from the assembly of those from the captivity.*
- 9 *So all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered at Jerusalem within three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth of the month; and all the people sat in the open square of the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of heavy rain.*
- 10 *Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have transgressed and have taken pagan wives, adding to the guilt of Israel.*
- 11 **"Now therefore, make confession to the LORD God of your fathers, and do His will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the pagan wives."**
- 12 *Then all the assembly answered and said with a loud voice, "Yes! As you have said, so we must do.*
- 13 *"But there are many people; it is the season for heavy rain, and we are not able to stand outside. Nor is this the work of one or two days, for there are many of us who have transgressed in this matter.*
- 14 *"Please, let the leaders of our entire assembly stand; and let all those in our cities who have taken pagan wives come at appointed times, together with the elders and judges of their cities, until the fierce wrath of our God is turned away from us in this matter."*
- 15 *Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite gave them support.*
- 16 *Then the descendants of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, with certain heads of the fathers' households, were set apart by the fathers' households, each of them by name; and they sat down on the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter.*
- 17 *By the first day of the first month they finished questioning all the men who had taken pagan wives.*
- 18 *And among the sons of the priests who had taken pagan wives the following were found of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah.*
- 19 **And they gave their promise that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they presented a ram of the flock as their trespass offering.**
- 20 *Also of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah;*
- 21 *of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah;*
- 22 *of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasa.*
- 23 *Also of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (the same is Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.*
- 24 *Also of the singers: Eliashib; and of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.*

- 25 *And others of Israel: of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Jeziah, Malchiah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah;*
- 26 *of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Eliah;*
- 27 *of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza;*
- 28 *of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai;*
- 29 *of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Ramoth;*
- 30 *of the sons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh;*
- 31 *of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,*
- 32 *Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah;*
- 33 *of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei;*
- 34 *of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel,*
- 35 *Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluh,*
- 36 *Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,*
- 37 *Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasai,*
- 38 *Bani, Binnui, Shimei,*
- 39 *Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,*
- 40 *Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,*
- 41 *Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,*
- 42 *Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph;*
- 43 *of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.*
- 44 ***All these had taken pagan wives, and some of them had wives by whom they had children. (NKJ)***

Surely, as much as Yahweh required the people of Israel to put away their pagan wives then, He will require the church of Jesus Christ to terminate their adulterous marriages today?

Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 4:1-3:

- 1 *Now the Spirit expressly says that **in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,***
- 2 *speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,*
- 3 ***forbidding to marry,*** and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. (NKJ)

Dear reader, can you doubt any longer that monogamy is a doctrine of demons and heresy of the worst kind? Will you continue to espouse such heresy at the risk of your eternal salvation, or will you cease to believe the lie and seek to refute it with every fibre of your being that you may indeed hear those words "well done thou good and faithful servant"?

Consider carefully Matthew 25:19-46:

- 19 ***"After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.***
- 20 *"So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'*
- 21 *"His lord said to him, '**Well done, good and faithful servant;** you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'*

- 22 "He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'
- 23 "His lord said to him, '**Well done, good and faithful servant;** you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'
- 24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.
- 25 'And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'
- 26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.
- 27 'So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.
- 28 'Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.
- 29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.
- 30 '**And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'**
- 31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.
- 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.
- 33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.
- 34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:
- 35 'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;
- 36 'I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'
- 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?
- 38 'When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?
- 39 'Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'
- 40 "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'
- 41 "**Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:**
- 42 'for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;
- 43 'I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'
- 44 "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'
- 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'
- 46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (NKJ)

Surely it cannot be much longer before our Lord returns and settles accounts with us? Surely we have received many talents, we have numerous translations of scripture, we have the Bible on computer, we have television, radio and numerous other resources. We, of all generations, have no excuse for not knowing what the Bible really says. Therefore, surely, much is expected of us and, if we do not take the treasure in the Word of God that has been given to us and use it wisely, we will stand condemned to everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels? Surely, if we have forbidden a man to take a second wife or forbidden a woman to marry a man who already has a wife and those people have subsequently fallen into sin, we shall be liable for a harsher judgment, will we not be told that, as much as we did that to the least of these we did it to Jesus?

2. FURTHER COMMENTS ON THE EVIDENCE OF VIRGINITY

As discussed in other section, our modern understanding of virginity is very limited and the sacredness of virginity is all but forgotten.

Deuteronomy 22:16 seems to suggest clearly that the father witnessed the defloration in order to be able to give evidence in support of his daughters virginity.

As much as our social system today finds the very thought of this offensive, sources indicate that this was not unheard of even in the last century in the United Kingdom where etchings exist depicting the entire bridal party observing the defloration. This was not a perverse act of voyeurism but a socially accepted procedure for ensuring that the bride was in fact a virgin and the marriage had indeed been consummated.

My objective is not to be offensive but only to demonstrate just how seriously virginity is viewed in the Word of God. AND how seriously it was viewed, even in the world, until relatively recently.

3. ECUMENICAL MARRIAGE

As an extension of the discussion regarding the falling away (apostasy) of the church over the past 2,000 years, it should be noted that ecumenical marriage, marriage by a "priest" or pastor, has only been in existence for about 500 years, prior to that marriage took place in a fashion much closer to scripture. A feast was held and the couple consummated the marriage.

Some years ago, the Lord led me to purchase a book quote on ecumenical marriage

Consider also the case of the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah, Genesis 24:64-67, discussed further in section regarding betrothal, and elsewhere, reports with regard to Rebekah on arrival from her father's house:

64 Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel;

65 for she had said to the servant, "Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?" And the servant said, "It is my master." So she took a veil and covered herself.

66 And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

67 Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. (NKJ)

As in every marriage reported in scripture, there is no evidence here of a priest, pastor, elder or ANYONE else, officiating at the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah. On the face of it, the scripture says that she got off the camel, met Isaac and went into his mother's tent with him whereupon he "took" her - in other words they had sexual intercourse and their marriage came into existence! Dare we

construct any other hypothesis based on the facts at our disposal? Certainly we may assume that there was some delay between her arrival and the consummation of the marriage but scripture does not specify any procedure nor does it report such a procedure anywhere as being a matter of necessity.

Consider also the case of Joseph and Mary. Matthew 1:18-25 reports:

- 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.*
- 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.*
- 20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.*
- 21 "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."*
- 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:*
- 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*
- 24 **Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,***
- 25 **and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.***
(NKJ)

On the face of the scripture, immediately he awoke, Joseph went and fetched his wife and she commenced living with him the day after the dream. This interpretation is entirely consistent with the bridegroom going to fetch his betrothed bride on a date of his choosing with no prior warning, as discussed in other section.

Consider also the report of Samson's marriage in Timnah in Judges 14:1-11:

- 1 Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines.*
- 2 So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife."*
- 3 Then his father and mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well."*
- 4 But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD-- that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.*
- 5 So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him.*
- 6 And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.*
- 7 **Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.***

- 8** *After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion.*
- 9 *He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.*
- 10** *So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so.*
- 11 *And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. (NKJ)*

Here we clearly see the bride groom returning to get his betrothed woman at a time of his choosing and then giving a feast in celebration which continued for seven days. Again there is no indication of an officiating official or any formal ceremony. The marriage was consummated in the marriage chamber.

Genesis 29:20-30 reports regarding the marriage of Jacob to Leah and Rachel:

- 20 *So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her.*
- 21 *Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her."*
- 22 *And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast.*
- 23** *Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her.*
- 24 *And Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid.*
- 25 *So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?"*
- 26 *And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.*
- 27 *"Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."*
- 28 *Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also.*
- 29 *And Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid.*
- 30** *Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years. (NKJ)*

Again, we see a feast of seven days where, on the evening of the first day the marriage is consummated. In this case, the bride was presented under false pretences. There can be little doubt that if the marriage had been performed by a "presiding officer" with an exchange of vows, Jacob would have realized that he was taking vows with the wrong woman - he had served seven years for Rachel and presumably knew her reasonably well. If he had taken vows with Rachel and that, in fact, constituted the marriage then Laban would have achieved nothing by giving Leah to Jacob in the evening. The only reason there was a marriage was as a consequence of the taking of Leah's virginity and, insofar as Jacob accepted that he had taken Leah's virginity, albeit under false pretences, he made no attempt that we no of to seek to have the marriage annulled. In other words he accepted that he was married! Yet, today, we would be told that Jacob was guilty of "premarital sex" with two woman and that he could only marry one of them. In fact, Jacob would probably be told to go to counselling with the pastor who would assist him to determine which of the two woman God wanted Jacob to marry, if indeed the pastor saw fit to determine on God's behalf that either of the two woman were

suitable marriage partners for Jacob such that the pastor would deem Jacob and the young lady worthy to receive the pastor's blessing and authorization of their marriage! What blasphemy!! Indeed surely the name of Yahweh and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is blasphemed because of this heresy!

As a final indicator, consider the marriage of Tobias as reported in the Apocryphal book of Tobit, chapters 6 to 8:

Chapter 6

- 1 And as they went on their journey, they came in the evening to the river Tigris, and they lodged there.*
- 2 And when the young man went down to wash himself, a fish leaped out of the river, and would have devoured him.*
- 3 Then the angel said unto him, Take the fish. And the young man laid hold of the fish, and drew it to land.*
- 4 To whom the angel said, Open the fish, and take the heart and the liver and the gall, and put them up safely.*
- 5 So the young man did as the angel commanded him; and when they had roasted the fish, they did eat it: then they both went on their way, till they drew near to Ecbatane.*
- 6 Then the young man said to the angel, Brother Azarias, to what use is the heart and the liver and the gall of the fish?*
- 7 And he said unto him, Touching the heart and the liver, if a devil or an evil spirit trouble any, we must make a smoke thereof before the man or the woman, and the party shall be no more vexed.*
- 8 As for the gall, it is good to anoint a man that hath whiteness in his eyes, and he shall be healed.*
- 9 And when they were come near to Rages,*
- 10 The angel said to the young man, Brother, **to day we shall lodge with Raguel, who is thy cousin; he also hath one only daughter, named Sara; I will speak for her, that she may be given thee for a wife.***
- 11 For to thee doth the right of her appertain, seeing thou only art of her kindred.*
- 12 And the maid is fair and wise: now therefore hear me, and I will speak to her father; and when we return from Rages we will celebrate the marriage: for I know that Raguel cannot marry her to another according to the law of Moses, but he shall be guilty of death, because the right of inheritance doth rather appertain to thee than to any other.*
- 13 Then the young man answered the angel, I have heard, brother Azarias, that this maid hath been given to seven men, who all died in the marriage chamber.*
- 14 And now I am the only son of my father, and I am afraid, lest, if I go in unto her, I die, as the other before: for a wicked spirit loveth her, which hurteth no body, but those which come unto her: wherefore I also fear lest I die, and bring my father's and my mother's life because of me to the grave with sorrow: for they have no other son to bury them.*
- 15 Then the angel said unto him, Dost thou not remember the precepts which thy father gave thee, that thou shouldest marry a wife of thine own kindred? wherefore hear me, O my brother; for she shall be given thee to wife; and make thou no reckoning of the evil spirit; for this same night shall she be given thee in marriage.*
- 16 And when thou shalt come into the marriage chamber, thou shalt take the ashes of perfume, and shalt lay upon them some of the heart and liver of the fish, and shalt make a smoke with it:*

17 *And the devil shall smell it, and flee away, and never come again any more: but when thou shalt come to her, rise up both of you, and pray to God which is merciful, who will have pity on you, and save you: fear not, for she is appointed unto thee from the beginning; and thou shalt preserve her, and she shall go with thee. Moreover I suppose that she shall bear thee children. Now when Tobias had heard these things, he loved her, and his heart was effectually joined to her.*

Chapter 7

1 *And when they were come to Ecbatane, they came to the house of Raguel, and Sara met them: and after they had saluted one another, she brought them into the house.*

2 *Then said Raguel to Edna his wife, How like is this young man to Tobit my cousin!*

3 *And Raguel asked them, From whence are ye, brethren? To whom they said, We are of the sons of Nephthalim, which are captives in Nineve.*

4 *Then he said to them, Do ye know Tobit our kinsman? And they said, We know him. Then said he, Is he in good health?*

5 *And they said, He is both alive, and in good health: and Tobias said, He is my father.*

6 *Then Raguel leaped up, and kissed him, and wept,*

7 *And blessed him, and said unto him, Thou art the son of an honest and good man. But when he had heard that Tobit was blind, he was sorrowful, and wept.*

8 *And likewise Edna his wife and Sara his daughter wept. Moreover they entertained them cheerfully; and after that they had killed a ram of the flock, they set store of meat on the table. Then said Tobias to Raphael, Brother Azarias, speak of those things of which thou didst talk in the way, and let this business be dispatched.*

9 *So he communicated the matter with Raguel: and Raguel said to Tobias, Eat and drink, and make merry:*

10 *For it is meet that thou shouldest marry my daughter: nevertheless I will declare unto thee the truth.*

11 *I have given my daughter in marriage to seven men, who died that night they came in unto her: nevertheless for the present be merry. **But Tobias said, I will eat nothing here, till we agree and swear one to another.***

12 *Raguel said, **Then take her from henceforth according to the manner, for thou art her cousin, and she is thine, and the merciful God give you good success in all things.***

13 *Then he called his daughter Sara, and she came to her father, and he took her by the hand, and gave her to be wife to Tobias, saying, **Behold, take her after the law of Moses, and lead her away to thy father. And he blessed them;***

14 *And called Edna his wife, and took paper, and did write an instrument of covenants, and sealed it.*

15 *Then they began to eat.*

16 *After Raguel called his wife Edna, and said unto her, **Sister, prepare another chamber, and bring her in thither.***

17 *Which when she had done as he had bidden her, she brought her thither: and she wept, and she received the tears of her daughter, and said unto her,*

18 ***Be of good comfort, my daughter; the Lord of heaven and earth give thee joy for this thy sorrow: be of good comfort, my daughter.***

Chapter 8

- 1 *And when they had supped, they brought Tobias in unto her.*
- 2 *And as he went, he remembered the words of Raphael, and took the ashes of the perfumes, and put the heart and the liver of the fish thereupon, and made a smoke therewith.*
- 3 *The which smell when the evil spirit had smelled, he fled into the utmost parts of Egypt, and the angel bound him.*
- 4 *And after that they were both shut in together, Tobias rose out of the bed, and said, Sister, arise, and let us pray that God would have pity on us.*
- 5 *Then began Tobias to say, Blessed art thou, O God of our fathers, and blessed is thy holy and glorious name for ever; let the heavens bless thee, and all thy creatures.*
- 6 *Thou madest Adam, and gavest him Eve his wife for an helper and stay: of them came mankind: thou hast said, It is not good that man should be alone; let us make unto him an aid like unto himself.*
- 7 *And now, O Lord, I take not this my sister for lush but uprightly: therefore mercifully ordain that we may become aged together.*
- 8 *And she said with him, Amen.*
- 9 *So they slept both that night. And Raguel arose, and went and made a grave,*
- 10 *Saying, I fear lest he also be dead.*
- 11 *But when Raguel was come into his house,*
- 12 *He said unto his wife Edna. Send one of the maids, and let her see whether he be alive: if he be not, that we may bury him, and no man know it.*
- 13 *So the maid opened the door, and went in, and found them both asleep,*
- 14 *And came forth, and told them that he was alive.*
- 15 *Then Raguel praised God, and said, O God, thou art worthy to be praised with all pure and holy praise; therefore let thy saints praise thee with all thy creatures; and let all thine angels and thine elect praise thee for ever.*
- 16 *Thou art to be praised, for thou hast made me joyful; and that is not come to me which I suspected; but thou hast dealt with us according to thy great mercy.*
- 17 *Thou art to be praised because thou hast had mercy of two that were the only begotten children of their fathers: grant them mercy, O Lord, and finish their life in health with joy and mercy.*
- 18 *Then Raguel bade his servants to fill the grave.*
- 19 *And he kept the wedding feast fourteen days.*
- 20 *For before the days of the marriage were finished, Raguel had said unto him by an oath, that he should not depart till the fourteen days of the marriage were expired;*
- 21 *And then he should take the half of his goods, and go in safety to his father; and should have the rest when I and my wife be dead. The King James Version Apocrypha, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.*

Ignoring the many aspects of this story which have a fairy tale quality to them and which appear to stretch scripture as far as the conduct of angels, deliverance from demons and other aspects are concerned, let us consider only the sequence of events. Tobias, accompanied by his companion, arrived at the house, declared who they were, agreed to the marriage, signed an agreement, ate a meal and consummated the marriage. Here we have a very detailed account of an old testament marriage and we clearly see that there is no ceremony and certainly no third party officiating. The marriage came into existence when it was consummated!

Ecumenical marriage is a necessary device if one fails to accept the taking of virginity as the seal of the marriage covenant which in turn must be done in order to support a doctrine of monogamy. If a man can take the virginity of many virgins but only marry one woman then virginity cannot be marriage and some authority other than God must declare a marriage!

4. WEDDING RINGS

add references

Wedding rings go back further than marriage by a priest or pastor, they are in fact a pagan tradition dating from the time of Christ. Effectively they were instituted because the safety seal of virginity was no longer considered relevant and Satan needed an alternative device to substitute for it. Thus we see rings which have no scriptural significance, taking the place of virginity and millions if not billions of souls potentially headed for hell or already in hell as a result. At the same time, internationally respected "men of God" preach and teach that rings are a scriptural component of the marriage covenant despite having no scripture to base their teaching on. Some even construct a hypothesis based on the ring being a substitute for a cut in the flesh of the ring finger which constituted the former method of "cutting covenant" in marriage and yet cannot and will not recognize that the virgin flesh of the bride is the God given mechanism for cutting covenant.

Again, the heresy of monogamy requires that some other device be provided as a symbol of the marriage covenant where the virginity of a woman would otherwise serve as proof positive of her marital status except in the cases of widowhood and Holy Spirit authorized divorce.

5. MARRIAGE COUNSELLING AND THE PERFECT PARTNER

As an extension of the previous points, today it has become increasingly prevalent for pastors in their office of pagan priests officiating over pagan marriage ceremonies dressed up in the name of Jesus Christ to further set themselves up as judges of the suitability of couples to marry and divorce. Today it is a challenge in many communities for a man and woman who love God, to get married in church in a socially acceptable fashion, without the church insisting that they undergo a lengthy period of premarital "marriage counselling" during which the pastor claims the prerogative to assist the parties to determine whether they are the "life partners" which God has appointed for one another. In the process the pastor may reserve the right to refuse to marry the couple if he thinks they are unsuited, even if they have already had sexual intercourse.

I sincerely hope that by the time you have read all that precedes this section you will realize that nowhere in scripture does God ordain any man to perform this role, that the role is pagan, heretical and blasphemous and also totally inappropriate.

The reality is that if the couple have had sexual intercourse they are married in the sight of God and nothing that any man does can change that, save that the day the father of the woman finds out he has the prerogative to terminate the relationship in terms of Exodus 22:16-17.

The further reality is that if the woman had had sexual intercourse with another man before this they are in adultery and there is no basis for marriage unless the woman is truly a widow or God truly permitted her to divorce. On these two points alone may I submit to you that probably in excess of seventy percent of all "marriage counselling" in the church today is a total farce and heresy bordering on blasphemy!

CHAPTER 8: CONSEQUENCES OF THE HERESY OF MONOGAMY AND RELATED FALSE DOCTRINES

A variety of consequences flow from the heretical doctrine of monogamy and the related false doctrines discussed in this book. These are briefly summarized below:

1. TOUCHING GOD'S ANOINTED AND DOING HIS PROPHETS HARM

Psalm 105:7-17, also reported in 1 Chr 16 states:

- 7 *He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.*
- 8 *He remembers His covenant forever, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations,*
- 9 *The covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac,*
- 10 *And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant,*
- 11 *Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the allotment of your inheritance,"*
- 12 *When they were few in number, indeed very few, and strangers in it.*
- 13 *When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people,*
- 14 *He permitted no one to do them wrong; yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes,*
- 15 *Saying, "**Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm.**"*
- 16 *Moreover He called for a famine in the land; he destroyed all the provision of bread.*
- 17 *He sent a man before them-- Joseph-- who was sold as a slave. (NKJ)*

1 Samuel 26:7-12 reports:

- 7 *So David and Abishai came to the people by night; and there Saul lay sleeping within the camp, with his spear stuck in the ground by his head. And Abner and the people lay all around him.*
- 8 *Then Abishai said to David, "God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear, right to the earth; and I will not have to strike him a second time!"*
- 9 *And David said to Abishai, "**Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?**"*
- 10 *David said furthermore, "As the LORD lives, the LORD shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish.*
- 11 ***"The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD'S anointed. But please, take now the spear and the jug of water that are by his head, and let us go."***
- 12 *So David took the spear and the jug of water by Saul's head, and they got away; and no man saw it or knew it or awoke. For they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen on them. (NKJ)*

Here we clearly see David, years after he was anointed by God to be king over Israel in 1 Samuel 16, fleeing from Saul who was rejected by God from being king in 1 Samuel 15 (before David was anointed), refusing to kill or even harm Saul when he had the opportunity. If it was so clear to David whom God calls "a man after my own heart" in 1 Samuel 13:14 and Acts 13:22 that he should not exact judgment or vengeance on Saul or even kill Saul in self defence, then surely it is inconceivable that there is any circumstance in which any one today should do anything to harm any man whom God has anointed or whom God may have anointed?

Yet I have heard a number of messages preached and also read a number of texts which condemn Abraham as an adulterer because he took Hagar as a second wife. Other messages condemn David for having adultery in his heart and therefore marrying more than one woman against the word of God. In the process the church totally destroys the standing of Abraham and David as Patriarchs who should provide role models for Godly men in marriage and sets up it's own pagan standards. At the same time God, Himself, is made out to be capricious and to condone sin because he still used Abraham and David "despite their adultery"! Surely this is the most appalling heresy?! In the process the real definition of adultery is totally hidden from view and adultery is rampant with the blessing of those who set themselves up to judge Abraham and David!

Thus we see that men and women who truly are seeking to love God with all their hearts, all their minds, all their soul and all their strength (Deuteronomy 6:5, Mark 12:30 and Luke 10:27) may well find themselves facing a harsh judgment (James 3:1) and possibly cast into outer darkness.

Matthew 22:13-14 states:

13 *"Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

14 *"For many are called, but few are chosen." (NKJ)*

Where they may genuinely have expected themselves to be called up higher at the feast to a place of honour or even to have sat on a throne with Christ for eternity. Joyner, on page 118 of *The Final Quest*, reports that most of the thrones in heaven are currently empty but that Jesus says that they could have been filled in any generation. Joyner also reports a "great reformer" and others who are greatly esteemed on earth who today are situated in the outermost courts of heaven because they failed to do what God had called them to do and caused others to stumble! Surely, if you love God and fear His judgment you must revise your thinking on the issues raised in this book and proclaim these truths from the roof tops.

2. A STUMBLING BLOCK FOR THE JEWS

Most Jews know that the Bible permits a man to have more than one wife, for example, The Living Torah, in a footnote to Exodus 21:10 states:

another wife, Polygamy (sic) was permitted by Torah Law. It was only forbidden later by a ban pronounced by all European rabbis under the leadership of Rabbenu Gershom (circa 965-1029).

Apart from the fact that this text uses the term Polygamy to describe Polygyny (a man having more than one wife) a widespread semantic error referred to in more detail in other section, it makes it quite clear that scriptural marriage in which a man can have more than one wife, was still practiced by the Jews until about 1,000 years after the death of Jesus Christ. Maurice Lamm, in his book, *"The Jewish Way in Love and Marriage"*, published by Jonathan David Publishers, Inc, Middle Village, New York 11379 in 1980 reports that this ban was "renewed for all Jews by Israel's Chief Rabbi when it expired in 1950. Known as the 'Cherem de Rabbenu Gershom,' it is in force regardless of the wishes of the husband or the consent of the wife."

From considering other sources regarding the systematic distancing of the Gentile church from the Jewish roots of Christianity as a consequence of Roman influence as early as 300 AD resulting in steadily increasing persecution of Jews, it appears that the Rabbinical decree was as a consequence

of increasing persecution by the Roman church seeking to enforce the proclamation by Justinian enforcing monogamy about three hundred years earlier.

On the few occasions where I have found myself in conversation with Jews on this matter it appears that the rabbinical decree is widely known as is the fact that monogamy is a Roman heresy instituted by the Christian church. It seems that in at least some Jewish quarters this is taken as a further indication that Jesus Christ could not possibly be the Messiah. This, in turn, must surely be a contributor to the difficulty that most Jews have in accepting conversion to Christianity. Surely this reason alone is sufficient grounds for any person who has the Love of God shed abroad in their heart (Romans 5:5) to urgently seek the proclamation from the roof tops of the true doctrines of Jesus Christ concerning marriage?

3. A STUMBLING BLOCK FOR MOSLEMS

For the same reason as the heresy of monogamy is a stumbling block for Jews, it is surely a stumbling block for Moslems. I have personally verified that in Malawi the church will permit a Moslem man with more than one wife to keep his wives but if a man converts he cannot take any more wives. The consequence is that when a man comes to the point of accepting that Jesus Christ is Lord he frequently chooses to delay giving effect to that decision in order to take his full quota of wives against a possible future decision to convert to Christianity.

In the process, Islam is making great inroads in Malawi and elsewhere while Christianity struggles to make an impact in Moslem areas, converts are murdered and great resistance is encountered. Surely this must at least in part relate to the very visible error of the Christian church in the area of marriage?

We must also surely ask ourselves whether it is a coincidence that Mohammed, a man with a number of wives, several of whom were reportedly Jewish and Christian, came to prominence at about the same time that Justinian made monogamy the legal marriage doctrine of the Roman church while at the same time the Roman church was departing more and more extensively from the teachings of scripture and the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Apostles and in the process taking harsher and harsher measures to persecute unbelievers.

Is it beyond the bounds of possibility that Mohammed could have indeed been sent by God as a prophet to warn the church but, because of persecution eventually turned away to some greater or lesser extent? Do we in fact know for sure that Mohammed was not a true prophet and that our understanding of his teachings is distorted? Is it possible that the Moslems today have more of the truth of scripture than the Christians? I do not know the answers to these questions but they are questions which I believe that every concerned believer who calls themselves by the name of Christ must surely ask themselves. For surely if we have the pearl of great price, the key to salvation (Matthew 13:45-46) and we have hidden it behind heresy and false doctrine so that it is not available to billions who are perishing we will face great weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12, Matthew 13:42, etc) when we come to judgment?

4. A STUMBLING BLOCK TO BUSINESS EXECUTIVES, GOVERNMENT LEADERS, LEADING SPORTSMEN AND THE MAN IN THE STREET

As the Lord has led me into more and more revelation on this topic I have also seen repeatedly through the Newspapers, secular television, magazines, etc the extent to which the heresy of monogamy proves a stumbling block for business executives, government leaders, leading sportsmen and even the average western "man in the street".

Consider the recent press reports with regard to President Bill Clinton of the United States of America and his female aid, Monika Lewinsky. If it were not for the heresy of monogamy, President Clinton would have been free to have had sexual congress with the staff member concerned and to take her as one of his wives or concubines. The only prerequisite would have been that she were a virgin. If she were not and that were known to the people that would perhaps have been legitimate cause for the outburst of righteous indignation that followed. Instead, we see a situation where a supposedly Christian doctrine comes close to destroying the career of one of the most prominent men in the world and we must wonder if he can ever reasonably accept Christianity wholeheartedly when it so callously casts him as a sinner for doing something that many great patriarchs of scripture did - taking a concubine from his female staff!

There have been many other instances where politicians in particular have had their careers destroyed because it has been found that they have a mistress. Again, the second or subsequent sexual relationship, which is the cause of the storm, is not the issue, the issue in the sight of God is whether the mistress is another man's wife. Again, the heresy of monogamy clouds the issue, causes the term "adultery" to be distorted and abused and scriptural adultery spreads like a cancer through the world as a result. At the same time, can there be any doubt that many men in these positions turn their back on Christianity because they know that the yoke of monogamy is more than they can bear.

William Schnoebelen in his book "Masonry, Beyond the Light" provides a shocking insight into the occultic and Satanic influences behind Free Masonry. He also reports that promiscuity among Free Masons is commonplace. Taking account of the factors addressed above, must we not ask ourselves how different things might be if the Christian church permitted a man to have more than one wife? How many millions of prominent men and women would turn to the Lord Jesus Christ if the yoke of monogamy were destroyed?

Casual reference to the newspapers and magazines shows countless sportsmen, pop stars and other popular heroes and heroines who move from one marriage to another. Serial polygamy, as it is called, is rife in our society and it is generally accepted AND permitted by the church that over 60% of all marriages today will end in divorce AND be followed by remarriage! Surely, if it were not for the heresy of monogamy the situation would be very different? Surely there are many ordinary men who have ongoing sexual relationships with more than one woman whose hearts desire would be to establish a legitimate family unit of a husband and several wives? Surely there are many others who, if they had known at the start of their lives that they could take several wives and had known how seriously God hates putting away and what an abomination adultery is in the sight of God and what adultery really is, would today be living their lives very differently?

Many of these people know at least that David, Abraham and Solomon had more than one wife. They hear Christian leaders declare the Bible to be the Living Word of God and to be inerrant and, in the next breath same Christian leaders declare that God has ordained monogamy. I have seen internationally recognised Christian leaders stand up before congregations running from 3,000 upwards and preach a message based on scriptures relating to David, Solomon, Abraham and others and in the same message condemn men who have come to them to say that the scripture permits a man to have more than one wife. This is done without a shred of acknowledgement that such a teaching is gross hypocrisy. How can any rational man or woman respect a religion which states that the Bible is the word of God, teaches from scriptures relating to men who clearly had more than one wife and, in the same message, condemns any man who takes more than one wife?

I stumbled on that one point when I was about eighteen years old and nearly ended up in hell when I was forty years old as a result. It was only by the grace of God that I was brought back from the very edge of the abyss to serve Him and to discover the truth of His Word in this area. I know of others who have also turned their back on a faith which was very dear to them on the basis of this hypocrisy!

5. SERIAL POLYGAMY - CHURCH SANCTIONED ADULTERY

The situation in the world AND the church today is that more than 60% of all marriages end in divorce and most of the divorced parties end up remarrying. According to Jesus in Matthew 5, Matthew 19 and Mark 10, unless those people were permitted by Yahweh to divorce on the grounds of porneia they will be committing adultery.

Yet the "christian" church advances all sorts of apologetics as to why serial polygamy is permitted while refusing steadfastly to examine their own doctrine to see if it is contributing to the problem.

6. PORNOGRAPHY - A WESTERN "CHRISTIAN" EVIL?

As I have gained revelation in the areas addressed in this book I have become increasingly aware of the extent to which pornography in the western world specifically in Europe, the USA and South Africa as the parts of the world that I have experience of, appears in some measure to seek to compensate for the constraints imposed by monogamy and it's related false doctrines.

Some surveys indicate that as many men as women read pornographic magazines and watch pornographic videos and movies. Most of these appear to focus on situations which result in effectively surrogate additional wives and sexual situations which might occur in a household with more than one wife. Based on a casual survey a few years ago where over the space of several days in London and western Europe the Lord led me to visit a number of locations where such material was on sale, scan the material and then leave I concluded that about 50% plus of pornography features monogamous male - female interaction, about 30% features several women without a male presence and about 15% features a man with more than one woman. The remaining 5% or so depicts more than one man with one woman and male - male (homo) sexuality, about 1% is bestiality, child sex, sadism and masochism. Superficially, about 70% of what is portrayed, taken on a case by case basis, represents sexual acts which, if they took place within a Godly marriage in private, are not prohibited by scripture. The remaining 30% or so represents acts which are an abomination in the sight of God. HOWEVER, insofar as they are publicly on display, they are objects of lust and to all intents and purposes every single person who is pictured or reported in these items is committing adultery they are an ABOMINATION IN THE SIGHT OF GOD!

The question that must, however, be asked is simply: if much of what is depicted relates to a man having sexual intercourse with more than one woman during the course of his life, and if scripture permits him to do that within the confines of marriage which requires that once he has had sex once with a woman he is responsible for her for life, if the yoke of monogamy was lifted, what percentage of people who are now living in adultery would be living in polygynous marriages which were scriptural?

I do not know the answer to that question, however, from my own life experience, I am firmly convinced that a significant number of people who are currently in hell or destined for hell because of the heresy of monogamy, could be saved. Consider Luke 15:1-10:

- 1 Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him.*
- 2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."*

- 3 *So He spoke this parable to them, saying:*
- 4 *"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?"*
- 5 *"And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.*
- 6 *"And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'"*
- 7 ***"I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.***
- 8 *"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it?"*
- 9 *"And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!'"*
- 10 ***"Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (NKJ)***

Thus we must surely conclude that if by lifting the yoke of the heretical doctrine of monogamy even one person more would come to salvation because the yoke that they thought God wanted to impose on them had been lifted, there will surely be rejoicing in heaven! For this reason, if no other will sway you, dare you argue for the retention of monogamy and its related teachings a moment longer?

7. MY BEST FRIEND STOLE MY HUSBAND / BOYFRIEND

One of the phenomena that seems to be fairly common in the society in which I live is the phenomenon that once a woman has found a man she finds she needs to protect her man from her female friends. Monogamy requires that two women who are close friends must become bitter enemies when a man arrives on the scene whom they both desire to marry.

Scriptural marriage, on the other hand, permits two or more women who are close friends to all marry the same man, remain best friends and develop their lives together with that man for the rest of their lives. If you dwell on this thought for a few minutes I think that you will see that on this point alone there is a phenomenal difference in terms of the relationships that exist in our society.

An extension of this phenomenon is that a Christian woman whose husband starts in any way to minister to a single woman immediately becomes threatened and resists extending all the love of God which she could in case that woman gets too close to her husband. Scriptural marriage, on the other hand, would regard it as perfectly acceptable in the sight of God for that man to extend his covering to that woman should he, his existing wives and the new woman all agree that it was the will of God for him to do so. In similar vein, single women would not fear being hurt by men whom they perceive to be "philandering husbands" who show any concern for their welfare. It is a strange phenomenon of monogamy that any man who is seeking to become more like Jesus Christ and who experiences compassion and concern for a single woman, immediately is branded a philanderer and a cad. Monogamy has totally perverted even the ministration of the love of God through the body of Christ!

8. TEENAGE NYMPHETTES

We have seen from the Talmud, that a girl becomes a marriageable woman at puberty which is about twelve and a half years old. As a consequence of the teachings which deny this and suggest that a girl should not marry before her late teens or early twenties and that she should have a number of "boy friends" before she has enough experience to choose which to marry a number of situations develop.

Firstly, girls still reach puberty at about twelve and a half years and for the most part, become increasingly sexually aware, conscious of their bodies and interested in babies in the years immediately following. By the age of fourteen as I understand it, most school teachers will report that girls are excessively interested in sex. Some secular press reports indicate that, depending on the community concerned, somewhere between 20% and 50% plus of fourteen year old girls have their first sexual experience! Given that most of these girls will be told by pastors, parents and teachers alike that they are not old enough to choose a husband, all of these girls will end up in adultery and headed for a part in the lake of fire and brimstone!

Furthermore, from our own limited ministry, we have repeatedly encountered women whose lives started going off the rails at about fourteen when they either had their first sexual experience, were molested by a father, step father, uncle or close family friend or in some other way found their entire world turned upside down. Secular magazines regularly report incidents where fourteen year old "nymphettes" seduce their teachers, the man next door, the husband of the family they are baby sitting for, etc.

An alarming number of women and by extension men, are headed for hell right now as a consequence of this false doctrine.

Consider this statistic against an alternative whereby such girls would be married to a man at least a few years older than they who they could look up to, respect, reverence and submit to and on whom all their girlish desires would be focussed. Surely this is a far cry to a woman in her late teens or early twenties who has been badly hurt in half a dozen relationships where the relationship ended because she refused to have sex or because she agreed and then regretted it because she was "too young to get married".

Surely it is time that the church let go of it's unrealistic, impractical and UNGODLY doctrines with regard to the age of marriage and stopped condemning millions of women and men to emotionally fractured and distorted lives!

9. WHERE HAVE ALL THE VIRGINS GONE?

A recent report of a sex survey in the United States indicated that "**less than 5% of women are virgins on their wedding night**". Elsewhere the same report indicated that "**more than 60% of all women have had sex with more than one man**". By extension, more than 60% of all women and therefore probably considerably more men are headed for hell or at the very least a part in the lake of fire and brimstone if that does not mean eternity in hell!

Surely the heresy of monogamy and it's related false doctrines reported in this book account for a significant proportion of these people fate? In particular, in the USA, England and South Africa most of those people have probably heard some portion of the gospel of Jesus Christ but it has been tainted by a pagan feast of the sun rebranded as Christmas, a heretical doctrine of monogamy which imposes a yoke that many are unable to bear and numerous other factors which make Jesus Christ an unattractive God to serve when compared with the God of this world. Surely those of us who have, by the Grace of God, come to some small measure of knowledge of the truth can look down on them OR we can take a long hard look at the polluted and distorted Gospel that is preached and realize that there is a massive sheet of panelling in the collective eye of the church and start energetically seeking to pluck it out.

10. A CASE HISTORY : CONSEQUENCES OF FALSE DOCTRINES AND ADULTERY

The following is a case history of a man who is well known to me. It is presented in the hope that it will assist readers to understand just how terrible the consequences of the heresies presented in this book are and in particular the consequences of adultery in this life.

The story is as follows:

"I gave my life to the Lord in a traditional church at the age of about thirteen and served Him with some commitment during my teenage years. At the age of nineteen, having completed military service, He spoke to me in a dream and instructed me to become an altar boy at a new church in my neighbourhood. I served Him there until I was about twenty four years old.

"At about the same time that the Lord spoke to me, Satan sent a woman across my path. At the age of nineteen I was deeply emotionally hurt. At the age of eighteen I fell deeply in love with a girl of fourteen. She was the sister of my best friend at school, our parents were house friends, she lived less than a kilometer up the road from my house and we started to see one another regularly. We became deeply romantically involved to a point where the desire for sex was becoming uncontrollable. We broke off the relationship because we were "too young". (Authors Note: If you consider carefully the scriptural analysis presented in this book you will see that this was probably an ideal match in the sight of God!) On the rebound, I fell deeply in love with another girl of fourteen, again the relationship ended because we were "too young". On leaving the army I started dating the first woman I met. I was not attracted to her other than the fact that she was seventeen and therefore not "too young" and that she met certain requirements of social acceptability. After some time she seduced me, during her menstrual cycle so that I never knew for certain whether she was a virgin or not, but she told me she was and I believed her right to the end. (Authors Note: notice the serious spiritual implications of a marriage consummated during menstruation, there are also possible connotations of witch craft)

"I knew enough of the Bible to know that virginity was sacred before God and that, in the sight of God I was responsible for her. At the time I entered into the relationship my mother warned me against her, but I had listened to my parents on the two previous occasions so rebellion crept in. At that time I did not know about schizophrenia, psychopathy and female sadism. Eventually I married her legally and she bore me two children. The relationship lasted twenty five years until nearly broken emotionally and financially the Lord, through a prophetic minister, showed me the depths of emotional, psychological and spiritual abuse that Satan had dragged me into. I was being played like a fish on a line, lied to, lied about and betrayed behind my back. She was oppressed by spirits of witchcraft and a strong Jezebel spirit and Satan was using her to destroy me. Nevertheless, it took twenty five years before God permitted me to divorce!

"During the relationship sexual deprivation was used regularly to manipulate and control. In the process I became dependent on pornography and, as I became more and more reliant on pornography to release my sexual tension my conscience became increasingly seared towards sexual sin. Eventually, at age thirty eight, after my wife had persuaded me to hire a woman as secretary whom she knew had had sex with every man she had ever worked with and after a year of verbal abuse and sexual deprivation from my wife, I finally succumbed to temptation and entered into a sexual relationship with another man's wife!

"This woman had been gang raped at the age of fourteen, started work at the age of sixteen in a firm where the boss and his secretary were involved in a sexual relationship and where regular

entertainment at the end of the working day was to watch the boss and his secretary across the road have sex on his desk! Her life experience effectively led her to understand that sex with the boss was a necessary requirement for employment. Accordingly, when, following a particularly vicious attack on me and my secretary by my wife, I made a tentative sexual advance to my secretary, the die was cast. She could not refuse, her life pattern told her that but I did not realise this then. Some weeks later the relationship was consummated and continued for two years.

"Before we consummated the relationship we agreed a number of things:

- i. We were having the relationship because our marriages were a mess but we intended to save our marriages. Accordingly we would NEVER use the word love towards one another.*
- ii. There was no obligation on either party to have sex, it would only take place voluntarily when offered.*
- iii. There were no limits on what was acceptable sexually, we would never say no to one another but we would never ask for anything the other could not give.*

"Having agreed these three points we consummated the relationship. Together with these points were several implicit points which were never discussed but always applied. Firstly that we would always respect and esteem one another and that she would never consider her sexual relationship with me to change her status as my employee. Secondly that we never thought of ourselves, we always did what we thought was best for the other and gave whatever we could which was in line with what we understood their needs to be.

"The day the relationship was consummated, she experienced her first orgasms with a man and, at the end of the afternoon we experienced a dramatic simultaneous climax. It was like nothing either of us had ever experienced before, it was ecstatic and it was beautiful. She told me that I was the most considerate lover she had ever had, she had probably had over twenty, and I told her that at last I was A MAN!

"The next day, respecting the requirement never to use the word love she told me that since she was not permitted to be 'in love with' me she must therefore be 'in lust' with me. We both knew something had changed, we saw each other differently and there was a closeness that could not be described. (Authors Note : The one flesh bond had come into existence)

"During the first afternoon of love making I shared a fantasy about making love to two women at the same time. It turned out that she was stimulated by the thought of sexual intimacy with another woman and with the fantasy. For the balance of the relationship we regularly fantasized about the presence of a second woman, both being sexually intimate with me and with her. We found that this greatly increased the level of arousal that we both experienced and increased my sexual capacity. At various times during the relationship we read newspaper articles about men with more than one wife and we talked about our relationship as my effectively having two wives. We also discussed the practical benefits of such a relationship in the light of our experience.

"During this period I also found that my sexual capacity with my wife was also heightened. It was possible for me to climax five or six times in one afternoon with my mistress and then return home and climax another couple of times with my wife. Interestingly, my wife was more receptive to sex after I had been with my mistress. Effectively my wife, who generally had previously been

disinterested in sex was more interested in sex, even though she theoretically knew nothing about my affair. At the same time, I never found that my affair in any way restricted me from meeting my wife's sexual needs although it did enable me not to be subject to sexual manipulation.

"In addition, after about six months, my wife's menstrual cycle which had always been very irregular became totally regular and synchronized with my mistress's menstrual cycle which had always been very regular. Their birthdays were two days apart and their cycles ran within a day of one another. At about that time I read an article on 'pheromones' and concluded that in some way some form of pheromone or hormone was being passed through me between the two women, even though they seldom saw one another.

"All of this led me to conclude that God had created me to be capable of satisfying two women sexually. However, after the relationship ended and I came back to the Lord I accepted the church's doctrine of monogamy.

"The relationship continued for two years. During this period I consistently refused to see that I was desperately in love with my mistress and she with me. I was adamant that a man could only love one woman. During those two years, everything in the business went well and, for the first time in my life (and hers) I was fulfilled as a man. We made love passionately at every opportunity and it was always extremely good for both of us. In two years we did not have a single quarrel and were in agreement about everything to do with the business. I consulted her with regard to business decisions and we ran the business together. In the process my mistress became increasingly concerned for my wife's well-being and even suggested and made arrangements for me to take my wife out to dinner and on holiday. It seemed that the more she loved me, the more she loved my wife!

"After two years my wife decided it was time for the relationship to end and suddenly confronted me with facts that had been known to her from the start of the relationship. I was not prepared to lie and confessed everything. At that time I was determined to end my marriage and marry my mistress. However, family pressure persuaded me to try and heal my marriage. In addition, there was something which would not allow me to leave my wife. (Author's note : The one flesh bond again). Consequently, I terminated the relationship but we decided that she should stay on as my employee.

"After weeks of anguish, during which I discovered that I was incredibly deeply in love with my mistress and that it felt like my very heart was being ripped out, I accepted that there was no way that I could make my marriage work while my former mistress still worked for me and I had to ask her to find alternative employment. Having reached this decision I went through absolute hell on earth. After a few days I moved out of the family home into a hotel and spent the night wondering how I could best kill myself. I was devastated, I could not think of my mistress without dissolving into tears. My life was not worth living any more.

"At about 07h00 the next morning a voice spoke to me and said 'phone, he has something you need', the person mentioned was a business associate. I phoned him and said I believe you have something I need. He immediately knew what I was talking about and that evening I had dinner with him and his wife and they led me back to the Lord Jesus Christ but in a way that I had never known before. They shared their testimony of the supernatural presence of God, of healing, of prophecy, of divine provision and protection. I cried out to God for forgiveness and He granted my petition.

"In the days and months that followed I threw myself entirely at the mercy of God. I knew that he was able to heal me and deliver me, to restore my business and to heal my marriage. I knew that only he could do it and I devoted all my energy to seeking Him. I went for counselling, I bought books and tapes and spent every spare minute of my time reading the Bible, praying, listening to tapes, reading books, in church, etc. In the process, I fought a massive battle with my intellect. I could not accept that the Bible was the Word of God. However, after a few weeks, by faith, I took a decision to accept the Bible as the Word of God and prayed and asked the Lord to answer my questions. As I did, He was faithful and answered me.

"As I sought God, he repeatedly spoke to me about making restitution to my former mistress's husband. After the affair became known to him he could not contain his jealous rage and came round to my house with a fire arm to kill me. By the grace of God he did not. It took her nearly nine months to find a job and then at a much lower salary because she could not give a satisfactory reason for leaving my employ. The consequences of my adultery not only caused her husband enormous grief they also caused him serious financial hardship over a number of years and on more than one occasion the Lord instructed me to make payments to them. On another occasion the Lord required me to speak to him telephonically in order to give him an opportunity to express what was on his heart. Amazingly, he forgave me and commiserated with me about my wife!

"About a year after coming back to the Lord and after some dramatic supernatural encounters the Lord clearly told my wife to speak to my former mistress. All hell broke loose. Years later I discovered that He had been telling my wife for much of the previous year to apologize to my mistress for setting up the whole affair! I also discovered that He had shown her that since scripture permitted a man to have more than one wife I had not directly sinned against her!

"In the meantime, my business was going to the wall in a dramatic fashion. I was losing business and losing money. I was tithing in faith, I totally believed God's promises but nothing helped and no one could tell me what was wrong.

"Some months later I reached a point where my former mistress was constantly on my mind, I was deeply concerned about her and there were some things that I should have said to her before the relationship ended that kept troubling me. I had repeatedly been for counselling to no avail and had been brutally rebuked by my pastor because of my sinfulness and unrepentant heart and told to concentrate on making right with my wife for all the wrong I had done her through my adultery. At the same time, the Lord was speaking to me about the 'one flesh bond' of Genesis 2:24 and I realized that I still had this bond with my mistress. I prayed to end it, nothing happened. Eventually I phoned my former mistress. All the things that were on my mind were on hers. We discovered that we both desperately longed to see one another. I told her about the one flesh bond and we agreed to meet in the hope that if we prayed in agreement the bond would break.

"We met and prayed. Nothing happened, I don't think that deep down either of us really wanted what we prayed. It was like we had never been apart. We started to see one another, we discovered that we had a near telepathic link, if she thought of me phoning her I would phone and vice versa. We were in torment and confusion. We had both reached profound revelation of our sin of adultery but now we found that we were still as in love as we ever had been. I broke down and asked her to marry me. By the grace of God she refused.

"Broken and desperate I spent the weekend considering once more how best to kill myself. On the Monday, with a Smith and Wesson revolver at my disposal in case it did not work, I met with my

pastor. After three hours of heated discussion and argument he eventually pointed out 1 Peter 3:7 to the effect that if my wife was not in agreement my prayers would not be hindered and I adamantly maintained that because I was one flesh with my mistress and she could not be in agreement with me, he reluctantly agreed to stand in agreement with me. Knowing that if my prayer was not answered I would blow my brains out I cried out to God in the name of Jesus to extend His Mercy and Grace to me to cut the one flesh bond. It was like I was being pulled apart by a massive bungee elastic rope and suddenly it was cut and I snapped back together.

"The next day my business turned around. However, my marriage continued as it always had with strife, false accusations, back stabbing, sexual deprivation and manipulation, etc.

"I continued to seek the Lord. He taught me about deliverance and showed me a spirit of witchcraft in my wife. I prayed and she was delivered but within days resumed her behaviour and it returned. He showed me books in her possession on the Satanic god's of Egypt, Babylon, Greece and Rome and told me to burn them. I fasted for her, I interceded for her. Things improved from time to time and then got worse. Sometimes she agreed with me and the business prospered and then, for no apparent reason she would start attacking me and the business would be attacked. She phoned my staff and partners behind my back and caused several to turn against me and leave. All the time I understood that I had no basis to divorce her unless she committed adultery and that I HAD to make my marriage work.

"Eventually, after another year, during which I continued to seek God for the healing of my marriage and to draw closer to Him and the Lord moved on several occasions powerfully in my life, He showed me that there were other grounds for divorce by way of a vision that I had in London, England. Through this vision, He led me to a Christian bookshop in London where I bought a book on Divorce in the Christian Faith, entitled "When the Vow Breaks". That night, as I read with amazement an open letter from a man to the woman who had psychologically abused him for so long, I realized that God, in His mercy and His grace WOULD permit me to divorce.

"I decided to divorce but my wife asked for another chance. I gave her a final ultimatum and she agreed to go for counselling. Within weeks this fell flat and another pastor who was telling me that I could not minister in the Body of Christ while I had marriage problems and had undertaken to counsel my wife, failed to follow through. Six months later, seeing my children increasingly subject to the same psychological abuse I had experienced, I cried out to God to take me out of the marriage and save my children.

"In the weeks that followed, He showed me prophetically that I had a massive wound in the back of my spirit, and my wife, when confronted, confessed that she had been deliberately sabotaging me and stabbing me in the back for twenty five years. I subsequently discovered that there were substantial amounts of money unaccounted for as well. Within days of confessing and repenting she resumed her attacks. In the process, Jesus appeared to her in a vision and required her to do what he had been speaking to her about for three years, to contact my former mistress, confess that she had set up the whole affair, repent and ask for forgiveness, she refused and Jesus turned his back and walked away.

"Shortly after this, the Lord brought a mature Christian woman, recently divorced after a fourteen year abusive marriage to an unsaved alcoholic. into my life. Within weeks He showed us both that we were to marry and He took me out of my marriage and into marriage with my new wife in the space of three days. We walked by faith because we knew God was speaking to us. We did not

even know the scriptures that pertained to what we were doing. We only realized months later that this was the only way I could have got free. If I had not moved directly into another relationship, broken the one flesh bond with my ex-wife and immediately consummated another marriage I would not have been spiritually strong enough to survive the storm that broke.

"Both of us were unprepared for the storm that broke. My ex-wife proceeded to spread the most vile lies about me. The church through me out and incited other churches against me. Pastors who had counselled me suddenly took sides with my ex-wife. My family distanced themselves because of what people would think. No one asked me why I had done what I had done. For a year Satan, assisted by the church did all that he could to destroy us. In one case, a prophetic minister who was new to a church called us out in front of the entire congregation, anointed us with oil and proclaimed an extravagant blessing on us in while the power of God fell upon us and a T.V. cameraman was 'slain' in the spirit. The next week we were thrown out of the church as a consequence of a view that God could not possibly have blessed us and therefore the blessing was in fact a curse!

"But the Lord was faithful. He gave us the scriptures to show that divorce was the issue of a certificate by the husband, not a legal document. He gave us the scriptures to show that marriage was the act of sexual union in His sight and not a piece of paper issued in a pagan marriage ritual. He sent prophets across our paths with words of encouragement and confirmation that we were in His will. In the process I made many mistakes and gave Satan many footholds in my life, permitting him to kill, steal and destroy in many areas. Eventually I secured the legal divorce and my new wife and I were officially married by a prophet of God in a formal ceremony.

"Subsequently, I discovered that I still had spiritual and emotional ties to my former mistress. Over a period of time the Lord taught me about soul ties and those were cut off, he dealt with me about broken unGodly vows and promises. I had promised to marry my mistress if I ever divorced. I had to phone her and ask her to release me! He taught us about transfer of spirits which takes place during sexual intercourse and I received deliverance from a whole bunch of demons transferred through my adulterous relationship. He showed me that familiar spirits gain legal right in one's life in an adulterous or unGodly sexual relationship and I was delivered of those. At the same time, the corresponding familiar spirits on my former mistress continued to try and make inroads into my spirit and eventually my new wife contacted my former mistress to offer to pray with her.

"Having dealt with all this and really believing that there were grounds to believe that all the spiritual links with my former mistress had been broken, the Lord permitted me to come face to face in a shop. My heart did somersaults and I went weak at the knees. It was like I had been hit with a sledgehammer! I was shocked and disturbed. Discussing it with my wife the words 'love never dies' hit me. I turned to 1 Corinthians 13:8 and found that it stated that 'love never fails' and that the context of the verse seemed to indicate that while prophecies and tongues will cease, love will continue for eternity. I found myself staring at a scripture which told me that for the rest of my life I would have to cope with the agape love of God in my heart towards a woman who was another man's wife!

"That has to be the most devastating consequence of adultery there is! As I read 1 Corinthians 13, I realized that most of the attributes of love described there had characterized my relationship with my mistress. Consequently, the love that we had first called lust after the consummation of the relationship was in fact God's love, intended for husband and wife! I cried out to God to kill this love, to cut it out of my heart, to some how make it go away! Instead, three weeks later he

permitted me to again see her in the shops that I might know that it is not possible for Him to destroy love, GOD IS LOVE!

"I have now more or less come to terms with this revelation. I have accepted that I must constantly ask God for grace to live with the consequences of my sin without sinning further. I have accepted that all that I can do when she comes to mind is to pray and ask God to extravagantly bless her marriage, to draw her and her husband close to Him, to guide her to fulfill her calling in Christ (she came to salvation as a consequence of her revelation of her sin after the relationship ended). As I do so the desire to have her as my wife has receded but it seems to me that burden may never fully leave me in this life.

"I can only close by exhorting you not to have sex or marry any person unless you are certain that God has ordained it and to advise you that adultery is indeed the most dreadful sin against your own body.

"Based on this experience I can testify that what has been written by James Robertson in this book reflects the true spiritual realities of marriage, adultery, divorce and sexual relationships between man and woman, as ordained by God, not as currently taught by the church."

An extract from the book "When the Vow Breaks", referred to in the above testimony, is contained in Appendix T.

COMMENTS

This testimony prompts a number of comments which confirm what is written elsewhere:

1. It is clear that this man's life would have turned out very differently if a marriage had been arranged between him and the fourteen year old daughter of his family friends.
2. Young men and women do not have the knowledge, experience or wisdom to choose suitable marriage partners. This should be the responsibility of parents and parents who avoid taking an active role in the selection of their children's marriage partners do them a gross disservice.
3. There can be no substitute to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in selecting a marriage partner.
4. If this man had taken a second wife it appears that his first wife would have been unable to use sexual deprivation to manipulate him and that he might well not have become addicted to pornography.
5. Based on his positive experience with his business during the two years that his mistress was in complete agreement with him it appears that if a man has two wives and the second is in total harmony and agreement this will go a significant way to over riding the impact of the disharmony of a first wife.
6. There is no such thing as sex without love. The act of sexual intercourse is, indeed, the Act of Marriage AND the Act of making (CREATING) Love.
7. In a strange way, despite the adulterous nature of the relationship, the principles highlighted:
 - a. They never thought of themselves, they always did what they thought was best for the other and gave whatever they could which was in line with what they understood their needs to be.

- b. That they always respected and esteemed one another and that the woman never considered her sexual relationship with her lover to change her status as his employee - in other words she always submitted to him.
- c. There was no obligation on either party to have sex, it would only take place voluntarily when offered and there were no limits on what was acceptable sexually, they would never say no to one another but they would never ask for anything the other could not give.

give an indication of what may be three of the most important principles of a Godly marriage.

- 8. Man and woman are physiologically and psychologically prepared for a relationship in which there is more than one wife.
- 9. The counsel of the church is of no avail in many cases and the religious and Jezebel spirit's in the church are amongst the most vicious on earth today.
- 10. Marriage is the sexual act between a man and a woman who are free to marry in the sight of God.
- 11. There is much that is not generally known about what scripture truly says about marriage, much of which has, I believe, been covered in this book.
- 12. The consequences of adultery are indeed far greater than most people realise and they continue long after the sexual activity has ended.

Can anyone doubt after reading this testimony that the impact of the heresies and false teachings discussed in this book are having the most horrible impact on the lives of billions of people. Indeed, any person who has had sex with dozens of people can expect to be in such a state of spiritual turmoil that they have little hope of having anything approaching a stable marriage life. The more they search for peace and joy in marriage with people other than their existing partners, the worse it will become. This is perhaps the most sinister and heinous lie of the entire heresy of serial polygamy posing as monogamy. It progressively destroys the very fabric of the being of those it ensnares as they pursue happiness in the form of a fairy tale monogamous marriage with one partner after another!

May the Good Lord bring all who have taught and enforced this terrible doctrine to repentance that they may receive forgiveness in this life before they are judged for eternity!

CHAPTER 9: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE HERESY OF MONOGAMY

In reading this you may ask "so what". Others have said to me "let's just get on with preaching the Gospel and winning souls and avoid controversy", others argue that this is divisive. Friend, Jesus never avoided controversy, He never avoided division where the division resulted from those who would stand on falsehood and heresy.

Consider further the real impact and implications of the heresy of monogamy:

- a. Millions, nay billions of souls who cannot accept that Jesus Christ is the Messiah because they know that the Torah (Jews) or Tawratt (Moslems) permits a man to have more than one wife and that Yahweh never changes.
- b. Millions, if not billions of souls of other beliefs whose stable communities in which multiple marriage had been practised from the beginning, have rejected the Gospel on this one point or been torn apart by missionaries preaching the heresy of monogamy in the name of Jesus Christ. There are heart rending stories of people giving their lives to Christ and being told to put away all but their first wife.
- c. Millions of others who have turned away from Jesus Christ when confronted with the hypocrisy of so-called Christians who tell them that if they have married more than one woman before conversion they can keep her but once they have converted they cannot marry more.
- d. Hundreds of thousands if not millions of modern day western business executives and Government leaders throughout the world, including the current president of the United States, not to mention ordinary men, who have been pilloried and persecuted for having mistresses or affairs when clearly they have been created with the capacity to love and provide for more than one wife and clearly have the desire to do just that. How can we expect such people to accept that Jesus Christ is Lord if we lay such an incredible burden on them?
- e. Millions of Christians who are unwittingly adulterers and adulteresses because they have been permitted to divorce or because they do not realize the marriage covenant is cut with a virgin and believe that it is issued by a priest or pastor in the name of God.
- f. Millions of abortions as a result of men not supporting so-called "unmarried mothers". Surely from this reading book you will see that is a contradiction in terms. These are men who have abandoned their wives and thus left their unborn children to die. This is surely an extension of the sacrifices of children to Molech that scripture speaks so harshly against and is an abomination in the sight of God.
- g. Millions of Christian women desperately seeking mature Christian husbands and not finding them and marrying out of the faith or inadvertently becoming harlots.
- h. Millions of missionaries, pastors, teachers, home cell leaders, etc, etc who will come before the judgment seat of Christ and discover that they have taught heresies, caused many to stumble and reject Christ or face a part in the second death and may find themselves with a part in the second death!
- i. Millions of Christians in poverty or ill health with unanswered prayers because of ungodly one flesh bonds resulting in divided houses or because of sin resulting from these false doctrines.

No doubt there are other impacts. Today I challenge you to sleep peacefully at night if you choose to ignore what is written here. In fact, my prayer must be that you will not sleep peacefully again until you have committed to God the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ to do all that you can to spread the word about these truths!

2. CONCLUSION

Weigh all of this up and consider, if you will, the billions of souls burning in Hell for eternity as a consequence of this heresy. Surely it must rank as one of Satan's most effective traps to snare people into his kingdom of darkness and destruction. Can you truly and with a clear conscience before God say that you do not know at least one person whose life has been destroyed by this false doctrine. Pause and think how many people you know or know of who have in some way been impacted by the errors reported in this book.

Can you truly say that this is of no consequence and should be ignored?

I doubt it!

Remember too, the words of Ezekial 33:1-11:

- 1 *Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,*
- 2 ***"Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: 'When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman,***
- 3 *'when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people,*
- 4 *'then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his own head.*
- 5 *'He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will save his life.*
- 6 ***'But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.'***
- 7 *"So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me.*
- 8 *"When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die!' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand.*
- 9 *"Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul.*
- 10 *"Therefore you, O son of man, say to the house of Israel: 'Thus you say, "If our transgressions and our sins lie upon us, and we pine away in them, how can we then live?"'*
- 11 ***"Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?'" (NKJ)***

Can you truly imagine after reading this book that Yahweh does not require you to warn those who are in peril from this heresy? Can you for a moment truly suggest that you will not be called to account for every soul that perishes that you could have spoken the truth to and afforded them the opportunity to be saved?

Are you certain that by ignoring the contents of this book that you will not, in time, find yourself tortured by eternal Hell fire in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death?

Friend, today is a day of choices. You have a choice to remain in your comfort zone with your heretical beliefs and take your chances on judgment and eternal damnation or you can seize this truth and run with it, as a man runs to warn a city of an impending volcanic eruption or lava flow, crying run for your lives!

This is a powerful truth, it may be the most powerful truth of this age. It is a truth that will unlock the full power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and teach us how the church may come into unity for truly the world will acknowledge Jesus when those people who are called by His name come into perfect unity in their marriages and in their churches. May the fire of God burn within you until you realize that if you love God, you have no choice but to shout this truth from the roof tops.

May the Lord bless you and keep you and make His face to shine upon you, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, King of Kings and Lord of Lords and saviour of the world. James Robertson, Apostle of the Most High God.

JAMES ROBERTSON

THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION

This section was never completed

PRAYERS FOR SALVATION, REPENTANCE, DELIVERANCE AND FOR SPIRIT LED GUIDANCE

This section was never completed

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New bible dictionary

Masonry, the light

Demons and Devils

Dake's

Copeland tapes on blood covenant

ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

Strong's

Vine's

other

Yahweh

Polygamy

other?

APPROACH TO INTERPRETATION

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RELATED INTERNET ADDRESSES

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APPENDIX A: VIRGINITY VARIOUS SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Throughout scripture reference is made to virginity. In the pages that follow many of the scriptures which make reference to virginity are listed. With such a wide range of references can we doubt that God regards virginity as being really important?

Genesis 24:16

16 Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. (NKJ)

Genesis 24:43

43 `behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw water, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink," (NKJ)

Exodus 22:16

16 "If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife. (NKJ)

Exodus 22:17

17 "If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins. (NKJ)

Leviticus 21:3

3 `also his virgin sister who is near to him, who has had no husband, for her he may defile himself. (NKJ)

Leviticus 21:14

14 `A widow or a divorced woman or a defiled woman or a harlot-- these he shall not marry; but he shall take a virgin of his own people as wife. (NKJ)

Deuteronomy 22:14

14 "and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,' (NKJ)

Deuteronomy 22:23

23 "If a young woman who is a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, (NKJ)

Deuteronomy 22:28

28 *"If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out, (NKJ)*

Judges 19:24

24 *"Look, here is my virgin daughter and the man's concubine; let me bring them out now. Humble them, and do with them as you please; but to this man do not do such a vile thing!" (NKJ)*

Judges 21:12

12 *So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man intimately; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. (NKJ)*

2 Samuel 13:2

2 *Amnon was so distressed over his sister Tamar that he became sick; for she was a virgin. And it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her. (NKJ)*

2 Samuel 13:18

18 *Now she had on a robe of many colors, for the king's virgin daughters wore such apparel. And his servant put her out and bolted the door behind her. (NKJ)*

I Kings 1:2

2 *Therefore his servants said to him, "Let a young woman, a virgin, be sought for our lord the king, and let her stand before the king, and let her care for him; and let her lie in your bosom, that our lord the king may be warm." (NKJ)*

II Kings 19:21

21 *"This is the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him: `The virgin, the daughter of Zion, has despised you, laughed you to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head behind your back! (NKJ)*

Esther 2:2

2 *Then the king's servants who attended him said: "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king; (NKJ)*

Esther 2:3

3 *"and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the citadel, into the women's quarters, under the custody of Hegai the king's eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given them. (NKJ)*

Esther 2:17

17 *The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. (NKJ)*

Psalm 45:14

14 *She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors; the virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You. (NKJ)*

Proverbs 30:19

19 *The way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a virgin. (NKJ)*

Song of Solomon 1:3

3 *Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, your name is ointment poured forth; therefore the virgins love you. (NKJ)*

Lamentations 1:4

4 *The roads to Zion mourn because no one comes to the set feasts. All her gates are desolate; her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness. (NKJ)*

Lamentations 1:15

15 *"The Lord has trampled underfoot all my mighty men in my midst; he has called an assembly against me to crush my young men; the Lord trampled as in a winepress the virgin daughter of Judah. (NKJ)*

Ezekial 23:3

3 *They committed harlotry in Egypt, they committed harlotry in their youth; their breasts were there embraced, their virgin bosom was there pressed. (NKJ)*

Ezekial 23:8

8 *She has never given up her harlotry brought from Egypt, for in her youth they had lain with her, pressed her virgin bosom, and poured out their immorality upon her. (NKJ)*

Ezekial 44:22

22 *"They shall not take as wife a widow or a divorced woman, but take virgins of the descendants of the house of Israel, or widows of priests. (NKJ)*

Amos 8:13

13 *"In that day the fair virgins and strong young men shall faint from thirst. (NKJ)*

Matthew 1:23

23 *"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." (NKJ)*

Matthew 25:1

1 *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. (NKJ)*

Matthew 25:7

7 *"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. (NKJ)*

Matthew 25:11

11 *"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' (NKJ)*

Luke 1:27

27 *to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. (NKJ)*

Acts 21:9

9 *Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. (NKJ)*

1 Corinthians 7:25

25 *Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy. (NKJ)*

1 Corinthians 7:28

28 *But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you. (NKJ)*

1 Corinthians 7:36

36 *But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry. (NKJ)*

1 Corinthians 7:37

37 *Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well. (NKJ)*

2 Corinthians 11:2

2 *For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (NKJ)*

APPENDIX B: SCRIPTURAL LOVE DEFINED FROM VINES EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY

LOVE (NOUN AND VERB) from Vines Expository Dictionary:

A. Verbs.

1. *agapao* ^{^25^} and the corresponding noun *agape* (B, No. 1 below) present "the characteristic word of Christianity, and since the Spirit of revelation has used it to express ideas previously unknown, inquiry into its use, whether in Greek literature or in the Septuagint, throws but little light upon its distinctive meaning in the NT. Cf, however, <Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:5>.

"*Agape* and *agapao* are used in the NT (a) to describe the attitude of God toward His Son, <John 17:26>; the human race, generally, <John 3:16; Rom. 5:8>, and to such as believe on the Lord Jesus Christ particularly <John 14:21>; (b) to convey His will to His children concerning their attitude one toward another, <John 13:34>, and toward all men, <1 Thes. 3:12; 1 Cor. 16:14; 2 Pet. 1:7>; (c) to express the essential nature of God, <1 John 4:8>.

"**Love can be known only from the actions it prompts.** God's love is seen in the gift of His Son, <1 John 4:9,10>. But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, **it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects**, <Rom. 5:8>. It was an exercise of the divine will **in deliberate choice**, made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself, Cf. <Deut. 7:7,8>.

"Love had its perfect expression among men in the Lord Jesus Christ, <2 Cor. 5:14; Eph. 2:4; 3:19; 5:2>; Christian love is the fruit of His Spirit in the Christian, <Gal. 5:22>.

"**Christian love has God for its primary object, and expresses itself first of all in implicit obedience to His commandments**, <John 14:15, 21,23; 15:10; 1 John 2:5; 5:3; 2 John 6>. **Self-will, that is, self-pleasing, is the negation of love to God.**

"Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, **nor does it spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered.** Love seeks the welfare of all, <Rom. 15:2>, and works no ill to any, <13:8-10>; love seeks opportunity to do good to `all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith,' <Gal. 6:10>. See further <1 Cor. 13> and <Col. 3:12-14>."

From Notes on Thessalonians, by Hogg and Vine, p. 105.

In respect of *agapao* as used of God, it expresses the deep and constant "love" and interest of a perfect Being towards entirely unworthy objects, producing and fostering a reverential "love" in them towards the Giver, and a practical "love" towards those who are partakers of the same, and a desire to help others to seek the Giver. See BELOVED.

2. *phileo* ^5368^ is to be distinguished from *agapao* in this, that *phileo* more nearly represents "tender affection." The two words are used for the "love" of the Father for the Son, <John 3:35> (No. 1), and <5:20> (No. 2); for the believer, <14:21> (No. 1) and <16:27> (No. 2); both, of Christ's "love" for a certain disciple, <13:23> (No. 1), and <20:2> (No. 2). Yet the distinction between the two verbs remains, and they are never used indiscriminately in the same passage; if each is used with reference to the same objects, as just mentioned, each word retains its distinctive and essential character.

Phileo is never used in a command to men to "love" God; it is, however, used as a warning in <1 Cor. 16:22>; *agapao* is used instead, e. g., <Matt. 22:37; Luke 10:27; Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 8:3; 1 Pet. 1:8; 1 John 4:21>. The distinction between the two verbs finds a conspicuous instance in the narrative of <John 21:15-17>. The context itself indicates that *agapao* in the first two questions suggests the "love" that values and esteems (cf. <Rev. 12:11>). It is an unselfish "love," ready to serve. The use of *phileo* in Peter's answers and the Lord's third question, conveys the thought of cherishing the Object above all else, of manifesting an affection characterized by constancy, from the motive of the highest veneration. See also Trench, *Syn.*, Sec. xii.

Again, to "love" (*phileo*) life, from an undue desire to preserve it, forgetful of the real object of living, meets with the Lord's reproof, <John 12:25>. On the contrary, to "love" life (*agapao*) as used in <1 Pet. 3:10>, is to consult the true interests of living. Here the word *phileo* would be quite inappropriate.

Note: In <Mark 12:38>, KJV, *thelo*, "to wish," is translated "love" (RV, "desire").

B. Nouns.

1. *agape* ^26^, the significance of which has been pointed out in connection with A, No. 1, is always rendered "love" in the RV where the KJV has "charity," a rendering nowhere used in the RV; in <Rom. 14:15>, where the KJV has "charitably," the RV, adhering to the translation of the noun, has "in love."

Note: In the two statements in <1 John 4:8> and <16>, "God is love," both are used to enjoin the exercise of "love" on the part of believers. While the former introduces a declaration of the mode in which God's love has been manifested <vv. 9,10>, the second introduces a statement of the identification of believers with God in character, and the issue at the Judgment Seat hereafter <v. 17>, an identification represented ideally in the sentence "as He is, so are we in this world."

2. *philanthropia* ^5363^ denotes, lit., "love for man" (*phileo* and *anthropos*, "man"); hence, "kindness," <Acts 28:2>, in <Titus 3:4>, "(His) love toward man."# Cf. the adverb *philanthropos*,

APPENDIX C: THE FORESKIN AND CIRCUMCISION VARIOUS REFERENCES

Below are listed many of the scriptures which refer to the foreskin in association with circumcision in the service of God and to circumcision. Can we doubt that the foreskin as a symbol of circumcision was important to God and that He deliberately created man with this otherwise unnecessary piece of flesh for the very purpose of cutting covenant with man?

At the same time, can we have any doubt that while Jesus was circumcised and observed the law during His life, **WHEN THE NEW AND BETTER COVENANT WAS CUT IN HIS FLESH AT CALVARY** the old sign of the covenant cut in the flesh of man was not longer required for it had been cut in the flesh of our glorious Saviour with the thorns, the lashes, the nails and **finally the cleaving of His flesh with the spear.**

Genesis 17:23

23 So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him. (NKJ)

Genesis 17:24

24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. (NKJ)

Genesis 17:25

25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. (NKJ)

Exodus 4:25

25 Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you are a husband of blood to me!" (NKJ)

Leviticus 12:3

3 `And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. (NKJ)

Deuteronomy 10:16

16 "Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer. (NKJ)

Joshua 5:3

3 *So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. (NKJ)*

Jeremiah 4:4

4 *Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, you men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My fury come forth like fire, and burn so that no one can quench it, because of the evil of your doings." (NKJ)*

Luke 1:59

59 *So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. (NKJ)*

Luke 2:21

21 *And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. (NKJ)*

John 7:22

22 *"Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. (NKJ)*

John 7:23

23 *"If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? (NKJ)*

Acts 7:8

8 *"Then He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. (NKJ)*

Acts 7:8

8 *"Then He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. (NKJ)*

Acts 10:45

45 *And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. (NKJ)*

Acts 16:3

3 *Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. (NKJ)*

Rom 2:25

25 *For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. (NKJ)*

Rom 2:26

26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? (NKJ)

Rom 2:27

27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfils the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? (NKJ)

Rom 2:28

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; (NKJ)

Rom 2:29

29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God. (NKJ)

Rom 4:9

9 Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. (NKJ)

Rom 4:10

10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. (NKJ)

Rom 4:11

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, (NKJ)

Rom 4:12

12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. (NKJ)

Rom 15:8

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:18

18 Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:19

19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters. (NKJ)

Gal 2:3

3 *Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. (NKJ)*

Gal 2:9

9 *and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. (NKJ)*

Phil 3:3

3 *For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, (NKJ)*

Phil 3:5

5 *circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; (NKJ)*

Col 2:11

11 *In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, (NKJ)*

APPENDIX D: VARIOUS SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO MORE THAN ONE WIFE

In recognition of the enormous difficulty many people have in coming to terms with some of the principles contained in this book, this appendix offers additional scriptural support for the fact that God permits a man to have more than one wife. These scriptures are offered in the sincere hope that, should you not yet have been persuaded by the body of the book, this will provide the additional evidence you need.

Above all, no matter how much you may have difficulty in accepting this principle, I urge you to submit to the Word of God as the final authority, NOT the teachings of man.

1. EXPLICIT COMMANDMENTS REGARDING MORE THAN ONE WIFE

A. DEUTERONOMY 21:15-17 STATES:

15 *"If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, both the loved and the unloved, and if the firstborn son is of her who is unloved,*

16 *"then it shall be, on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, that he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the true firstborn.*

17 *"But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his. (NKJ)*

This scripture explicitly deals with a situation in which a man has two wives. It was recorded by Moses in a portion of scripture (variously named the Pentateuch by Western Christians, the Torah by Jews and the Tawrat by Moslems) where Christians, Jews and Moslems alike agree that the scripture is inspired by God. As best I understand, there are more people in the world who believe that the five books of Moses are inspired by God than any other passage of scripture. This must carry weight in this situation.

2. SCRIPTURES WHICH EXPRESSLY REFER TO MORE THAN ONE WIFE

This section presents a further selection of scriptures with explicit reference to two or more wives. These scriptures are presented over and above those cited in the body of this discourse and are offered simply to assist you to appreciate the weight of scripture which is behind what is presented here.

A. GENESIS 4:19

19 *Then Lamech took for himself **two wives**: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. (NKJ)*

This is the first explicit reference to a man having more than one wife and apparently occurs between about 200 and 500 years after the creation of Adam. There is no indication that this was anything special or unusual or that it represented some departure from what occurred prior to that time.

B. GENESIS 17:15-23

- 15 *Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.*
- 16 *"And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her."*
- 17 *Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"*
- 18 *And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"*
- 19 **Then God said:** *"No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.*
- 20 **"And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.**
- 21 *"But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year."*
- 22 *Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.*
- 23 *So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him. (NKJ)*

In this scripture, we see God appearing in manifest form, many believe this was Jesus, and speaking to Abraham face to face. Not only does He not rebuke Abraham for taking Hagar as a concubine, which surely He would have done had the taking of a second wife or concubine have been contrary to God's Word, He does not even caution Abraham that it was not "His best". He even goes on to bless Ishmael and to declare that he will be the father of twelve princes. A statement which probably indicates that Ishmael was likely to take more than one wife!

Surely we must accept from this scripture alone that God is not in the least opposed to a man having more than one wife? Could we not at least gain the impression that God might even favour such an arrangement?

C. GENESIS 22:20-24

- 20 *Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, "Indeed **Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor:***
- 21 *"Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram,*
- 22 *"Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel."*
- 23 *And Bethuel begot Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother.*
- 24 **His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah. (NKJ)**

Here we see that in Abraham's immediate family it was common for a man to have more than one wife. If you care to read carefully, you will find that Abraham's father had more than one wife as well, that was why Sarai was his half-sister!

D. GENESIS 25:6

6 *But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of **the concubines which Abraham had**; and while he was still living he sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to the country of the east. (NKJ)*

Here we see that ultimately Abraham had several concubines and yet James 2:23-24 states:

23 *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And **he was called the friend of God.***

24 *You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. (NKJ)*

So we see that it is possible for a man to have more than one wife or a wife and several concubines and yet be called "the friend of God". Dare we speak evil of Abraham, or call him an adulterer, and not fear the wrath of God against us for speaking against His covenant partner and friend?

Dear reader, please understand, these are not matters to be taken lightly, they are not matters in which we can hide behind uncertainty with regard to the interpretation of scripture. These are Words of God that are yea and amen! We dare not speak against him whom God has called His friend without opening ourselves up to the most awful judgement and granting Satan an enormous foothold in our lives!

E. GENESIS 25:12-17

12 *Now this is the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Haggar the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham.*

13 *And these were the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,*

14 *Mishma, Dumah, Massa,*

15 *Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.*

16 *These were the sons of Ishmael and these were their names, by their towns and their settlements, twelve princes according to their nations.*

17 *These were the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. (NKJ)*

Here we see that God's promise to Abraham with regard to Ishmael having twelve son's is fulfilled, quite possible through several wives.

F. GENESIS 30:1-27

1 *Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"*

2 *And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "**Am I in the place of God**, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"*

3 *So she said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her."*

4 ***Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her.***

5 *And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son.*

6 *Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan.*

7 *And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.*

- 8 *Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.*
- 9 ***When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife.***
- 10 *And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son.*
- 11 *Then Leah said, "A troop comes!" So she called his name Gad.*
- 12 *And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son.*
- 13 *Then Leah said, "I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed." So she called his name Asher.*
- 14 *Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."*
- 15 *But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes."*
- 16 *When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." And he lay with her that night.*
- 17 ***And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son.***
- 18 ***Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar.***
- 19 *Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son.*
- 20 ***And Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun.***
- 21 *Afterward she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah.*
- 22 ***Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb.***
- 23 *And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach."*
- 24 *So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The LORD shall add to me another son."*
- 25 *And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my country.*
- 26 ***"Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you."***
- 27 *And Laban said to him, "Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, **for I have learned by experience that the LORD has blessed me for your sake.**" (NKJ)*

In this passage, not only do we see the chronology of Jacob taking his two concubines, and also see some of his marital challenges, we see that both of his first two wives voluntarily offered him their maids as concubines. In addition, we see that throughout the passage reference is made to God. In verse 27 we clearly see that "*the Lord has blessed*". Again, how can we dare to presume that God had frowned on Jacob's marriage to Laban's two daughters AND their two hand maids?

G. GENESIS 32:32

- 22 *And he [Jacob] arose that night and took his **two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok.***
- 23 *He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had.*
- 24 ***Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.***

- 25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.
- 26 And He said, "**Let Me go, for the day breaks.**" But he said, "**I will not let You go unless You bless me!**"
- 27 So He said to him, "**What is your name?**" And he said, "**Jacob.**"
- 28 And He said, "**Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.**"
- 29 Then Jacob asked, saying, "**Tell me Your name, I pray.**" And He said, "**Why is it that you ask about My name?**" And He blessed him there.
- 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "**For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.**"
- 31 Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip.
- 32 Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank. (NKJ)

Here we seek Jacob wrestling with God face to face, receiving the name Israel (central to the entire balance of scripture) and being blessed by God. How can we presume to suggest that God in any way frowned on Jacob / Israel for having more than one wife? Is that not presumption bordering on blasphemy?

H. 1 SAMUEL 1:1-2

- 1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.
- 2 And **he had two wives**: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. (NKJ)

Here we see that Samuel, one of the great prophets of scripture, was the son of a man who had two wives. Later in this passage we read that God answered Hannah's prayers and granted her a child (Samuel) whom she dedicated to God and whom God spoke to clearly when he was still a child AND throughout his life. Dare we suggest that Samuel was "illegitimate" or a "bastard" - the terms that would be applied to him today?

I. 1 SAMUEL 13:13-14

- 13 And Samuel said to Saul, "**You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.**"
- 14 "**But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.**" (NKJ)

In this passage, God, speaking through Samuel, informs Saul that God has rejected him and informs him that God has chosen "a man after His own heart", who we learn later is David. Subsequently, long after David's death, God, speaking through Paul, reported in Acts 13:21-23 says:

- 21 "**And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.**"

22 *"And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'*

23 *"From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior-- Jesus-- (NKJ)*

Here we see that despite all his eleven (?) wives and ten (?) concubines and despite a number of errors of which David was quick to repent, God referred to David as "a man after His own heart" about one thousand years after David's death! Surely it is utter foolishness to suggest that David was an adulterer, as some have done?

I Kings 15:4-5 also records after David's death:

4 *Nevertheless for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem;*

5 *because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. (NKJ)*

How dare we suggest that David was an adulterer or had adultery in his heart from his youth because he had several wives. Few other men in history have received an accolade like this from the Living God!! Has the reverent fear of God and His judgment departed from the church that people think that they can speak against David?

J. 1 SAMUEL 27:3

3 *So David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, each man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's widow. (NKJ)*

K. 1 SAMUEL 30:5-8

5 *And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive.*

6 *Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. **But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.***

7 *Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, "Please bring the ephod here to me." And Abiathar brought the ephod to David.*

8 ***So David inquired of the LORD**, saying, "Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?" **And He answered him**, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all." (NKJ)*

Here we see that at a relatively early stage of his life David already had two wives. At this time he "inquired of the LORD" and the LORD "answered him". Surely if David were sinning by having two wives God would have taken this opportunity to point this sin out to him? Instead, we read in 1 Samuel 30:18

18 *So David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and **David rescued his two wives.** (NKJ)*

So God not only answered him, but He granted David's petition!

L. 2 SAMUEL 5:13

13 And **David took more concubines and wives** from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters were born to David. (NKJ)

At this time, God did not see fit to warn or rebuke David in any way. However, after the incident with Bathsheba, we read in 2 Samuel 12:5-14, after God sent Nathan the prophet to David:

- 5 So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die!
- 6 "And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."
- 7 Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.
- 8 **'I gave you your master's house and your master's wives** into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!
- 9 **'Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.**
- 10 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'
- 11 "Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and **I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.**
- 12 'For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'"
- 13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.
- 14 "However, because **by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.**" (NKJ)

God clearly and unambiguously rebukes David, He also states that HE (GOD) GAVE DAVID SAUL'S WIVES! How can we call David an adulterer after this?

God also makes it quite clear to us that David's adultery had given the enemies of the Lord occasion to blaspheme. How much more has the heresy of monogamy and false adultery, giving rise to wholesale fornication, given even those who would serve the Lord occasion to blaspheme. **Indeed what a great burden of judgment awaits those who in this age with access to Bibles in numerous translations insist on perpetuating the heresy of monogamy!**

In addition, God is quite specific about David's sin and about the penalties that David would pay. Can we doubt for a moment that David's plurality of wives was NOT adultery but that his intercourse with another man's wife WAS? In 2 Samuel 16:21 we see God's judgement on David fulfilled through his OWN son!

21 And Ahithophel said to Absalom, "**Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you are abhorred by your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong.**"

22 *So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and **Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.** (NKJ)*

In 2 Samuel 20:3 we read about David's subsequent actions:

3 *Now David came to his house at Jerusalem. And the king took the ten women, his concubines whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in seclusion and supported them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up to the day of their death, living in widowhood. (NKJ)*

It would appear that David had such respect for the commandment of the Lord after his rebuke through Nathan that he set aside his concubines because of their forced adultery through rape rather than again incur the wrath of God! Would that most Christians had this reverence for the Word of God with regard to their treatment of the consequences of casual adultery and "one night stands"!

M. I KINGS 11:1-4

- 1 *But King Solomon **loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh:** women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites--*
- 2 ***from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods."** Solomon clung to these in love.*
- 3 *And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.*
- 4 *For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. (NKJ)*

In this passage it is quite clear that Solomon's error was to marry foreign wives, against the commandment of the Lord. NOT that he had more than one wife. He also multiplied wives (hundreds of them) which is directly contrary to Deuteronomy 17:15-17.

- 15 *"you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.*
- 16 *"But **he shall not multiply horses** for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.'*
- 17 *"**Neither shall he multiply wives** for himself, lest his heart turn away; **nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.** (NKJ)*

However, in the light of other scriptures in this section it does not seem reasonable to conclude that "multiply wives" refers to two wives, it certainly applies to seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines! Surely it would be stretching a point to apply Deuteronomy 17:17 to David, as an example, seeing as there is NO indication of even the slightest rebuke to David?

In addition, we note that Solomon also "multiplied horses" and "multiplied silver and gold for himself" in direct contradiction of this scripture.

In addition, the word "love" in I Kings 11:1 is the word "'ahab", Strong's number 157: 'ahab (aw-hab');

or 'ahab (aw-habe'); a primitive root; to have affection for (sexually or otherwise):

KJV-- (be-) love (-d, -ly, -r), like, friend.

This is far removed from the "agape" love of God described in 1 Corinthians 13 . This must surely be lust not love? Is this not the curse of our age? And is the fact that the root word of this love is "ahab" perhaps more than a coincidence seeing that the indications are that much of the false doctrine of monogamy appears to owe it's source to Jezebel and Ahab?

N. 1 CHRONICLES 4:5

5 *And Ashhur the father of Tekoa **had two wives**, Helah and Naarah. (NKJ)*

Here we see a specific reference to a man with two wives in Chronicles. Careful reading of Chronicles will reveal that the majority of significant personalities in Chronicles had more than one wife. In fact, it is probably correct to say that it was the norm among the majority of Israelite leaders.

O. 2 CHRONICLES 11:21

21 *Now Rehoboam loved Maachah the granddaughter of Absalom more than **all his wives and his concubines; for he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines**, and begot twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. (NKJ)*

Another example of a leader who had more than one wife.

P. ESTHER 2:8-18

8 *So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at Shushan the citadel, under the custody of Hegai, that **Esther** also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women.*

9 *Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best place in the house of the women.*

10 *Esther had not revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal it.*

11 *And every day Mordecai paced in front of the court of the women's quarters, to learn of Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.*

12 ***Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation**, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women.*

14 ***In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who kept the concubines.** She would not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and called for her by name.*

15 *Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.*

16 *So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.*

- 17 **The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.**
- 18 *Then the king made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king. (NKJ)*

Here we see that Esther must have been at least the 366 th woman to lie with King Ahasuerus, in all probability many more went before her. According to modern doctrine this would make the king a wholesale adulterer and Esther an adulteress. Yet God used Esther to save His people and, in verses 4:7-17 and 5:1-3 we read:

- 7 *And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews.*
- 8 *He also gave him a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people.*
- 9 *So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai.*
- 10 *Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai:*
- 11 *"All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days."*
- 12 *So they told Mordecai Esther's words.*
- 13 *Then Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews.*
- 14 *"For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. **Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"***
- 15 *Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai:*
- 16 ***"Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"***
- 17 *So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded him.*

CHAPTER 5

- 1 *Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.*
- 2 **So it was, when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, that she found favor in his sight, and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther went near and touched the top of the scepter.**
- 3 *And the king said to her, "**What do you wish, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given to you-- up to half the kingdom!"** (NKJ)*

Here we see that it appears that God placed Esther in the court as queen, for "such a time as this" in order to save His people. Surely He would not have placed her there in this fashion were it to have required her to commit a sin as serious as adultery?

We also note that He heard her prayers although we know from John 9:31 that God "does not hear sinners":

John 9:30-33 reporting the conversation between the blind man to whom Jesus granted his sight, and the Pharisees, states:

30 *The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvellous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!*

31 *"Now we know that **God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshipper of God and does His will, He hears him.***

32 *"Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.*

33 *"If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." (NKJ)*

Can we not infer from this scripture that Esther was a worshipper of God AND did His will, otherwise God would not have heard her prayer? If this is the case, surely we must draw the same conclusion regarding Abraham, Jacob, David and others? In other words, THEY WERE IN THE WILL OF GOD WHEN THEY TOOK ADDITIONAL WIVES!!!

Q. SONG OF SOLOMON 6:8

8 *There are **sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number.***

9 *My dove, my perfect one, is the only one, the only one of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her. The daughters saw her and called her blessed, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. (NKJ)*

Song of Solomon is perhaps not a particularly good source of information on this subject given Solomon's apparently flagrant sins of multiplying foreign wives, horses and silver and gold, referred to above. However, it is important to note that Song of Solomon is generally cited in the Christian Church as the authoritative scripture on marriage, love and romance and is quite widely quoted. **Surely it is gross hypocrisy to cite the writings of a man who had numerous wives and concubines and THEN preach against a man having more than one wife? Surely scripture is quite explicit about the fate of hypocrites?**

R. DANIEL 5:2

2 *While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, **his wives, and his concubines** might drink from them. (NKJ)*

From this scripture we gather that Belshazzar had wives AND concubines. In the same passage verse 5:23 we read how Daniel offers Belshazzar the interpretation of the writing of the "finger of God" on the wall in the banquet hall:

23 *"And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your **wives and your concubines**, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do*

not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. (NKJ)

Surely God would have added in a rebuke for having more than one wife if that were another major sin?

3. INFERENCE OF MANY WIVES BASED ON NUMBER OF OFFSPRING

A careful reading of scripture will also reveal many instances where, although the number of wives of a man are not explicitly defined, the number of children borne to that man are suggestive of there having been more than one wife. Each of the instances below are from the book of Judges. The judges were ordained by God and were anointed by Him to Judge. Accordingly, since they were required to judge according to the Law of Moses it would seem reasonable to conclude that they were more or less in the will of God most of the time and it is therefore perhaps even more notable that they had the number of children which they did:

A. JUDGES 8:30

*30 Gideon had seventy sons who were his own offspring, **for he had many wives.** (NKJ)*

B. JUDGES 12:8-9

8 After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel.

*9 He had **thirty sons.** And he gave away **thirty daughters** in marriage, and brought in thirty daughters from elsewhere for his sons. He (NKJ)*

C. JUDGES 12:13-14

13 After him, Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel.

*14 He had **forty sons** and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy young donkeys. He judged Israel eight years. (NKJ)*

APPENDIX E: ALL SCRIPTURE REFERENCES INCLUDING THE GREEK WORD 3391 "MIA" ONE / FIRST / ETC

The following passages all include the Greek word *mia*, not all of them refer to "one":

Matt 5:18 "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. (NKJ)

Matt 5:19 "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (NKJ)

Matt 5:36 "Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. (NKJ)

Matt 17:4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (NKJ)

Matt 19:5 "and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? (NKJ)

Matt 19:6 "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." (NKJ)

Matt 20:12 "saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' (NKJ)

Matt 21:19 And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." And immediately the fig tree withered away. (NKJ)

Matt 24:41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. (NKJ)

Matt 26:40 Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? (NKJ)

Matt 26:69 Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee." (NKJ)

Matt 28:1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. (NKJ)

Mark 9:5 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"-- (NKJ)

Mark 10:8 'and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. (NKJ)

Mark 12:42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. (NKJ)

Mark 14:37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? (NKJ)

Mark 14:66 Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came. (NKJ)

Mark 16:2 Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. (NKJ)

*Luke 5:12 And it came to pass, when he was in a **certain** city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. (KJV)*

*Luke 5:17 And it came to pass on a **certain** day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. (KJV)*

*Luke 8:22 Now it came to pass on a **certain** day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. (KJV)*

*Luke 9:33 Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"-
- not knowing what he said. (NKJ)*

Luke 13:10 Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. (NKJ)

Luke 14:18 "But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' (NKJ)

Luke 15:8 "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? (NKJ)

Luke 16:17 "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail. (NKJ)

Luke 17:22 Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. (NKJ)

Luke 17:34 "I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. (NKJ)

Luke 17:35 "Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. (NKJ)

Luke 20:1 Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him (NKJ)

Luke 22:59 Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." (NKJ)

Luke 24:1 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. (NKJ)

John 10:16 "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. (NKJ)

John 20:1 On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. (NKJ)

*John 20:19 Then, the same day at evening, being the **first** day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." (NKJ)*

Acts 4:32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. (NKJ)

Acts 12:10 When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. (NKJ)

- Acts 19:34 *But when they found out that he was a Jew, all with one voice cried out for about two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" (NKJ)*
- Acts 20:7 *Now on the **first** day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. (NKJ)*
- Acts 21:7 *And when we had finished our voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day. (NKJ)*
- Acts 24:21 *"unless it is for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.'" (NKJ)*
- Acts 28:13 *From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 6:16 *Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 10:8 *Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 16:2 *On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. (NKJ)*
- 2 Cor 11:24 *From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. (NKJ)*
- Gal 4:24 *which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar-- (NKJ)*
- Eph 4:4 *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; (NKJ)*
- Eph 4:5 *one Lord, one faith, one baptism; (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:31 *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (NKJ)*
- Phil 1:27 *Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 3:2 *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 3:12 *Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (NKJ)*
- Titus 1:6 *if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (NKJ)*
- Titus 3:10 *Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, (NKJ)*
- Heb 10:12 *But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, (NKJ)*
- Heb 10:14 *For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. (NKJ)*
- Heb 12:16 *lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. (NKJ)*
- 2 Pet 3:8 *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (NKJ)*
- 2 Pet 3:8 *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (NKJ)*

Rev 6:1 Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." (NKJ)

Rev 9:12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things. (NKJ)

Rev 9:13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, (NKJ)

Rev 13:3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marvelled and followed the beast. (NKJ)

Rev 17:12 "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. (NKJ)

Rev 17:13 "These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. (NKJ)

Rev 17:17 "For God has put it into their hearts to fulfil His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. (NKJ)

Rev 18:8 "Therefore her plagues will come in one day-- death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her. (NKJ)

Rev 18:10 "standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' (NKJ)

Rev 18:17 'For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance (NKJ)

Rev 18:19 "They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.' (NKJ)

APPENDIX F:
TEXT FROM VINE'S EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY
REGARDING THE WORDS FOR
WIFE / WIVES / WOMAN / WOMEN

Vines with regard to the Hebrew links to Woman when searching for Wife. There is no separate reference to wives or women as both are translations of the same root word:

WIFE refers to WOMAN, WIVES and WOMEN

'ishshah ^802^, "woman; wife; betrothed one; bride; each." This word has cognates in Akkadian, Ugaritic, Aramaic, Arabic, and Ethiopic. It appears about 781 times in biblical Hebrew and in all periods of the language.

This noun connotes one who is a female human being regardless of her age or virginity. Therefore, it appears in correlation to "man" (ish): "...she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" <Gen. 2:23>. This is its meaning in its first biblical usage: "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man [adam], made he a woman, and brought her unto the man" <Gen. 2:22>. The stress here is on identification of womanhood rather than a family role.

The stress on the family role of a "wife" appears in passages such as <Gen. 8:16>: "Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee."

In one special nuance the word connotes "wife" in the sense of a woman who is under a man's authority and protection; the emphasis is on the family relationship considered as a legal and social entity: "And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered..." <Gen. 12:5>.

In <Lam. 2:20> 'ishshah is a synonym for "mother": "Shall the women eat their [offspring, the little ones who were born healthy]?" In <Gen. 29:21> (cf. <Deut. 22:24>) it appears to connote "bride" or "betrothed one": "And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her." <Eccl. 7:26> uses the word generically of "woman" conceived in general, or womanhood: "And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets..." (cf. <Gen. 31:35>).

This word is used only infrequently of animals: "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female" <Gen. 7:2>.

This word can also be used figuratively describing foreign warriors and or heroes as "women," in other words as weak, unmanly, and cowardly: "In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts..." <Isa. 19:16>.

In a few passages 'ishshah means "each" or "every": "But every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house..." <Exod. 3:22>; cf. <Amos 4:3>. A special use of this nuance occurs in passages such as <Jer. 9:20>, where in conjunction with re`ut ("neighbor") it means "one" (female): "Yet hear the word of the Lord, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbor lamentation."

(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

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With regard to the Greek words WIFE, WIVES, Vines states:

1. *gune* ^{^1135^} denotes (1) **"a woman, married or unmarried"** (see WOMAN); (2) "a wife," e. g., <Matt. 1:20; 1 Cor. 7:3,4>; in <1 Tim. 3:11>, RV, "women," the reference may be to the "wives" of deacons, as the KJV takes it.

2. *gunaikeios* ^{^1134^}, an adjective denoting **"womanly, female,"** is used as a noun in <1 Pet. 3:7>, KJV, "wife," RV, "woman."#

Note: In <John 19:25> the article stands idiomatically for "the wife (of)"; in <Matt. 1:6>, the article is rendered "her that had been the wife (of)."

(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

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With regard to the Greek word WOMAN, (there is no separate reference for Women since the same root is translated in both forms) Vines states:

1. *gune* ^{^1135^}, **for which see also WIFE, is used of a "woman" unmarried or married, e. g.,** <Matt. 11:11; 14:21; Luke 4:26>, of a "widow"; <Rom. 7:2>; in the vocative case, used in addressing a "woman," it is a term not of reproof or severity, but of endearment or respect, <Matt. 15:28; John 2:4>, where the Lord's words to His mother at the wedding in Cana, are neither rebuff nor rebuke. The question is, lit., "What to Me and to thee?" and the word "woman," the term of endearment, follows this. The meaning is "There is no obligation on Me or you, but love will supply the need." She confides in Him, He responds to her faith. There was loving-kindness in both hearts. His next words about "His hour" suit this; they were not unfamiliar to her. Cana is in the path to Calvary; Calvary was not yet, but it made the beginning of signs possible. See also <4:21; 19:26>.

In <Gal. 4:4> the phrase "born of a woman" is in accordance with the subject there, viz., the real humanity of the Lord Jesus; this the words attest. They declare the method of His incarnation and "suggest the means whereby that humanity was made free from the taint of sin consequent upon the Fall, viz., that He was not born through the natural process of ordinary generation, but was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit... To have written 'born of a virgin' would have carried the argument in a wrong direction... Since that man is born of woman is a universal fact, the statement would be superfluous if the Lord Jesus were no more than man" (Notes on Galatians, by Hogg and Vine, pp. 184f.).

2. *gunaikeion* ^{^1133^}, a diminutive of No. 1, a "little woman," is used contemptuously in <2 Tim. 3:6>, "a silly woman."#

3. *presbuteros* ^4245^, "elder, older," in the feminine plural, denotes "elder women" in <1 Tim. 5:2>. See *ELDER, A, No. 1*.

4. *presbutis* ^4247^, the feminine of *presbutes*, "aged," is used in the plural and translated "aged women" in <Titus 2:3>.#

5. *theleia* ^2338^, the feminine of the adjective *thelus*, denotes "female," and is used as a noun, <Rom. 1:26,27>. See *FEMALE*.

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APPENDIX G: SCRIPTURE REFERENCES INCLUDING THE GREEK WORD 1135 "GUNE" WIFE / WIVES / WOMAN / WOMEN

Following are many scriptures all of which contain the Greek word "gune". Readers are encouraged to observe the extent to which gune is variously translated and the English usage is determined by the context. There are a number of instances where the singular can be replaced with the plural. Note also the extent to which woman and wife, women and wives can be interchanged.

Matt 1:20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. (NKJ)

Matt 1:24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, (NKJ)

Matt 5:28 "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (NKJ)

Matt 5:31 "Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' (NKJ)

Matt 5:32 "But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery. (NKJ)

Matt 9:20 And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. (NKJ)

Matt 9:22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour. (NKJ)

Matt 11:11 "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. (NKJ)

Matt 13:33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." (NKJ)

Matt 14:3 For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. (NKJ)

Matt 14:21 Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. (NKJ)

Matt 15:22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." (NKJ)

Matt 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour. (NKJ)

- Matt 15:38 Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. (NKJ)*
- Matt 18:25 "But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. (NKJ)*
- Matt 19:3 The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?" (NKJ)*
- Matt 19:5 "and said, `For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? (NKJ)*
- Matt 19:8 He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. (NKJ)*
- Matt 19:9 "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." (NKJ)*
- Matt 19:10 His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry." (NKJ)*
- Matt 22:24 saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)*
- Matt 22:25 "Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. (NKJ)*
- Matt 22:27 "Last of all the woman died also. (NKJ)*
- Matt 22:28 "Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her." (NKJ)*
- Matt 26:7 a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. (NKJ)*
- Matt 26:10 But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. (NKJ)*
- Matt 27:19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." (NKJ)*
- Matt 27:55 And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, (NKJ)*
- Matt 28:5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. (NKJ)*
- Mark 5:25 Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, (NKJ)*
- Mark 5:33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. (NKJ)*
- Mark 6:17 For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. (NKJ)*
- Mark 6:18 For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." (NKJ)*
- Mark 7:25 For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. (NKJ)*
- Mark 7:26 The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. (NKJ)*
- Mark 10:2 The Pharisees came and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" testing Him. (NKJ)*
- Mark 10:7 `For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, (NKJ)*

Mark 10:11 So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. (NKJ)

Mark 12:19 "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)

Mark 12:19 "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)

Mark 12:20 "Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. (NKJ)

Mark 12:22 "So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. (NKJ)

Mark 12:23 "Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife." (NKJ)

Mark 14:3 And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head. (NKJ)

Mark 15:40 There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, (NKJ)

Luke 1:5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (NKJ)

Luke 1:13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. (NKJ)

Luke 1:18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." (NKJ)

Luke 1:24 Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, (NKJ)

Luke 1:42 Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! (NKJ)

Luke 3:19 But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, (NKJ)

Luke 4:26 "but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. (NKJ)

Luke 7:28 "For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (NKJ)

Luke 7:37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, (NKJ)

Luke 7:39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." (NKJ)

Luke 7:44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. (NKJ)

Luke 7:44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. (NKJ)

Luke 7:50 Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." (NKJ)

Luke 8:2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities-- Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, (NKJ)

Luke 8:3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance. (NKJ)

Luke 8:43 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, (NKJ)

Luke 8:47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. (NKJ)

Luke 10:38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. (NKJ)

Luke 11:27 And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" (NKJ)

Luke 13:11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. (NKJ)

Luke 13:12 But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." (NKJ)

Luke 13:21 "It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." (NKJ)

Luke 14:20 "Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' (NKJ)

Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. (NKJ)

Luke 15:8 "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? (NKJ)

Luke 16:18 "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery. (NKJ)

Luke 17:32 "Remember Lot's wife. (NKJ)

Luke 18:29 So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, (NKJ)

Luke 20:28 saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)

Luke 20:28 saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)

Luke 20:29 "Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. (NKJ)

Luke 20:32 "Last of all the woman died also. (NKJ)

Luke 20:33 "Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife." (NKJ)

Luke 22:57 But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." (NKJ)

Luke 23:27 And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. (NKJ)

Luke 23:49 But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. (NKJ)

Luke 23:55 And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. (NKJ)

Luke 24:22 "Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. (NKJ)

Luke 24:24 "And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see." (NKJ)

John 2:4 Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." (NKJ)

John 4:7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." (NKJ)

John 4:9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. (NKJ)

John 4:9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. (NKJ)

John 4:11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? (NKJ)

John 4:15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." (NKJ)

John 4:17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' (NKJ)

John 4:19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. (NKJ)

John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. (NKJ)

John 4:25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." (NKJ)

John 4:27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marvelled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" (NKJ)

John 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, (NKJ)

John 4:39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." (NKJ)

John 4:42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." (NKJ)

John 8:3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, (NKJ)

John 8:4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. (NKJ)

John 8:9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (NKJ)

John 8:10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" (NKJ)

John 16:21 "A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. (NKJ)

John 19:26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" (NKJ)

John 20:13 Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." (NKJ)

John 20:15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." (NKJ)

Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. (NKJ)

Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. (NKJ)

Acts 5:2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. (NKJ)

Acts 5:7 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. (NKJ)

Acts 5:14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, (NKJ)

Acts 8:3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. (NKJ)

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. (NKJ)

Acts 9:2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. (NKJ)

Acts 13:50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. (NKJ)

Acts 16:1 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. (NKJ)

Acts 16:1 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. (NKJ)

Acts 16:13 And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. (NKJ)

Acts 16:14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. (NKJ)

Acts 17:4 And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas. (NKJ)

Acts 17:12 Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. (NKJ)

Acts 17:34 However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them. (NKJ)

Acts 18:2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. (NKJ)

Acts 21:5 When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till we were out of the city. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed. (NKJ)

Acts 22:4 "I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, (NKJ)

Acts 24:24 And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. (NKJ)

Acts 24:24 And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. (NKJ)

Rom 7:2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. (NKJ)

1 Cor 5:1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles-- that a man has his father's wife! (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:1 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:11 But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:12 But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:13 And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife? (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:33 But he who is married cares about the things of the world-- how he may please his wife. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:34 There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world-- how she may please her husband. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:39 A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. (NKJ)

1 Cor 9:5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? (NKJ)

- 1 Cor 11:3 *But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:5 *But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:6 *For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:7 *For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:8 *For man is not from woman, but woman from man. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:9 *Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:10 *For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:11 *Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:11 *Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:12 *For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:13 *Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:15 *But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 14:34 *Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 14:35 *And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. (NKJ)*
- Gal 4:4 *But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:22 *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:23 *For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:24 *Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:28 *So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:31 *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:33 *Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:33 *Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (NKJ)*
- Col 3:18 *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. (NKJ)*

Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. (NKJ)

1 Tim 2:9 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, (NKJ)

1 Tim 2:10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. (NKJ)

1 Tim 2:11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. (NKJ)

1 Tim 2:12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. (NKJ)

1 Tim 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. (NKJ)

1 Tim 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; (NKJ)

1 Tim 3:11 Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. (NKJ)

1 Tim 3:12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (NKJ)

1 Tim 5:9 Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, (NKJ)

Titus 1:6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (NKJ)

Heb 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. (NKJ)

1 Pet 3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, (NKJ)

1 Pet 3:5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, (NKJ)

Rev 2:20 "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. (NKJ)

Rev 9:8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. (NKJ)

Rev 12:1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. (NKJ)

Rev 12:4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. (NKJ)

Rev 12:6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. (NKJ)

Rev 12:13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. (NKJ)

Rev 12:14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. (NKJ)

Rev 12:15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. (NKJ)

Rev 12:16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. (NKJ)

Rev 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (NKJ)

Rev 14:4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. (NKJ)

Rev 17:3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. (NKJ)

Rev 17:4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. (NKJ)

Rev 17:6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marvelled with great amazement. (NKJ)

Rev 17:7 But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. (NKJ)

Rev 17:9 "Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. (NKJ)

Rev 17:18 "And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth." (NKJ)

Rev 19:7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." (NKJ)

Rev 21:9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." (NKJ)

APPENDIX H: ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE REFERENCES REPORTING JESUS REPLY TO THE SADDUCEES REGARDING LEVIRATE MARRIAGE

The following additional passages confirm Jesus' response to the question concerning brothers marrying their deceased brother's wives:

Mark 12:18-25

- 18 *Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying:*
19 *"Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.*
20 *"Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring.*
21 *"And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise.*
22 *"So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also.*
23 *"Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife."*
24 *Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?"*
25 *"For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. (NKJ)*

Luke 20:27-36

- 27 *Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him,*
28 *saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.*
29 *"Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children.*
30 *"And the second took her as wife, and he died childless.*
31 *"Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died.*
32 *"Last of all the woman died also.*
33 *"Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife."*
34 *And Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage.*
35 *"But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;*
36 *"nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. (NKJ)*

APPENDIX I:
PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLY BIBLE
FROM THE ANCIENT EASTERN TEXT
GEORGE M. LAMSA'S TRANSLATION
FROM THE ARAMAIC OF THE PESHITTA
HARPER COLLINS PUBLISHERS

The following is a verbatim quotation of the preface and introduction to Lamsa's translation of the Bible from the Peshitta (Aramaic text) with emphasis added by the author of this document. It highlights a number of issues of critical importance to any Christian seeking to better understand what the Word of God truly says versus what modern English translations would have us believe.

PREFACE

The favorable reception accorded the Lamsa translation of the Gospels, later of the New Testament and of the Psalms, has prompted us to publish a complete translation of The Holy Bible from the Peshitta, the authorized Bible of the Church of the East. This translation of the Old and New Testaments into English is based on Peshitta manuscripts which have comprised the accepted Bible of all of those Christians who have used Syriac as their language of prayer and worship for many centuries. **It is appropriate that as we have translations based on the Greek Septuagint of the Old Testament and on the Latin Bible of Jerome, so also should there be available to the modern reader that form of the text which was translated anciently into a branch of the Aramaic language which has been used by Christians from earliest times.**

In the long history of the Aramaic language, there are three periods of special interest to us. From the sixth to the fourth century before Christ, it was a language of empire extending from the borders of Persia to those of Europe, and down the Nile through the length of Egypt. It was in those days spoken and written by the Jewish people at least equally with Hebrew; and so we have parts of Ezra and Daniel, and one verse in Jeremiah (10: 11), that were composed in Aramaic and preserved in that ancient form of the language in the midst of the Hebrew Old Testament.

In the first century, Jesus and his earliest followers certainly spoke Aramaic for the most part, although they also knew Hebrew. Therefore the Gospel message was first preached in the Aramaic of the Jews of Palestine. Modern scholarship tells us that the originals of the Four Gospels and of other parts of the New Testament were written in Greek; this is disputed by the Church of the East and by some noted Western scholars. Regardless of which view one may accept, Aramaic speech is an underlying factor and it is unquestionably true that documents written in Aramaic were drawn on by writers of the New Testament, the basic inspired form of the Christian message.

Aramaic was the language of the Church that spread east, almost from the beginning of Christianity, from Antioch and Jerusalem, beyond the confines of the Roman Empire. This differed from the

language of Palestine in choice of words and grammatical forms rather more extensively than does American English from British English and in written form these differences became regular and standardized. The Jews and Christians used the literary dialect of Aramaic that we call Syriac almost at the same time to propagate their translations of the sacred books brought from Palestine and the West, reaching into Syria and Mesopotamia and the nearby mountains, quite early into India, and into China in the course of time. Modern scholarship believes that as happened in other parts of the Church, the earliest copies of the sacred books in Syriac were revised again and again to bring them closer to the standard of the Hebrew and Greek texts from which they were drawn; this view, too, is not accepted by the Church of the East. **Under any conditions by the fifth century A.D. the Peshitta version in its present form held the field by universal acclaim.**

The fixed stand of the Church of the East with respect to some of the points mentioned above can best be understood by reference to the following letter, which we are authorized to quote, from the Patriarch and Head of that Church:

Patriarchate of the East, Modesto, California, April 5, 1957

"With reference to your letter concerning Lamsa's translation of the Aramaic Bible, and the originality of the Peshitta text, as the Patriarch and Head of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East we wish to state, that **the Church of the East received the scriptures from the hands of the blessed Apostles themselves in the Aramaic original, the language spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and that the Peshitta is the text of the Church of the East which has come down from the Biblical times without any change or revision.**"

Mar Eshai Shimun
by Grace, Catholicos Patriarch
of the East

From the Mediterranean east into India the Peshitta is still the Bible of preference among Christians, though today nearly all who use it speak Arabic, or one of the tongues of South India. West of the Euphrates, spoken Aramaic as a mothertongue survives today only in two mountain villages northwest of Damascus, differing as much from the speech of Jesus' day as French from its parent Latin. East of the Euphrates, in the Kurdish mountains, and near Lake Urmia, perhaps a hundred thousand people (Christian, Jew and Muslim) speak another form of it, strangely mixed with borrowed words from the various languages of their polyglot neighbors, but still basically akin to the Aramaic (Syriac) of olden times.

George M. Lamsa, B.A., F.R.S.A., the translator of this work is uniquely fitted for the task to which he has devoted the major part of his life. He is an Assyrian and a native, of ancient Biblical lands, where he lived until World War 1. Until that time, isolated from the rest of Christendom, his people retained Biblical customs and Semitic culture which had perished everywhere else. This background, together with his knowledge of the Aramaic (Syriac) language, has enabled him to recover much of the meaning that has been lost in other translations of the Scriptures.

Manuscripts used in making this translation were the Codex Ambrosianus for the Old Testament and the so-called Mortimer-McCawley manuscript for the New Testament; the former is in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, Italy, and has been identified as fifth century A.D.; the latter was used for our previous translation of the New Testament, of which this edition is a revision, and has been variously identified as sixth or seventh century A.D. Comparisons have been had with Peshitta manuscripts in the Morgan

Library, New York, N. Y., with manuscripts in the Freer Collection, Washington, D. C., with the Urumiah edition, and with a manuscript of the Peshitta Old Testament in the British Museum, the oldest dated Biblical manuscript in existence. Our translator states that comparisons show no differences in text between these various manuscripts, and that he has filled in the few missing portions of Chronicles from other authentic Peshitta sources, as noted in his Introduction.

We hope that this translation will be of aid to Bible readers and students in obtaining a more thorough and complete understanding of the Scriptures.

THE PUBLISHER

INTRODUCTION

North of the Garden of Eden in the basin of the river Tigris, in the mountain fastnesses of what is known today as Kurdistan, there lived an ancient people, the descendants of the Assyrians, the founders of the great Assyrian empire and culture in Bible days, the originators of the alphabet and many sciences which contributed so generously to the Semitic culture from which sprang our Bible. These people, the Assyrians, played an important part in the history of the Near East, of the Bible, and of religion in general.

When Nineveh was destroyed in 612 B.C., many of the princes and noblemen of this once vast empire fled northward into inaccessible mountains where they remained secluded and cut off until the dawn of the twentieth century. Nahum says: "Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them." Nah. 3:18.

Some descendants of the Assyrians and some of the descendants of the ten tribes who were taken captive by the Assyrian kings in 721 B.C., and settled in Assyria, Babylon, Persia and other places east of the river Euphrates, were among the first converts to Christianity.

When Jesus sent seventy of his disciples to preach the gospel, he instructed them not to go in the way of the Gentiles or into any city of the Samaritans but to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, meaning the ten tribes who were lost from the house of Israel. Some of the descendants of these Hebrew tribes are still living in Iraq, Iran, and Turkey, and most of them still converse in Aramaic. Jesus' command was carried out. The gospel was preached to the Jews first. "Now those who had been dispersed by the persecution which occurred on account of Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and even to the land of Cyprus and to Antioch, preaching the word to none but to the Jews only." Acts 11: 19.

The Assyrians remained dormant during the Persian, Greek, Roman and Arab conquests. Being isolated and surrounded by their enemies, they remained secluded throughout the centuries, thus preserving the Aramaic language, which was the language of the Near East, and perpetuating the ancient Biblical customs and manners which were common to all races and peoples in this part of the ancient world. Not until the Turkish reign did these isolated Assyrian tribes recognize any government or pay any taxes. During the centuries of Arab and Turkish reigns, the Assyrians retained their cultural independence, later recognizing the sympathetic Turkish rule which permitted the continuation of their institutions and their religion. Under magnanimous Turks they were ruled by their patriarchs and chiefs, paying a nominal tax to the Turkish government.

The Assyrian church, or as it is known, the ancient Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East, was one of the strongest Christian churches in the world and was noted for its missions in the Middle East, India, and China. Its missionaries carried the Christian gospel as far as China and Mongolia, Indonesia, Japan and other parts of the world. Not until the 14th century was this church rivaled by any other church in the world. It was the most powerful branch of Christendom in the Near East, Palestine, Arabia, Lebanon, Iran, India and elsewhere. All the literature of this church was written in literary Aramaic, the lingua franca of that time. This is corroborated by Dr. Arnold J. Toynbee in his *A Study of History* wherein he writes: ". . . Darius the Great's account of his own acts on the rock of Behistan, overhanging the Empire's great north-east road, was transcribed in triplicate in three different adaptations of the cuneiform script conveying the three imperial capitals: Elamite for Susa, Medo-Persian for Ecbatana, and Akkadian for Babylon. But the winning language within this universal state was none of the three thus officially honoured; it was Aramaic, with its handier alphabetic script. The sequel showed that commerce and culture may be more important than politics in making a language's fortune; for the speakers of Aramaic were politically of no account in the Achaemenian Empire . . ."

The Persians used the Aramaic language because this tongue was the language of the two Semitic empires, the empire of Assyria and the empire of Babylon. Aramaic was so firmly established as the lingua franca that no government could dispense with its use as a vehicle of expression in a far-flung empire, especially in the western provinces. Moreover, without schools and other modern facilities, Aramaic could not be replaced by the speech of conquering nations. Conquerors were not interested in imposing their languages and cultures on subjugated peoples. What they wanted was taxes, spoils, and other levies.

The transition from Aramaic into Arabic, a sister tongue, took place after the conquest of the Near East by the Moslem armies in the 7th century, A.D. Nevertheless, Aramaic lingered for many centuries and still is spoken in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and northwestern Iran, as well as among the Christian Arab tribes in northern Arabia. Its alphabet was borrowed by the Hebrews, Arabs, Iranians, and Mongols.

Dr. Philip K. Hitti, noted historian and Professor of Semitic languages at Princeton University, in his book *The History of the Arabs*, uses the terms Aramaic and Syriac interchangeably and states that Aramaic is still a living language. He says, "In country places and on their farms these dhimmis clung to their ancient cultural patterns and preserved their native languages: Aramaic and Syriac in Syria and Al-'Iraq, Iranian in Persia and Coptic in Egypt." And again, "In Al-'Iraq and Syria the transition from one Semitic tongue, the Aramaic, to another, the Arabic, was of course easier. In the out-of-the-way places, however, such as the Lebanons with their preponderant Christian population, the native Syriac put up a desperate fight and has lingered until modern times. Indeed Syriac is still spoken in Ma'lula and two other villages in Anti-Lebanon. With its disappearance, Aramaic has left in the colloquial Arabic unmistakable traces noticeable in vocabulary, accent and grammatical structure."

The late Dr. W. A. Wigram, in *The Assyrians and Their Neighbours* wrote: "**One thing is certain, that the Assyrians boast with justice that they alone of all Christian nations still keep as their spoken language what is acknowledged to be the language of Palestine in the first century . . .**"

Quoting Dr. Toynbee again from *A Study of History*: As for the Aramaic alphabet, it achieved far wider conquests. In 1599 A.D., it was adopted for the conveyance of the Manchu language on the eve of the Manchu conquest of China. The higher religions sped it on its way by taking it into their service. In its

'Square Hebrew' variant it became the vehicle of the Jewish Scriptures and liturgy; in an Arabic adaptation it became the alphabet of Islam . . . "

As a miracle of miracles, Aramaic and most of the ancient Biblical customs which were common to Semitic people have survived in northern Iraq until today. Aramaic is still spoken in Iraq and in northwestern Iran by remnants of the Assyrian people and the Jews of the exile, and the literary Aramaic remains the same today as it was of yore. Some of the Aramaic words which are still retained in all Bible versions are still used in the Aramaic language spoken today: for example, Raca, Ethpatakh, Rabbuh Etha, Manna, Khakal-Dema.

As we have said, the survival of this small remnant of this segment of the ancient Semitic culture was due to the isolation, tenacity, and warlike character of the Assyrian people who were living isolated, now under the Parthian Empire, now under the Persian Empire, now under the Arabian Empire and now under the Turkish Empire. And because of this isolation, these ancient Christians had hardly any contact with Christians in the West. Only one of their bishops and a deacon participated in the Nicene Council in 325 A.D.

After the conversion of Emperor Constantine to Christianity in 318 A.D., Christians in the Persian Empire who hitherto had been tolerated and looked upon as the enemies of Rome, the persecutor of Christianity, now were looked upon as the friends of the Christian emperor, Constantine, and the enemies of the Persian government. Persecution of these Christians did not begin until the 4th century A.D., and lasted until the Arab conquest of Persia, 632 A.D. **This is why this ancient Church was unable to establish contacts with Western Christianity.**

The Scriptures in the Church of the East, from the inception of Christianity to the present day, are in Aramaic and have never been tampered with or revised, as attested by the present Patriarch of the Church of the East. The Biblical manuscripts were carefully and zealously handed down from one generation to another and kept in the massive stone walls of the ancient churches and in caves. They were written on parchment and many of them survive to the present day. When these texts were copied by expert scribes, they were carefully examined for accuracy before they were dedicated and permitted to be read in churches. Even one missing letter would render the text void. Easterners still adhere to God's commandment not to add to or omit a word from the Scriptures. The Holy Scripture condemns any addition or subtraction or modification of the Word of God.

"You shall not add to the commandment which I command you, neither shall you take from it, but you must keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." Deut. 4:2.

"Everything that I command you, that you must be careful to do; you shall not add nor take from it." Deut. 12:32.

"Do not add to his words; lest he reprove you, and you be found a liar." Prove 30:6.

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his portion from the tree of life and from the holy city and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22:19.

It is also true of the Jews and Moslems that they would not dare to alter a word of the Torah or Koran. Easterners are afraid that they may incur the curse if they make a change in the Word of God.

Some of these ancient manuscripts go back to the 5th century A.D. The oldest dated Biblical manuscript in the world is that of the four Books of Moses, 464 A.D., which now lies in the British Museum. Another one is the Codex Ambrosianus. Some of it goes back to the 7th century, some of it to the 5th century, and some of it might be earlier. This Codex is not the work of one man. Apparently some portions were written before the vowel system was invented and that would put it prior to the 5th century. The Pentateuch of the British Museum must have been written before the vowel system was invented. Aramaic documents of the 5th century and later use the vowel system, some of them fully and some in part. It is interesting to know that this vowel system was adopted by the Jews and was begun about the 5th century, A.D. In some portions of the above texts, the old Aramaic original consonantal spelling without apparatus of vowel points is well preserved. This is also true of some of the New Testament texts in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York City.

Unfortunately many ancient and valuable Aramaic texts were lost during World War I. But printed copies of them, carefully made by American missionaries under the help and guidance of competent native scholars, are available. Moreover, a number of ancient New Testament texts, some of them going back to the 5th century A.D. are in various libraries. The New Testament texts in the Pierpont Morgan Library are among the oldest in existence.

The translator of this work has access to the existing texts; he has spent many years comparing them in the course of translating the Bible.

Astonishingly enough, all the Peshitta texts in Aramaic agree. There is one thing of which the Eastern scribes can boast: they copied their holy books diligently, faithfully, and meticulously. Sir Frederick Kenyon, Curator of the British Museum, in his book *Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, speaks highly of the accuracy of copying and of the antiquity of Peshitta MSS.

The versions translated from Semitic languages into Greek and Latin were subject to constant revisions. Learned men who copied them introduced changes, trying to simplify obscurities and ambiguities which were due to the work of the first translators. Present translators and Bible revisers do the same when translating the Bible, treaties, and documents from one language to another. The American Constitution, written in English, will always remain the same when new copies are made, but translations into other languages will be subject to revision. Therefore, a copy of the United States Constitution published ten years ago is far more valuable than a translation made two hundred years ago. Translations are always subject to revisions and disputes over exact meaning because words and terms of speech in one language cannot be translated easily into another without loss. This is one reason why we have so many translations and revisions of the King James version.

As said before, Aramaic was the language of Semitic culture, the language of the Hebrew patriarchs and, in the older days, the lingua franca of the Fertile Crescent. The term "Hebrew" is derived from the Aramaic word Abar or Habar which means "to cross over." This name was given to the Hebrew people simply because Abraham and the people who were with him crossed the river Euphrates and went to Palestine. Therefore, they were known by those who lived east of the river Euphrates as

Hebrews, that is, "the people across the river." All branches of the great Semitic people had a common speech. How could the people of Nineveh have understood Jonah, a Hebrew prophet, had the Biblical Hebrew tongue been different from Aramaic? There were some differences similar to the differences we have in English spoken in Tennessee and that spoken in New York.

This small pastoral Hebrew tribe through which God chose to reveal himself to mankind, for several generations continued to keep its paternal and racial relations with the people who lived in Padan-Aram (Mesopotamia), and preserved customs and manners which they brought with them from Padan-Aram, and the language which their fathers spoke. Jacob changed the name of Luz to Beth-el (Aramaic-the house of God). Abraham instructed his servant not to let his son, Isaac, marry a Palestinian maid but to go to Padan-Aram to his own kindred from whence to bring a maid to his son. Years later, Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, went to Padan-Aram and married his uncle's two daughters and their handmaids and lived in Haran about twenty years. Eleven of his sons were born in Padan-Aram. The first generation of the children of Jacob went to Egypt. Their sojourn in Palestine was so brief that there was no possibility of linguistic change. That is why they spoke the language which they had learned in Padan-Aram. While in Egypt, living by themselves, they continued to use names of Aramaic derivation such as Manasseh, Ephraim, Bar-Nun, Miriam, etc.

After the captivity, Aramaic became the vernacular of the Jewish people and is still used by them in their worship. Both of the Jewish Talmuds, namely, the Babylonian and Palestinian, were written in Aramaic. The later findings, especially of Jewish-Aramaic papyri which were found in Egypt in 1900, have produced many passages in Biblical Aramaic. The discovery of the Commentary on the Book of Habakkuk in the caves of Qumran in Jordan proves that Aramaic has been in constant use from early times to the present day.

It is evident that during the exile and post-exile the Hebrew writers used Aramaic. Some of the portions of their works were put into Hebrew. Daniel and Ezra were born during the captivity. Hebrew was no longer spoken and the official language of writing in Babylon was southern Aramaic and the Jewish community had already parted with their Hebrew. (Footnote The two languages were so close that Hebrew could not be retained in Babylon) Thus, the captivity produced the transition from Hebrew, a sister language, into Aramaic.

Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic were very closely related, like American English and English spoken in England. Whether the Hebrew prophets wrote in Hebrew or Aramaic would make little difference. The differences would be like those between several Arabic dialects which are spoken in Arabia. Even though the vernacular speech differs because of local color and idioms, the norm of the written language remains the same. This is true today with written Arabic when compared with spoken Arabic. And such was the case with Attic Greek when compared with other Greek dialects. The grammar, verbs, nouns and other parts of speech are practically the same in the basic ancient Biblical Hebrew language and Aramaic. **The structure of a sentence, in point of grammar and syntax of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic, is the same. But this is not the case when translating from Hebrew or Aramaic into a totally alien tongue such as Greek, Latin, or English.** Moreover, the alphabet in Hebrew and Aramaic is exactly the same and all letters are pronounced alike.

The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. II, tells us:

"In Palestinian Aramaic the dialect of Galilee was different from that of Judea, and as a result of the religious separation of the Jews and the Samaritans, a special Samaritan dialect was evolved, but its literature cannot be considered Jewish. To the eastern Aramaic, whose most distinctive point of difference is "n" in place of "y" as the prefix for the third person masculine of the imperfect tense of the verb, belong the idioms of the Babylonian Talmud, which most closely agree with the language of the Mandaean writings."

The strongest points in ascertaining the originality of a text are the style of writing, the idioms, and the internal evidence. Words which make sense and are easily understood in one language, when translated literally into another tongue, may lose their meaning. One can offer many instances where scores of Aramaic words, some with several meanings and others with close resemblance to other words, were confused and thus mistranslated.

This is why in Jeremiah 4: 10, we read in the King James:

" . . . Ah, LORD God! surely thou hast greatly deceived this people . . ."

The Aramaic reads:

" . . . Ah, LORD God! I have greatly deceived this people. . ." The translator's confusion is due to the position of a dot, for the position of a dot frequently determines the meaning of a word.

In Isaiah 43:28, the King James version reads:

"Therefore, I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary. . ."

The Aramaic reads:

". . . Your princes have profaned my sanctuary. . ." This error was caused by misunderstanding of a passive plural verb. The same error occurs in John 12:40, which in the Eastern Text reads:

' . . Their eyes have become blind. . . " instead of ". . . He hath blinded their eyes. . . "

In Isaiah 14:12, the Aramaic word ailel, to howl, is confused by the Hebrew word helel, light. The reference here is to the king of Babylon and not to Lucifer.

In Psalm 22:29, King James version, we read:

"All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship. . . and none can keep alive his own soul."

The Aramaic text reads:

"All those who are hungry (for truth) shall eat and worship . . . my soul is alive to him." The error in this instance is due to the confusion of the Aramaic words which have some resemblance. Some of these words when written by hand resemble one another. A list of words, their meanings and how they were confused one with the other will be found in this Introduction.

THE ARAMAIC PESHITTA TEXT

The term Peshitta means straight, simple, sincere and true, that is, the original.

This name was given to this ancient and authoritative text to distinguish it from other Bible revisions and translations which were introduced into some of the Churches of the East (Monophysites) after the division at Ephesus and Chalcedon in 431 and 451 A.D., respectively. This ancient Peshitta is still the only authoritative text of the Old and New Testament of all Eastern Christians in the Near East and

India, the Church of the East, the Roman Catholic Church in the East, the Monophysites, and Indian Christians. This is because this text was in use for 400 years before the Christian Church was divided into several sects.

The Peshitta Old Testament contains what is known as the Books of the Apocrypha, which have been handed down in the Peshitta manuscripts together with the Books of the Law and the Books of the Prophets, and since these Apocryphal' books are included in the text they are looked upon as a sacred literature, even though they are not as commonly used as the others. Moreover this ancient New Testament text omits the story of the woman taken in adultery, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation. (But these books are included in later Aramaic texts.) The Peshitta canon was set before the discovery of these books.

Amid persecutions, the ancient Church of the East, through God's help and protection, was able to keep these sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments in the Biblical lands in Persia and India just as the Roman Catholic Church preserved them in the West. Christianity also owes a debt to the Jewish people who preserved the Word of God amid persecution and suffering.

Therefore, Peshitta should not be confused with the 5th century Bible revisions in Aramaic and new versions which were made from Greek. None of these new revisions and versions made by the Monophysite bishops in the 5th century has ever been accepted by the Church of the East. Moreover, these bishops who left their church and joined the Greek church and produced these versions for theological reasons so that their doctrine might agree with the doctrine of the Byzantine Church, which was the powerful imperial sect, were expelled by the Patriarch of the East and their works were condemned. However, in some provinces, owing to the pressure exerted by the Byzantine emperors, these new revisions were introduced. But when the territory was occupied by the Persian government, they were destroyed.

Had the Peshitta been made by order of one of the rival churches, the others would have rejected it. But since all Christians, even the Moslems in the Middle East accept and revere the Peshitta text, it proves beyond a doubt that it was in use many centuries before the division of the Church.

The originality of the Peshitta text is strongly supported by early evidence. Aphraates quoted it. St. Ephraim wrote a commentary on it and the doctrine of Addi placed it at the apostolic times.

According to the Peshitta text, the Semitic names of people and towns and localities, in both the New and Old Testaments, agree. The names which end with "s" are retained for the western reader. In the Peshitta text, Barnabas is Barnba, Abbas is Abba, Peter is Kepa. Then again, some of the names of localities are different but older than those in other texts. For example, Rakim is used instead of Kadesh, Mathnin instead of Bashan, Amorah for Gomorah; the error in this instance is due to close similarity between gamel and ain. A town near the city of Gomorah is called Amoriah. No doubt, the pre-exile Hebrew texts used these older names.

The late Mar-Yacob (Jacob) Eugene Manna, Chaldean Roman Catholic Metropolitan of Armenia, a distinguished Aramaic scholar whose writings are in Aramaic, says that the text which is called Peshitta is without dispute even earlier than the writings which came down from the works of Bar-Dasan, who was living in the latter part of the second century. He also states that the Aramaic speech in Mesopotamia was richer and purer than the Aramaic speech of other regions. It was the richness and the beauty of this language which was used as the lingua franca by the three great empires in the Near

East and Middle East which enriched the English language. **The Greek and Latin translators** made literal translations of the Scriptures, keeping the Semitic rhythm and sentence structure.

Indeed, the translation of the Scriptures into the English language facilitated the work of later English writers. The style of Shakespeare, Milton, and Browning could not have been what it is without the beauty of the King James translation which was inherited from Semitic languages. This is true also of all languages into which the Bible has been translated.

The Septuagint is based on early Hebrew manuscripts and not on the later ones known as the Massoretic, which were made in the 6th to the 9th centuries. **In other words, there are many similarities between the Septuagint and the Peshitta text but the former contains inevitable mistranslations which were due to difficulties in transmitting Hebrew or Aramaic thought and mannerisms of speech into a totally alien tongue like Greek. But as has been said, such was not the case between Biblical Aramaic and Biblical Hebrew which are of the same origin. Josephus used Aramaic and Hebrew words indiscriminately. Thus, the term "translating" from Hebrew into Aramaic or vice versa is incorrect.** It would be like one stating as having translated the United States Constitution from the Pennsylvania language into the English language or from lower German to higher German. Even before the first captivity, 721 B.C., Jewish kings, scribes, and learned men understood Aramaic. 2 Kings 18:26.

The Israelites never wrote their sacred literature in any language but Aramaic and Hebrew, which are sister languages. The Septuagint was made in the 3rd century, B.C., for the Alexandrian Jews. This version was never officially read by the Jews in Palestine who spoke Aramaic and read Hebrew. Instead, the Jewish authorities condemned the work and declared a period of mourning because of the defects in the version. Evidently Jesus and his disciples used a text which came from an older Hebrew original. This is apparent because Jesus' quotations from the Old Testament agree with the Peshitta text but do not agree with the Greek text. For example, in John 12:40, the Peshitta Old Testament and New Testament agree. This is not all. **Jesus and his disciples, not only could not converse in Greek but they never heard it spoken.**

We believe that the Scriptures were conceived and inspired by the Holy Spirit and written by Hebrew prophets who spoke and wrote, as the Holy Spirit moved them, to the people in their days, using idioms, similes, parables and metaphors in order to convey their messages. Moreover, these men of God sacrificed their lives that the Word of God might live. The Jewish race treasured these sacred writings as a priceless possession.

Writing was prevalent from the earliest days. The Israelites made more extensive use of the instrument of writing than neighboring nations such as the Ammonites, Moabites, and other kindred people round about them. Moses wrote the Ten Commandments; Joshua wrote on an altar which he built west of Jordan. The Israelites were admonished to fasten the commandments to their foreheads and necks and to write them on their doorsteps. Everything was written at the time it was revealed. God said to Moses,

"Now therefore write this song for them, and teach it to the children of Israel; and put it into their mouths; this song will be a witness for me against the children of Israel." Deut. 31:19.

"And the LORD answered me and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he who reads it may understand it clearly." Hab. 2:2. Thus, the Old Testament Scriptures were written very early.

This is also true of the Gospels. They were written a few years after the resurrection and some of the portions were written by Matthew while Jesus was preaching. They were not handed down orally and then written after the Pauline Epistles, as some western scholars say; they were written many years before those Epistles. Other contemporary Jewish literature was produced at the same time the Gospels were in circulation. The Gospels, as well as the Epistles, were written in Aramaic, the language of the Jewish people, both in Palestine and in the Greco-Roman Empire.

Greek was never the language of Palestine. Josephus' book on the Jewish Wars was written in Aramaic. Josephus states that even though a number of Jews had tried to learn the language of the Greeks, hardly any of them succeeded.

Josephus wrote (42 A.D.): "I have also taken a great deal of pains to obtain the learning of the Greeks, and understand the elements of the Greek language; although I have so accustomed myself to speak our own tongue, that I cannot pronounce Greek with sufficient exactness. For our nation does not encourage those that learn the language of many nations. On this account, as there have been many who have done their endeavors, with great patience, to obtain this Greek learning, there have yet hardly been two or three that have succeeded herein, who were immediately rewarded for their pains." Antiquities XX, XI 2.

Indeed, the teaching of Greek was forbidden by Jewish rabbis. It was said that it was better for a man to give his child meat of swine than to teach him the language of the Greeks.

When the King James translation was made, western scholars had no access to the East as we have today. In the 16th century, A.D., the Turkish empire had extended its borders as far as Vienna. One European country after another was falling under the impact of the valiant Turkish army. Europe was almost conquered. This is not all. The reformations and controversies in the Western Church had destroyed Christian unity. Moreover, the Scriptures in Aramaic were unknown in Europe. **The only recourse scholars had was to Latin and to a few portions of Greek manuscripts. This is clearly seen from the works of Erasmus. Besides, the knowledge of Greek was almost lost at this time and Christians were just emerging from the Dark Ages.**

Many people have asked why the King James' translators did not use the Peshitta text from Aramaic or the Scriptures used in the East. The answer is: there were no contacts between East and West until after the conquest of India by Great Britain and the rise of the imperial power of Britain in the Near East, Middle East, and the Far East. **It is a miracle that the King James' translators were able to produce such a remarkable translation from sources available in this dark period of European history.** Even fifty years ago, the knowledge of Western scholars relative to the Eastern Scriptures in Aramaic and the Christian Church in the East was conjectural. Moreover, these scholars knew very little of the Eastern customs and manners in which the Biblical literature was nurtured. Thank God, today new discoveries have been made; new facts have come to light; new democratic institutions and governments have been established in the East. What in the 16th and 17th centuries was viewed at a long distance now can be seen face to face. Today, not only scholars, ministers, and Bible teachers walk on Palestinian soil but also thousands of men and women visit Biblical lands every year.

For centuries translations from Semitic languages have been subject to revision. They are, even now, subject to revision. This is why there are so many Bible versions varying each from the other. Let us just take one instance which I consider very important. In the King James version, we read in Numbers 25:4:

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel."

The Aramaic reads:

"And the LORD said to Moses, Take all the chiefs of the people and expose them before the LORD in the daylight that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from the children of Israel."

Some noted Greek scholars in recent translations have changed the word hang to execute, but this is not what the original writer said. God could not have told Moses to behead or execute all Israelites. The Lord was angry at the princes of Israel because of the sin of Baal-peor. They had been lax in enforcing the law and also guilty in joining the sensual Baal worship.

And in I Corinthians 7:36 and 38, King James, we read:

"But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and needs so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry." "So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better."

The Aramaic reads:

"If any man thinks that he is shamed by the behavior of his virgin daughter because she has passed the marriage age and he has not given her in marriage and that he should give her, let him do what he will and he does not sin. Let her be married." "So then he who gives his virgin daughter in marriage does well; and he who does not give his virgin daughter in marriage does even better." Some of the scholars use "betrothed" instead of "virgin daughter." The American Standard Version of 1901 correctly used the term "virgin daughter." Certainly the King James' translators would have known the difference between "virgin daughter" and "betrothed." Paul, in this instance, is referring to a virgin's vow. Num. 30:16.

These discrepancies between various versions have been the cause of contentions and divisions among sincere men and women who are earnestly seeking to understand the Word of God. At times, they do not know what to believe and what not to believe. They cannot understand why the Scripture in one place says, "Love your father and mother" and in another place admonishes, "Hate your

father and mother." Moreover, they are bewildered when told that Jesus on the cross cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The King James says in John 16:32, "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Then again, the Old Testament in many instances states that God does not forsake the righteous nor those who trust in him. Jesus was the son of God and entrusted his spirit to God. Jesus could not have contradicted himself.

The Peshitta text reads "My God, my God, for this I was spared!"

After all the Bible is an Eastern Book, written primarily for the Israelites, and then for the Gentile world.

When we come to the New Testament, the new Covenant, we must not forget that Christianity grew out of Judaism. The Christian gospel was another of God's messages, first to the Jewish people and then to the Gentile world. For several centuries, the Christian movement was directed and guided by the Jews. All of the apostles and the evangelists were Jewish. These facts are strongly supported by the gospels and history.

The Pauline Epistles were letters written by Paul to small Christian congregations in Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome. These early Christians were mostly Jews of the dispersion, men and women of Hebrew origin who had been looking for the coming of the promised Messiah whose coming was predicted by the Hebrew prophets who had hailed him as a deliverer.

At the outset, the Romans were the masters of the world and the Greeks were not looking for a deliverer to rise up from among a people whom they hated and had crushed. Paul, on his journeys, always spoke in the Jewish synagogues. His first converts were Hebrews. Then came Arameans, the kindred of the Hebrews, as in the case of Timothy and Titus. Their fathers were Aramean and their mothers were Jewish.

Jesus and his disciples spoke the Galilean dialect of Aramaic, the language which the early Galileans had brought from the other side of the river Euphrates. 2 Kings 17:22-25. Mark tells us in his Gospel, 14:70 that Peter was exposed by his Galilean Aramaic speech.

Paul, in all of his Epistles, emphasizes Hebrew law, Jewish ordinances and temple rituals. He refers to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as "our fathers." In his letters and teaching he appeals to the Jewish people to accept Jesus as the promised Messiah. Paul's mission was first to his own people. When they refused to listen to him, he shook his 'garment and went out among the Gentiles. Acts 18:6. Paul preached the Christian gospel written in Aramaic. His Epistles were written years later when Christianity had spread into Syria and parts of the Near East and India. In other words, the Pauline Epistles were letters addressed to the Christian churches already established. Moreover, Paul, in nearly all of his Epistles, speaks of the Hebrew fathers, subjugation in Egypt, crossing the Red Sea, eating manna, and wandering in the desert. This proves beyond a doubt that these letters were written to members of the Hebrew race and not to the Gentile world who knew nothing of Hebrew history and divine promises made to them. The Greeks had not been persecuted in Egypt nor did they cross the Red Sea, nor did they eat manna in the desert.

Paul was educated in Jewish law in Jerusalem. He was a member of the Jewish Council. His native language was western Aramaic but he acquired his education through Hebrew and Chaldean or Palestinian Aramaic, the language spoken in Judea. He defended himself when on trial in his own tongue and not in Greek. Acts 22:2. Paul was converted, healed, and baptized in Damascus in Syria. Acts 9:17,18. The Epistles were translated into Greek for the use of converts who spoke Greek. Later they were translated into Latin and other tongues. I believe that this translation of the Bible based on the Eastern text of the Scriptures, written in a Semitic tongue which for many centuries was the lingua franca of the Near East and Palestine, will throw considerable light on many obscure passages and that it will elucidate many other passages which have lost their meaning because of mistranslations.

Many church authorities in the Near East, India, and other parts of Asia have been looking for a long time for a translation of their venerable Aramaic text of the Scriptures into the English language. Many

of them, despite their religious differences, have prayed for the translation and publication of this work so that thousands of educated men and women whose second language is English might read the Word of God translated from their own ancient text rather than made from secondary sources. This is also true of thousands of educated Moslems who revere Peshitta and look upon it as the authentic text of the Scriptures.

All the English speaking people in Asia will welcome a translation based on what they believe to be the pure original sources which have been carefully kept all these centuries without the slightest modification or revision. I firmly believe that this work will strengthen the faith in Jesus Christ of many Christians in the Near East and Far East and enhance missionary efforts in spreading the Word of God to millions of people in Asia. These were the facts which motivated me when I undertook this task, to which I have devoted my life.

Since World War 1, when the Aramaic speaking people were brought to the attention of the Western world and some of their ancient books brought to America, more facts from the ancient past have come to light. The National Geographic Magazine, as well as British and American newspapers have touched on the question of the Aramaic speaking people. The National Geographic Magazine in an article on Syria and Lebanon, December, 1946, speaks of Assyrian nurses, newly trained in Christian healing, who could have understood The Sermon on the Mount as it left Jesus' lips nearly two thousand years ago. The article also mentions The Four Gospels According to the Eastern Version, translated by George M. Lamsa, an Assyrian, from Aramaic into English, and states that Aramaic is the still living language which Jesus spoke.

The translator wishes to express his sincerest and deepest gratitude to Dr. Walter D Ferguson of Temple University for editorial work, for his sincere interest in this translation, for his rich knowledge and understanding of the Biblical background, and also for his inspiration and enthusiasm. I am also indebted to many others for consultation, among them my countrymen, Archdeacon Saul Neesan and the Rev. Isaac Rehana; also to a number of Jewish scholars.

The translator is also grateful to the men and women of many denominations whose generous interest and financial help enabled me to complete this work. God only can reward them for their generous part in this work.

I wish also to state that I firmly believe in the Bible as the inspired Word of God. I believe in the miracles and wonders which God wrought in the past and which are still demonstrated today. May the Holy Word of God give us faith, wisdom, and understanding to grasp the inner meaning of God's Holy Word and to make us partakers in His Kingdom. May the blessings of God rest upon the readers and students of this translation. May God's richest blessings be upon this country without whose freedom and democratic institutions, this translation could not have been made.

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105.

GEORGE M. LAMSA

APPENDIX J: ADDITIONAL REFERENCES TO THE INTERPRETATION OF THE WORD "ANER" TO DESCRIBE A MAN OR HUSBAND

The word "aner" is used in the Greek to describe a man or husband. Following are some additional descriptions of this word in support of this discussion.

Strong's defines 435 aner (an-ayr');

a primary word [compare 444]; a man (properly as an individual male):

KJV-- fellow, husband, man, sir.

VINES DEFINES "HUSBAND"

aner ^435^ denotes, in general, "a man, an adult male" (in contrast to anthropos, which generically denotes "a human being, male or female"); it is used of man in various relations, the context deciding the meaning; it signifies "a husband," e. g., <Matt. 1:16,19; Mark 10:12; Luke 2:36; 16:18; John 4:16,17,18; Rom. 7:23>. See MAN. (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

VINES DEFINES MAN (SEE ALSO MEN)

2. aner ^435^ is never used of the female sex; it stands (a) in distinction from a woman, <Acts 8:12; 1 Tim. 2:12>; as a husband, <Matt. 1:16; John 4:16; Rom. 7:2; Titus 1:6>; (b) as distinct from a boy or infant, <1 Cor. 13:11>; metaphorically in <Eph. 4:13>; (c) in conjunction with an adjective or noun, e. g., <Luke 5:8>, lit., "a man, a sinner"; <24:19>, lit., "a man, a prophet"; often in terms of address, e. g., <Acts 1:16; 13:15, 26; 15:7,13>, lit., "men, brethren"; with gentile or local names (virtually a title of honor), e. g., <Acts 2:14; 22:3>, lit., "Judean men," "a Judean man"; <3:12; 5:35>, lit., "Israelite men"; <17:22>, "Athenian men"; <19:35>, lit., "Ephesian men"; in <Acts 14:15> it is used in addressing a company of "men," without any descriptive term. In this verse, however, the distinction between aner and anthropos (2nd part) is noticeable; the use of the latter comes under No. 1 (e); (d) in general, "a man, a male person" (used like the pronoun tis, No. 3), "a man" (i. e., a certain "man"), e. g., <Luke 8:41>; in the plural, <Acts 6:11>. (Vine's, op cit)

VINE'S DEFINES FELLOW

1. aner ^435^ denotes "a man," in relation to his sex or age; in <Acts 17:5> (plural) it is rendered "fellows," as more appropriate to the accompanying description of them. See HUSBAND, MAN, SIR. (Vine's op cit)

VINE'S DEFINES SIR (-S)

2. aner ^435^, "a man," is translated "sirs" in <Acts 7:26; 14:15; 19:25; 27:10,21,25>. See MAN.

Note: In <John 21:5> the KJV marg. has "sirs" for paidia, "children." (Vine's op cit)

There can be no doubt that the word "aner" does not, in itself, determine the marital state of a man. In fact, as with the words "gune" and "ishshah" described elsewhere, the same conclusion must be reached. That is that it was relatively uncommon for a man to be unmarried and, accordingly, there was no word, other than perhaps eunuch, necessary to describe such a state.

APPENDIX K: SCRIPTURES RELATING TO "PUT AWAY" TRANSLATED AS "DIVORCE"

The word divorce is widely used in the church to describe a condition which the Bible refers to as "put away".

Malachi 2:13-16 states:

13 And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

14 Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

15 And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

*16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth **putting away**: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously. (KJV)*

The word translated "putting away" in Malachi 2:16 and translated "divorce" in most other translations, is Strong's number 7971 "shalach":

Vines defines shalach under the term "SEND":

A. Verb.

shalach ^{^7971^}, "to send, stretch forth, get rid of." This verb occurs in the Northwest Semitic languages (Hebrew, Phoenician, and Aramaic). It occurs in all periods of Hebrew and in the Bible about 850 times. Biblical Aramaic uses this word 14 times.

Basically this verb means "to send," in the sense of (1) to initiate and to see that such movement occurs or (2) to successfully conclude such an action. In <Gen. 32:18> the second emphasis is in view - these animals are "a present sent unto my lord Esau." In <Gen. 38:20> the first idea is in view: When "Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend..., he found her not"; it never reached its goal. In <1 Sam. 15:20> Saul told Samuel about the "way which the lord sent" him; here, too, the emphasis is on the initiation of the action.

The most frequent use of shalach suggests the sending of someone or something as a messenger to a particular place: "...he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence" <Gen. 24:7>; God's angel (messenger) will be sent to Nahor to prepare things for the

successful accomplishment of the servant's task. One may also "send a word" by the hand of a messenger (fool); one may send a message <Prov. 26:6>, send a letter <2 Sam. 11:14>, and send instructions <Gen. 20:2>.

Shalach can refer to shooting arrows by sending them to hit a particular target: "And he sent out arrows, and scattered them..." <2 Sam. 22:15>. In <Exod. 9:14> God "sends" His plague into the midst of the Egyptians; He "sends" them forth and turns them loose among them. Other special meanings of this verb include letting something go freely or without control: "Thou givest thy mouth to evil..." <Ps. 50:19>.

Quite often this verb means "to stretch out." God was concerned lest after the Fall Adam "put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life" <Gen. 3:22>. One may stretch forth a staff <1 Sam. 14:27> or a sickle <Joel 3:13>.

For the most part the intensive stems merely intensify the meanings already set forth, but the meaning "to send away" is especially frequent: "...Abner was no longer with David in Hebron, for David had sent him away..." <2 Sam. 3:22>, NIV. That is, David "let him go" <v. 24>, NIV. God sent man out of the garden of Eden; He made man leave <Gen. 3:23>-- the first occurrence of the verb. Noah sent forth a raven <Gen. 8:7>. Shalach can also mean to give someone a send off, or "to send" someone on his way in a friendly manner: "...and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way [send them off]" <Gen. 18:16>. In <Deut. 22:19> the word is used of divorcing a wife, or sending her away.

This verb can signify "to get rid of" something: "They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their [labor pains]" <Job 39:3>. It can also be used of setting a bondservant free: "And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty" <Deut. 15:13>. In a less technical sense shalach can mean to release someone held by force. The angel with whom Jacob wrestled said: "Let me go, for the day breaketh" <Gen. 32:26>. Yet another nuance is "to hand someone over," as in <Ps. 81:12>: "So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust...." Shalach can also mean to set something afire, as in "set the city on fire" <Judg. 1:8>.

In the passive sense the verb has some additional special meanings; in <Prov. 29:15> it means "to be left to oneself": "...but a child left to himself [who gets his own way] bringeth his mother to shame."

B. Nouns.

Mishlach means "outstretching; undertaking." This noun occurs 7 times. The word refers to an "undertaking" in <Deut. 28:8>: "The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee...." The phrase "that thou settest" embodies the meaning of mishach here (cf. <Deut. 28:20>).

Other nouns are related to shalah. Shilluchim occurs 3 times and means "presents" in the sense of something sent out to or with someone <1 Kings 9:16>. Mishloach is found 3 times and refers to "the act of sending" <Esth. 9:19,22> or "the place hands reach when stretched forth" <Isa. 11:14>, RSV. Shelach means "something sent forth as a missile," and it can refer to a sword or a weapon. Shelach occurs 8 times <2 Chr. 32:5; Job 33:18; Neh. 4:17>. The proper noun shiloah appears in <Isa. 8:6> and refers to a channel through which water is sent forth.

(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

A concordance search in the New King James translation identifies 28 verses with the word "divorce" or a derivative of that word whereas the same search in the King James Version reveals only 11 verses with the word "divorce" or a derivative thereof. The remaining 17 verses contain the words "put away"

or derivatives thereof. In some verses where "divorce" or it's derivatives occurs the word "put away" or it's derivatives also occurs.

Clearly there is a critical play on words involved in discussing divorce in scripture versus other forms of marital separation or "putting away". It seems quite clear that there are a range of criteria in terms of which divorce is acceptable and a wide range of criteria in terms of which what is called divorce today is NOT divorce but is "putting away" which leads to adultery.

Following are all instances in the NKJ where the word "divorce" or it's derivatives occurs but with the **King James Version** text substituted. The word/s in the NKJ corresponding to "divorce" and it's derivatives are highlighted.

Leviticus 21:7

*7 They shall not take a wife that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman **put away** from her husband: for he is holy unto his God. (KJV)*

Leviticus 21:14

*14 A widow, or a **divorced** woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife. (KJV)*

Leviticus 22:13

*13 But if the priest's daughter be a widow, or **divorced**, and have no child, and is returned unto her father's house, as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat: but there shall no stranger eat thereof. (KJV)*

Numbers 30:9

*9 But every vow of a widow, and of her that is **divorced**, wherewith they have bound their souls, shall stand against her. (KJV)*

Deuteronomy 22:19

*19 And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not **put her away** all his days. (KJV)*

Deuteronomy 22:29

*29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not **put her away** all his days. (KJV)*

Deuteronomy 24:1

*1 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of **divorcement**, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. (KJV)*

Deuteronomy 24:3

*3 And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of **divorcement**, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; (KJV)*

Deuteronomy 24:4

4 Her former husband, which **sent her away**, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. (KJV)

Isaiah 50:1

1 Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother's **divorcement**, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away. (KJV)

Jeremiah 3:1

1 They say, If a man **put away** his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD. (KJV)

Jeremiah 3:8

8 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of **divorce**; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. (KJV)

Ezekial 44:22

22 Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is **put away**: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before. (KJV)

Malachi 2:16

16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth **putting away**: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously. (KJV)

Matthew 5:31

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall **put away** his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: (KJV)

Matthew 5:32

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall **put away** his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. (KJV)

Matthew 19:3

3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to **put away** his wife for every cause? (KJV)

Matthew 19:7

7 *They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of **divorcement**, and to **put her away**? (KJV)*

Matthew 19:8

8 *He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to **put away** your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. (KJV)*

Matthew 19:9

9 *And I say unto you, Whosoever shall **put away** his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. (KJV)*

Mark 10:2

2 *And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to **put away** his wife? tempting him. (KJV)*

Mark 10:4

4 *And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of **divorcement**, and to **put her away**. (KJV)*

Mark 10:11

11 *And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall **put away** his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. (KJV)*

Mark 10:12

12 *And if a woman shall **put away** her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery. (KJV)*

Luke 16:18

18 *Whosoever **putteth away** his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is **put away** from her husband committeth adultery. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 7:11

11 *But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband **put away** his wife. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 7:12

12 *But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not **put her away**. (KJV)*

1 Corinthians 7:13

13 *And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not **leave** him. (KJV)*

APPENDIX L: SCRIPTURES CONTAINING THE GREEK WORD "PORNEIA" (FORNICATION)

All scriptures containing the Greek word "Porneia", Strong's number 4202. Note that this word encompasses both sexual immorality AND spiritual fornication.

Matt 5:32

32 *"But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery. (NKJ)*

Matt 15:19

19 *"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. (NKJ)*

Matt 19:9

9 *"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." (NKJ)*

Mark 7:21

21 *"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, (NKJ)*

John 8:41

41 *"You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father-- God." (NKJ)*

Acts 15:20

20 *"but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. (NKJ)*

Acts 15:29

29 *that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell. (NKJ)*

Acts 21:25

25 *"But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality." (NKJ)*

1 Cor 5:1

1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles-- that a man has his father's wife! (NKJ)

1 Cor 5:1

1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles-- that a man has his father's wife! (NKJ)

1 Cor 6:13

13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. (NKJ)

1 Cor 6:18

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. (NKJ)

1 Cor 7:2

2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. (NKJ)

2 Cor 12:21

21 lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced. (NKJ)

Gal 5:19

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, (NKJ)

Eph 5:3

3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; (NKJ)

Col 3:5

5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. (NKJ)

1Thes 4:3

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; (NKJ)

Rev 2:21

21 "And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. (NKJ)

Rev 9:21

21 *And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*
(NKJ)

Rev 14:8

8 *And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."* (NKJ)

Rev 17:2

2 *"with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."* (NKJ)

Rev 17:4

4 *The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.*
(NKJ)

Rev 18:3

3 *"For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury."* (NKJ)

Rev 19:2

2 *"For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."*
(NKJ)

**APPENDIX M:
PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS:
CHRISTIANITY'S BLOOD-STAINED RECORD**

This section was never completed

**APPENDIX N:
SCRIPTURES RELATING TO ADULTERY,
FORNICATION, HARLOTRY AND RELATED SINS**

This section was never completed

**APPENDIX O:
GRANT ON "THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE"**

This section was never completed

APPENDIX P: A JEWISH BENEDICTION

This section was never completed

APPENDIX Q: WOW! SO THAT'S HOW JESUS LOVES ME!

The following article was published in the October 1999 issue of Joy Magazine, Box 377, Merrivale 3291, South Africa, email: joymag@iafrica.com. The article is titled "**WOW! So *that's* how Jesus loves me!**" and was written by John & Helen Gardiner. This article came to my attention in January 2000 and confirmed and amplified much of what is written elsewhere in this book. It gives a wonderful summary of why the subject of this book is so important and, while the author's of this article clearly do not yet have the revelation contained in this book, it is apparent that what is contained in this article and what is contained in this book are, of necessity, complimentary in Yahweh's scheme of things.

"THE Lord began speaking to us recently about marriage - and giving us some understanding of why so many marriages are in a mess or out of order, and even why so few Christian marriages are what they could be.

Daily we seem to hear of people suffering the most terrible abuse and unhappiness and fear within marriages, and hear of more and more Christian marriages ending in the cataclysm of divorce.

Something that God purposed to be one of His greatest sources of joy and blessing to people often ends up as a curse and misery.

The Lord began to reveal that the reason why marriage is under such incredible attack is *because of what He meant it to be.*

You see, God purposed marriage to be a prophetic sign and a wonder.

Yet the enemy so often succeeds in making it a laughing stock instead of a prophetic signpost that points the way to something much deeper.

Ephesians 5:21-33 says: "*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.*"

"Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."

"In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no-one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of his body."

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

Paul says this is a great or profound mystery he's speaking about. The only other great or profound mystery is found in 1 Timothy 3:16 *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."*

Whenever scripture speaks of a mystery, it is something that can only be understood by divine revelation - how much more so a *great* mystery? However, these mysteries are something God wants us to understand - because if we don't, the enemy will run riot in that area of ignorance in our lives.

So Paul is saying, "When I'm talking about marriage, I'm talking about Christ and the church." He is saying that every time you look at a Christian marriage you should be able to say: "A-ha - so *that's* how Jesus loves His church, and that's how we as the church should respond to Him!

Marriage was made by God to be a sign that shows the world how much Jesus loves His church. Yet how many of us can say we've seen even a handful of marriages in our lifetimes that have been this?

Marriages where you look at the way the husband loves his wife, and you can say "Wow! That's how Jesus loves me as part of his church." Or you look at the wife and are able to say "Yes, I see now, I understand now how I as a Christian need to submit to Jesus in love."

Because this man and this woman have painted a prophetic picture for you, you now have a greater understanding of this great mystery!

Now do you begin to see why Satan hates marriage - and especially Christian marriages - with such a passion?

Why he will do everything within his power to pervert, make a mockery of, and destroy marriages? Because every time he does that he's not just causing misery in the lives of the people concerned, he is also destroying and pulling down something that God purposed to be a prophetic signpost.

When there are problems in a marriage, you're not just dealing with difficult people, you're dealing with all the hoards of hell trying their utmost to make a mockery of a prophetic statement that God wanted to make.

Those who are in difficult marriage situations, or who have areas of their marriage that are out of order, must wake up to this truth. It's not just that you and your spouse cannot get along with each other - it's also because you have powerful demonic forces working against your marriage becoming a prophetic sign and statement!

You need to start pulling down those demonic strongholds over your relationship. Not just in your spouse! But strongholds in you and *over* your relationship that cause both of you to react and allow friction and division to rush in.

Every area of marriage was purposed to be a prophetic sign. If you want to understand what idolatry does to the heart of God, then look at what sexual infidelity does to a marriage.

If you want to gain a clearer understanding of what it does to God when we have other gods other things that elicit our love and devotion - then look at what adultery does to a marriage. It's a prophetic sign!

You will often find in a marriage the same extremes as you find in the church. Lust in marriage is the same as spiritual licentiousness in the church - the same as just binging and going overboard on grace with no boundaries.

Then, at the other end of the scale you get frigidity in marriage - which is the same as legalism and a religious spirit in the church - cold, hard, truth with no love.

You often get these two forces at work in the same marriage, just as you get them at work in the church, and they're both just as destructive. Lust in a marriage and licentiousness in the church are just as destructive as frigidity in marriage and legalism in the church.

You also find rebellion and reaction against God's order and authority are a problem in both marriage and in the church. Just as you also get domination, manipulation and control both in marriage and in the church.

We have got to start waking up to what marriage is meant to be, and why so pitifully few are what they should be!

People get married so lightly without really understanding what they're doing. Few people who go into marriage realise they are entering into something that was meant to be a blood covenant.

This is why virginity is so important.

God's purpose for marriage was that on the wedding night the marriage covenant would be sealed with blood. Again, this is a prophetic picture of Jesus' blood covenant with us. Yet how many marriages are that today?

We want to say to any young people (both male and female!) reading this: Your virginity is one of the most precious gifts God has given you. Don't ever let the devil snatch it away from you.

In biblical times if a man took away a woman's virginity they stoned him to death. Nowadays, they label him a superstud or a loverboy or something like that!

God purposed marriage to be a blood covenant, and it is our firm belief that if you have two people entering into a marriage as virgins, and with an understanding of the awesomeness and sacredness of what they're doing on their wedding night, then God will honour that covenant and protect that marriage supernaturally. If those getting married are not virgins, they at least need to have an understanding of this awesome *covenant* relationship they're entering into.

God cannot fully bless and anoint and rebuke the devourer over many marriages today because they were never established on the foundation of covenant. People went through all the man-made rituals of the wedding ceremony, but never entered into a true covenant with each other.

If you look at the average wedding ceremony today, much of what goes on has its roots in the occult.

The veil was originally believed to ward off evil spirits. Confetti was also originally purposed to chase away evil spirits. Tradition has it that it's bad *luck* for the groom to see the bride before the wedding ceremony, and that it is good *luck* for the bride to wear something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue. Then there's the whole ritual of catching the garter and bouquet and the *lucky* souls who catch them.

The average wedding table is filled with *lucky* horseshoes or wishbones, and then the lucky couple are sent on their way to the strains of "Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye..."

All this "good luck" is just a smokescreen to distract people away from the real meaning of the ceremony - that it was meant by God to be a time of two people cutting covenant with each other before their God.

The average wedding ceremony today is a total mockery of what God intended. You get two people who've been sleeping together for years going through a silly little ritual that has no real binding upon their souls. And then people wonder why the whole thing ends up in the divorce courts two years down the road!

God wants us to begin to understand the sacredness of marriage.

If you look at what marriage entailed in biblical times, you begin to understand just how much points to Jesus - and why Jesus even said some of the things He said.

At marrying age, the young man might be attracted to a young woman, or his parents might have chosen an appropriate bride for him. The procedure could be followed by one of three different parties:

The father making the arrangements for his son, as Samson's father did for him in Judges 14: 1-10.

An agent working on behalf of the father, as Eliezer did on behalf of Abraham in Genesis 24:1-67.

Or it could be done by the young man himself.

For illustration's sake, an example of the last possibility will be used.

A young man went to the home of his potential bride-to-be. He carried three things with him: a large sum of money in order to pay the price for his bride, a betrothal contract called a *Shitre Erusin*, and a skin of wine.

Of course, anyone arriving with these things would immediately arouse the curiosity of the household! The man approached the girl's father and older brothers. The contract was laid out, and the bride-price was discussed.

Finally, a glass of wine was poured. If the father approved, then the young lady was called in. If she also approved, then she would drink the wine. In doing so, she committed herself to this man, agreeing to follow the contract that now was a legal document between the two.

They would be called husband and wife at this time, and their union could only be dissolved by a divorce. However, their status was that of betrothed, rather than that of fully married. This is where we as the church are today: the contract has been signed, the price has been paid in full. We are betrothed.

After the wine had been drunk, the man made the statement that he would go to his father's house and prepare a place for her. This place was known as the *chadar* (chamber, or a bed with a canopy).

The young Jewish bridegroom would make the following speech as he was leaving: "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." Does that sound familiar to you? Our Lord Jesus spoke those same words of us in John 14:2-3!

From the time that the *Shitre Erusin* was ratified, the young woman was consecrated, *kiddushin*, set apart to her husband. That's how we as Christians should be.

She has been bought with a price and her body is no longer her own. 1 Corinthians 6:20 says "You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body" and 1 Corinthians 7:23 says "You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men."

She must spend her time preparing to live as a wife and mother in Israel. Her days of waiting for her wedding are spent in learning how to please her husband.

Meanwhile, the young man returned to his father's home, and the *chadar* went under construction.

The room is provided with every comfort, as they will retire here for a whole week following their wedding ceremony. We see this seven day period in: Genesis 29:22-28. Laban says - "Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work.' And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife." And read Judges 14:10-18, too.

The young man, if asked when the day of his wedding would be, replied, "No man knows except my father." **In Israel the father had to be satisfied that every preparation had been made by his son before he gave him permission to go and get his bride. Jesus spoke these same words of His wedding day.**

The groom secured two close friends to assist him in securing his bride and during the actual ceremony. These two are known as "the friends of the bridegroom." They functioned as the two witnesses required for a Jewish wedding. One of them was to assist the bride, and to lead her to the ceremony, while the other was stationed with the groom. He performed a special task when the couple retired into the *chadar* after the ceremony.

During the ceremony, known as *Kiddushin*, a second contract was brought forth called a *Ketubah*. This marriage contract was witnessed by the friends of the bridegroom and turned over to the parents of the bride. It contained the promises that the groom pledged to his wife.

As at all weddings, focus was centred on the bride and groom. For this one day they were looked at as king and queen. Every effort was made, and no expense was spared to ensure their joy. On this day, tradition says, their sins were forgiven. They stood pure, without spot or blemish as they were united.

Ephesians 5:25-32, *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, And to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."*

Following the ceremony, the bride and groom entered the *chadar*. Here the groom gave gifts to the bride (Genesis 34:12 & Genesis 24:53).

The couple spent seven days under the *chupah*, or literally in the chamber. The friend of the bridegroom stood at the door. All the guests of the wedding assembled outside, waiting for the friend of the bridegroom to announce the consummation of the marriage covenant, which was related to him by the groom.

John 3:26-30: *"They came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan - the one you testified about - well, He is baptising, and everyone is going to him. 'To this John replied, 'A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, "I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him. "The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less."*

At this signal, great rejoicing broke forth in a week long celebration, until the two emerged from the *chupah* to begin the actual wedding feast.

Revelation 19:4-9: *"The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: 'Amen, Hallelujah!' Then a voice came from the throne, saying: 'Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!"*

"Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: 'Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.' (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) Then the angel said to me, 'Write: "Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, 'These are the true words of God."

Do you begin to understand the enormity of what we're touching here? You need to start looking at marriage through new eyes!

Even as the first trump (shofar) announced the betrothal, so the last trump announced the wedding. Today, when the shofar is blown in churches we are reminded that we are betrothed - and that there's a wedding feast yet to come!

In Psalm 45 we are brought to the biblical portrayal of not only the wedding of the Messiah but also His coronation. The guests are assembled, and gifts are distributed.

Isaiah 61:10 - 62:5 shows the glory of the bride and groom bedecked in all their wedding finery: *"For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow. You will be a crown of splendour in the Lord's hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God. No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Heplizibah, and your land Beulah; for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married. As a young man marries a maiden, so will your sons marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you."*

But we've left the best for last...

Before the wedding the groom required three days to prepare. We know that one day is as a thousand years to the Lord. And just as with working out the three days of the death and resurrection of Jesus, we know that the Jewish method of measuring days is different to ours.

So, we are on the brink of the third millennium, the third day. Yes, the third day is almost upon us. Our bridegroom has been preparing Himself for three days. He is fully prepared and fully expectant, longing to be with His bride. The marriage supper of the lamb could be any day now.

No one knows the exact day except the Father.

The third day is upon us - and the bridegroom is fully prepared.

But are we?

God wants to release us out of much and into much when it comes to our understanding of marriage.

He wants to pull down and smash man-made myths and perceptions of marriage. He wants us throw out all the Mills & Boon and Bold & Beautiful junk, and begin to come into a Biblical understanding of what marriage is all about.

He wants to pull down demonic strongholds over existing and past and future marriages - strongholds of lust and frigidity, strongholds that have been established because the enemy has done everything in his power to make a mockery of God's prophetic purposes.

Some of you are sitting in marriages with things over you, some of you who are divorced are still bound by hurts and bitterness, others are sitting under things that keep you from being released into marriage - because of fear and demonic oppression.

There are some to whom God would say: *"I've kept you from marriage. You've fought and kicked and got angry because you've never got married, but it's been My grace that has kept you and protected you from entering into something that would just be a pale, weak, wishy-washy counterfeit of what I've really purposed for you."*

And as those strongholds come down, you will begin to find marriages restored and unsaved partners coming to the Lord. Good marriages will become even better as they are elevated into the realm of becoming prophetic statements. Becoming a sign and a wonder that people will

look at and say, "So that's how Jesus loves his betrothed, so that's how we as the church should submit and respond to Jesus!"

Father, in Jesus' name forgive me for taking marriage so lightly, forgive me for my perverted and wrong understandings of what marriage is meant to be. And Father as You forgive me, I pray that you will deliver me from every stronghold that is over my life in the area of marriage. Strongholds that have come down through the generations, as well as strongholds that I have allowed to become established through my own fears and sin.

"Lord I ask you to give me a revelation in my heart of Your purpose for marriage - so that my marriage (or future marriage) will become the prophetic sign and wonder to the world that You purposed it be. I ask You to do this in the precious and powerful name of Jesus through the power of Your holy Spirit."

With acknowledgements to Greg Killian for his information on Biblical wedding ceremonies.

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APPENDIX R:

EXTRACTS FROM "THE FINAL QUEST" BY RICK JOYNER

The book "The Final Quest" by Rick Joyner and its sequel, "The Call" may well constitute the most important prophetic message to the church in our generation. It provides a startling revelation of the judgment process which each of us must undergo and confirms the extent to which the church is far removed from the reality of what God has called it to be.

It also shows that both the throne room and the thrones in heaven are not filled to anywhere near capacity because the Lord's shepherds have held onto the one and not gone after the ninety nine that are lost.

R1-THE FINAL QUEST : PAGE 118 : A MEETING WITH JESUS CHRIST BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

There was no way that I could answer "yes" to the Lord's question if I considered myself worthy to sit here. I was not worthy to sit in the company of any who were there. I knew I had been given the opportunity to run for the greatest prize in heaven or earth, and I had failed. I was desperate, but there was still one hope. Even though most of my life had been a failure, I knew that I was here before I had finished my life on earth. When I confessed that I was not worthy, He asked:

"But do you want this seat?"

"I do with all of my heart," I responded.

The Lord then looked at the galleries and said, ***"Those empty seats could have been filled in any generation. I gave the invitation to sit here to everyone who has called upon My name. They are still available. Now the last battle has come, and many who are last shall be first. These seats will be filled before the battle is over. Those who will sit here will be known by two things: they will wear the mantle of humility, and they will have My likeness. You now have the mantle. If you can keep it and do not lose it in the battle, when you return you will also have My likeness. Then you will be worthy to sit with these, because I will have made you worthy. All authority and power has been given to Me, and I alone can wield it. You will prevail, and you will be trusted with My authority only when you have come to fully abide in Me. Now turn and look at My household."***

I turned and looked back in the direction I had come from. From before His throne I could see the entire room. The spectacle was beyond any comparison in its glory. Millions filled the ranks. Each individual in the lowest rank was more awesome than an army, and had more power. It was far beyond my capacity to absorb such a panorama of glory. **Even so, I could see that only a very small portion of the great room was occupied.**

R2-THE FINAL QUEST : PAGE 119 : THE LORD JESUS' TEARS FOR ALL WHO ARE LOST

I then looked back at the Lord and was astonished to see tears in His eyes. He had wiped the tears away from every eye here, except His own. As a tear ran down His cheek he caught it in His hand. He then offered it to me.

"This is My cup. Will you drink it with Me?"

There was no way that I could refuse Him. As the Lord continued to look at Me I began to feel His great love. Even as foul as I was He still loved me. As undeserving as I was He wanted me to be close to Him. Then He said:

*"I love all of these with a love that you cannot now understand. I also love all who are supposed to be here but did not come. **I have left the ninety-nine to go after the one who was lost. My shepherds would not leave the one to go after the ninety-nine who are still lost. I came to save the lost.** Will you share My heart to go to save the lost? **Will you help to fill this room? Will you help to fill these thrones, and every other seat in this hall? Will you take up this quest to bring joy to heaven, to Me and to My Father? This judgment is for My own household, and My own house is not full. The last battle will not be over until My house is full.** Only then will it be time for us to redeem the earth, and remove the evil from My creation. If you drink My cup you will love the lost the way that I love them."*

R3-THE FINAL QUEST : PAGE 128 : THE SHAME OF THE CHURCH BECAUSE THERE IS NO JUSTICE

..... was about His judgment. He paused to let this sink in, and then continued.

"There is a freedom that comes when you perceive truth, but whoever I set free is free indeed. The freedom of My presence is greater than just knowing truth. You have experienced liberation in My presence, but there is yet much more for you to understand about My judgments. When I judge I am not seeking to condemn, or to justify, but to bring forth righteousness. Righteousness is only found in union with Me. That is the righteous judgment, bringing men into unity with Me.

"My church is now clothed with shame because she does not have judges. She does not have judges because she does not know Me as the judge. I will now raise up judges for My people who know My judgment. They will not just decide between people or issues, but to make things right, which is to bring them into agreement with Me.

"When I appeared to Joshua as the Captain of the Host, I declared that I was for neither him nor his enemies. I never come to take sides. When I come it is to take over, not to take sides. I appeared as the Captain of the Host before Israel could enter her Promised Land. The church is now about to enter her Promised Land, and I am again about to appear as the Captain of the Host. When I do I will remove all who have been forcing My people to take sides against their brothers. My justice does not take sides in human conflicts, even those of My own people. What I was doing through Israel I was doing for their enemies, too, not against them. It is only because you see from the earthly, temporal perspective that you do not see My justice. You must see My justice to walk in My authority because righteousness and justice are the foundation of My throne.

*"I have imputed righteousness to the people I have chosen, but like Israel in the wilderness, **even the greatest saints of the church age have only aligned themselves with My ways a small part of the time, or with a small part of their minds and hearts.** I am not for them or against their enemies, but I am coming to use My people to save their enemies. I love all men, and desire for all to be saved."*

I could not help thinking of the great battle that we had fought on the mountain. We did wound many of our own brethren as we fought against the evil controlling them. There were still many of them in the camp of the enemy, either being used by him, or kept as his prisoners. I started to wonder if the next battle would be against our own brothers again. The Lord was watching me ponder all of this, and then He continued.

"Until last battle is over, there will always be some of our brothers who are being used by the enemy. But that is not why I am telling you this now. I am telling you this to help you see how the enemy gets into your own heart and mind, and how he uses you! Even now you still do not see everything the way that I do."

*"This is common with My people. **At this time, even My greatest leaders are seldom in harmony with Me. Many are doing good works, but very few are doing what I have called them to do. This is the result of divisions among you.** I am not coming to take sides with any one group, but I am calling for those who will come over to My side....."*

R4-THE FINAL QUEST : PAGE 135 : INTERVIEW WITH THE APOSTLE PAUL

[Paul] put both hands on my shoulders and looked me even more resolutely straight in the eyes.

"I am your brother. I love you as everyone here does. But you must understand. Our course is now finished. **We can neither add to or take away from what we planted in the earth, but you can. We are not your hope. You are now our hope.** Even in this conversation I can only confirm what I have already written, but you still have much writing to do. Worship only God, and grow up in all things into Him. Never make any man your goal, but only Him. Many will soon walk the earth who will do much greater works than we did. The first shall be last, and the last, first. We do not mind this. It is the joy of our hearts because we are one with you. My generation was used to lay and begin building upon the foundation, and we will always have the honor of that. But every floor built upon the foundation should go higher. We will not be the building we are supposed to be unless you go higher."

As I pondered this he watched me closely. Then he continued, "There are two more things that we attained in our time that were lost very quickly by the church, and they have not yet been recovered. You must recover them."

"What are they?" I inquired, feeling that what he was about to say was more than just an addendum to what he had already said.

"You must recover the ministry, and the message," he said emphatically.

I looked at the Lord, and He nodded His affirmation, adding, ***"It is right that Paul should say this to you. Until this time he has been the most faithful with both of these."***

"Please explain," I implored Paul.

"Alright," he replied. **"Except for a few small places in the world where there is great persecution or difficulties now, we can hardly recognize either the ministry or the message that is being preached today. Therefore, the church is now but a phantom of what it was even in our time, and we were far from all that we were called to be.** When we served, being in ministry was the greatest sacrifice one could make and this reflected the message of the greatest sacrifice that was made - the cross. The cross is the power of God, and it is the center of all that we are called to live by. You have so little power to transform the minds and hearts of the disciples now because you do not live, and do not preach, the cross. Therefore, we have difficulty seeing much difference between the disciples and the heathen. That is not the gospel or the salvation with which we were entrusted. You must return to the cross."

With those words he squeezed my shoulders like a father, and then returned to his seat. I felt like I had received both an incredible blessing and a profound rebuke. As I walked away I began thinking of the level of salvation on the mountain, and the treasures of salvation that I had seen inside the mountain. I began to see that most of my own decisions, even the decision to enter the door that led me here, was based mostly on what would get me further,.....

APPENDIX S: THE CURSE OF THE LAW

Deuteronomy 28 - 30 states the blessings and curses of the Mosaic Covenant:

CHAPTER 28

- 1 *"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.*
- 2 *"And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:*
- 3 *"Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.*
- 4 *"Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.*
- 5 *"Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.*
- 6 *"Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.*
- 7 *"The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.*
- 8 *"The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*
- 9 *"The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.*
- 10 *"Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.*
- 11 *"And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.*
- 12 *"The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.*
- 13 *"And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them.*
- 14 *"So you shall not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.*
- 15 *"But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:*
- 16 *"Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country.*
- 17 *"Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.*

- 18 *"Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.*
- 19 *"Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.*
- 20 *"The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.*
- 21 *"The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess.*
- 22 *"The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish.*
- 23 *"And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron.*
- 24 *"The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.*
- 25 *"The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth.*
- 26 *"Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten them away.*
- 27 *"The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.*
- 28 *"The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart.*
- 29 *"And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save you.*
- 30 *"You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes.*
- 31 *"Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue them.*
- 32 *"Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all day long; and there shall be no strength in your hand.*
- 33 *"A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually.*
- 34 *"So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see.*
- 35 *"The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.*
- 36 *"The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods-- wood and stone.*
- 37 *"And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.*
- 38 *"You shall carry much seed out to the field and gather but little in, for the locust shall consume it.*
- 39 *"You shall plant vineyards and tend them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them.*

- 40 *"You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil; for your olives shall drop off.*
- 41 *"You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for they shall go into captivity.*
- 42 *"Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land.*
- 43 *"The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower.*
- 44 *"He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail.*
- 45 *"Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.*
- 46 *"And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever.*
- 47 *"Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything,*
- 48 *"therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.*
- 49 *"The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand,*
- 50 *"a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.*
- 51 *"And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.*
- 52 *"They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you.*
- 53 *"You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you.*
- 54 *"The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind,*
- 55 *"so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.*
- 56 *"The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter,*
- 57 *"her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.*
- 58 *"If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD,*
- 59 *"then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues-- great and prolonged plagues-- and serious and prolonged sicknesses.*

- 60 *"Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you.*
- 61 *"Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed.*
- 62 *"You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.*
- 63 *"And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess.*
- 64 *"Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known-- wood and stone.*
- 65 *"And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul.*
- 66 *"Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life.*
- 67 *"In the morning you shall say, 'Oh, that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Oh, that it were morning!' because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.*
- 68 *"And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you."*

CHAPTER 29

- 1 *These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb.*
- 2 *Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land--*
- 3 *"the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders.*
- 4 *"Yet the LORD has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day.*
- 5 *"And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet;*
- 6 *"you have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or similar drink; that you may know that I am the LORD your God.*
- 7 *"And when you came to this place, Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan came out against us to battle, and we conquered them.*
- 8 *"We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh.*
- 9 *"Therefore keep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.*
- 10 *"All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel,*
- 11 *"your little ones and your wives-- also the stranger who is in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water--*

- 12 *"that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today,*
- 13 *"that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and that He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*
- 14 *"I make this covenant and this oath, not with you alone,*
- 15 *"but also with him who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, as well as with him who is not here with us today*
- 16 *(for you know that we dwelt in the land of Egypt and that we came through the nations which you passed by,*
- 17 *and you saw their abominations and their idols which were among them-- wood and stone and silver and gold);*
- 18 *"so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood;*
- 19 *"and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I walk in the imagination of my heart'-- as though the drunkard could be included with the sober.*
- 20 *"The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven.*
- 21 *"And the LORD would separate him from all the tribes of Israel for adversity, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the Law,*
- 22 *"so that the coming generation of your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, would say, when they see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it:*
- 23 *'The whole land is brimstone, salt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does it bear, nor does any grass grow there, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.'*
- 24 *"All nations would say, 'Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?'*
- 25 *"Then people would say: 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt;*
- 26 *'for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them.*
- 27 *'Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against this land, to bring on it every curse that is written in this book.*
- 28 *'And the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.'*
- 29 *"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

CHAPTER 30

- 1 *"Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you,*
- 2 *"and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul,*
- 3 *"that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you.*
- 4 *"If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you.*
- 5 *"Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.*
- 6 *"And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.*
- 7 *"Also the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you.*
- 8 *"And you will again obey the voice of the LORD and do all His commandments which I command you today.*
- 9 *"The LORD your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good. For the LORD will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers,*
- 10 *"if you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, and if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*
- 11 *"For this commandment which I command you today, it is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off.*
- 12 *"It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'*
- 13 *"Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'*
- 14 *"But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.*
- 15 *"See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil,*
- 16 *"in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.*
- 17 *"But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them,*
- 18 *"I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess.*
- 19 *"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;*

20 *"that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."* (NKJ)

**APPENDIX T:
EXTRACT FROM "WHEN THE VOW BREAKS"**

This section was never completed

**APPENDIX U:
EXTRACT FROM "THE CALL"
BELIEVERS IN SPIRITUAL PRISON CAMPS**

This section was never completed

APPENDIX V:
EXTRACT FROM "AFTER POLYGAMY WAS MADE A SIN
THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN POLYGAMY"
by JOHN CAIRNCROSS

As I was led by the Holy Spirit to research the subject of this book, I came across the book, "After Polygamy was made a sin, the social history of Christian Polygamy", by John Cairncross, published by Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, in 1974.

Various extracts of this book are quoted verbatim below:

PREFACE

The idea of writing this book goes back to a winter's day on the Paris quais, some twenty years ago, when I discovered a rare French eighteenth-century book. It was a defence of monogamy, and it turned out to be dull and prolix. However, a second reading revealed that the work was not just a conventional moral treatise but was an attempt to counter a very real campaign in favour of polygamy.

I tracked down the - equally rare - studies referred to by the author. My appetite was whetted. I began to dig deeper into this new and bizarre controversy. One discovery led to another. A lucky find in a London bookshop showed that Milton had secretly held pro-polygamy views. Another buy, also in London, brought to light the indignant attacks of B. Higgons, Gent. on Bishop Burnet's heterodox opinions on matrimony. A month's intensive research at the British Museum and a delightful professorial year at Western Reserve University in Cleveland brought in a rich harvest, especially of German and American material.

From all this detective work there emerged a long but largely underground tradition of Christian polygamy (supplemented and sometimes intertwined with a mainly French freethinking current), which extends from the first half of the sixteenth century to about 1800, and indeed, in isolated areas of Utah, to the present day.

The reconstruction of the tradition was no easy task, precisely because it was underground. Orthodoxy in Western Europe, or for that matter in the Christian world as a whole, has been fiercely opposed to polygamy in any shape or form since at least A.D. 600, and has shown itself particularly ruthless in suppressing the hated monster whenever it raised its head in their own ranks. This constant opposition explains both-why the Christian polygamists rarely put their views into practice and why their writings are often to be found in scarce, or out-of-the-way editions. For the same reason, most of the studies of the subject are fragmentary, uncritical and biased.

By going back to the original texts, I have tried to present a less distorted picture of the tradition. The exposition of the material in its historical sequence and perspective has led to not a few curious

discoveries, such as the relation between Mormon polygamy in its early stages and the private life of the founder of that religion.

This book does not of course set out to argue the advantages of polygamy, of which there are as many kinds as there are of revolution. In particular, Christian polygamy, as I have attempted to show in Chapter 1, is very much *sui generis*. It is therefore pointless, in this book and elsewhere, to talk of polygamy as such. While I discuss the possible reasons for the emergence of the tradition and its eclipse, my main aim is simply to portray each of the phases of its evolution, which are often not causally connected but arise from the combination of certain constant ingredients at various points in time between 1530 and 1900.

Despite the lengthy research and analysis which went to the making of this book, I greatly enjoyed writing it, and only hope that it will also divert the reader.

NOTE

The correct term is 'polygyny' meaning 'many women'). 'Polygamy' literally means having man spouses

Pages 1 to 3:

CHAPTER I

THE LORDLY FREEDOM OF MAN

On 23 July in the year of grace 1534, the northwest German city of Munster proclaimed polygamy as the ideal form of marriage. The event is unique in the history of Christian Europe, and the reaction to this announcement explains why the experiment was never repeated. For it was greeted with unanimous revulsion and horror.

This condemnation (both then and subsequently) reflects a loathing for polygamy which is very deeply rooted in western man. True, the idea of cohabiting both with a wife and one or more mistresses has often been tolerated and even covertly admired. But the open and legal possession of several wives permitted by polygamy has been strictly taboo. For most Europeans, such a practice has always seemed the acme of libertinage and has exercised a guilty fascination. It conjures up visions of voluptuous oriental harems and uninhibited caresses on sunny south sea beaches. As Briffault points out in his comprehensive work on marriage, *The Mothers*,^[1] 'there is scarcely a feature of non-European societies which excites the same zealous denunciation....Every other departure from European sexual codes,

every vice even, is looked upon with lenience' in comparison.

Almost from the outset,^[2] Christianity has set its face sternly against plural marriage. In fact, if 'polygamy was made a sin', this was the Church's doing. To quote Briffault again, before the coming of Christ, polygamy was universally established and practised:^[3]

The terms 'monogamy', 'bigamy', 'polygamy', in the sense in which we use them, were unknown, and there existed no words to indicate what they denote. The 'prohibition' of polygyny [is not a natural, innate inclination of humanity, but] was promulgated for the first time in any part of the world in the code of Justinian in the sixth century of our era.... No authenticated instance is known outside Christian nations of a people among whom polygyny is an object of moral reprobation or is condemned or forbidden by tribal custom.

Conversely, 'even today, the grounds of European objections to polygamy are incomprehensible to uncultured peoples'.

How was it possible for such an unChristian institution to emerge in the heart of Europe? The answer is not a simple one, but it is undoubtedly connected with the outbreak of the Protestant Reformation in Germany. when the great Reformer, Martin Luther, nailed his protest against papal indulgences to the church door in Wittenberg in 1517, he started an earthquake. The authority of the Pope and the Catholic hierarchy in northern Germany was rapidly undermined, and in its place was set the Gospel, now available in the vernacular to all and sundry and no longer a Latin text reserved for priests and scholars. Moreover, both the Old and the New Testaments were held to be literally inspired and hence equally deserving of reverence. Admittedly, in the Catholic Middle Ages the patriarchs had been treated as the forerunners of Christ, but the Lutherans placed them on an even higher pedestal, Hence the polygamous proclivities of the Old Testament fathers began to loom larger and larger in theological discussions. And they were viewed with considerable indulgence. If Luther rejected pleas for the re-introduction of polygamy, this was not because he thought such a move would be morally wrong but because he was convinced that it was not at all expedient, since it would be bound to discourage potential converts to the new faith.

But these discussions were merely on stream in the flood of controversy unleashed by Luther's defiance of clerical authority/ Far more important that the validity of the patriarchal example was the denunciation of monastic celibacy as the root of all sexual evil. Reacting violently against medieval practice, he urged all but those with a genuine vocation for chastity to marry and propagate the species, especially women. For the first time in Europe, the text 'Increase and multiply' resounded with predictable regularity from the pulpit.

These doctrines were enthusiastically taken up by the more radical Protestant sects, especially the Anabaptists. And the men who proclaimed the Munster were of the persuasion. Among many other things, the sect was fiercely exclusive. Members regarded themselves as the elect, and everyone else, including Lutherans, as infidels. No marriage was valid unless contracted between sectarians and blessed by the elders. such an attitude was bound to lead to some degree of contempt for orthodox morals and some relaxation of the marriage bond. A marriage within the community might be held to be indissoluble, but this was small comfort to the unbelieving spouse who, having refused to follow his or her partner in joining the elect, was summarily abandoned.

The factor which probably had an even greater influence on Anabaptist morals (especially in Munster) was the belief of the sectarians in the Second Coming of christ who would restore all things to their pristine purity before the Fall. Millennialism is as old as the world and has assumed innumerable forms. It has always, however, been the religion of the poor and the afflicted who looked to apocalyptic future to compensate them for their present sufferings. the Anabaptists were drawn from the poorer classes. They were also excessively Puritanical in their sexual morals. these various elements combined to produce the conviction that the begetting without sin or lust of a certain number of children would hasten the Coming of Christ.

Such a conception of marriage and parenthood clearly represents a potential move towards polygamy. Add to this the new emphasis on the Old Testament, Luther's teaching on marriage, the state of flux of religious belief in general, and in particular the domination of the sectarians by prophets receiving direct revelations from God. It will then be clear why theories which would ordinarily be dismissed as visionary could, given the right combination of circumstances, personality and leadership, produce a kind of theological mutation which was totally unexpected at the time. Cases of plural marriage can

be traced spasmodically in central Germany during the 1520s but the Anabaptists as a whole did not subscribe to polygamy. that institution was formally adopted by a group only when the Anabaptists took control of Munster and, even then, only after John of Leyden had assumed power after the death of the previous leader, Jan Matthys.

Pages 31 - 52:

CHAPTER II

BIGAMY, SIR, IS A CRIME

'If only', observes Pascal, in one of his penetrating Pansees, 'Cleopatra's nose had been a fraction shorter, the course of world history would have been altered.' An equally plausible, though less edifying supposition is that, if only Philip the Magnanimous of Hesse had followed the current practice of taking a concubine and not married a second wife, the Reformation might have swept irresistibly through the whole of Germany and possibly even central Europe as well. As it was, the Landgrave (to use his German title) felt impelled by his reverence for the sacraments to mend his first marriage by contracting a second one even while his wife was alive.

And he did so with the sanction of the Fathers of the Reformation. 'The first paladin of German Protestantism', notes the scholarly Rockwell in the opening page of his book on Philip's bigamy, was, with Luther's and Melanchthon's permission, a bigamist.' Protestant historians have never recovered from the shock. One of Luther's biographers denounces the step as the greatest stain on his reputation and indeed on the Reformation. Other writers have sought to shift the blame to the unfortunate Landgrave.

Philip indignantly denied that he was at fault. And it is difficult not to feel some sympathy for him. At the youthful age of sixteen, before he knew what he was doing, he was railroaded into an engagement with Christina, the daughter of Duke George of Saxony (of the house of Meissen). She had given him six children (some historians say seven) at the time of his bigamous marriage. 'Nevertheless,' says Rockwell with professorial candour, 'Philip was dissatisfied with his wife.' The reasons for his unhappiness are not far to seek. Christina was desperately plain. She drank and stank and had unpleasant (if unspecified) habits. Little wonder that Philip 'never felt love or desire for her.' His revulsion must have been intense, for he describes himself as having a strong constitution, and he is credited with the possession of three testicles and a correspondingly powerful sex drive.

He stuck it out for three weeks, and thereafter settled down to a steady diet of fornication and adultery, seasoned with occasional bouts of homosexuality. At assemblies of the German Princes, he was particularly exposed to the temptations of the flesh during the long sessions of riotous carousing. As Philip put it to the Lutheran preachers, how could he, in all fairness, avoid sin when he could not always 'take a large harem along with him'?

It was not that he lacked a moral sense. He was a God-fearing prince, well versed in the Bible. Well enough to know that, according to Saint Paul, adulterers and fornicators would never enter the kingdom of heaven. So that, if he died in battle, the Devil would carry him off to eternal damnation. He was constantly being urged by his spiritual advisers to suppress immorality, but how could he punish offenders when he was himself guilty of the sin? His feeling of guilt was such that, soon after his marriage (in 1523), he consistently refrained from observing communion, although he longed to partake of it. His pangs of conscience rose to a paroxysm in 1539 when, like so many of his illustrious

contemporaries, he had a serious attack of syphilis - obviously, he felt, a punishment from on high for his excesses.

His sufferings, both physical and spiritual, became intolerable. But what was the remedy? Divorce was out of the question, both on legal and political grounds. However, if he could not repudiate Christina, could he not marry another, more attractive wife, and thus escape from the toils of Satan? He had long and openly proclaimed his belief that it was not an offence in God's eyes to have two wives, and he was encouraged in this view by some of the court preachers. His interest in bigamy revived, and it became intense when he suddenly fell in love with a beautiful seventeen-year-old girl called Margarete von der Sale - a lady-in-waiting to his sister Elizabeth (wife of Duke Henry of the house of Dresden).

However, it takes two to make a marriage, especially a bigamous one. Philip realized that the struggle would be a hard one, and he prepared for it with the meticulous but daring generalship that he brought to his strategic campaigns. The girl, or rather her widowed mother, Anna, had to be won round, and Anna had very clear ideas as to what she wanted. Ambition, reinforced by respect for conventional morality, enabled her to put formidable pressure on the Prince. She was not prepared to let her daughter become Philip's concubine, or even (by a secret bigamous marriage) to be put in a position which suggested as much. Initially, therefore, the most that she would concede was that Margarete would be pre-empted for the Landgrave for three years. If Christina died within this waiting period, Margarete would be his. And she sweetened her semi-refusal by permitting Philip to visit her daughter in the family house as often as he wished.

Philip was not discouraged. Gradually he wore down the mother's resistance. His first victory was to obtain her agreement to a bigamous marriage if its legitimacy was openly defended and if others were allowed to follow the Prince's example, that is, if bigamy were made generally and publicly permissible. This demand was at once rejected. But Philip kept up the pressure and in the end Anna yielded further ground. She now accepted that the marriage be kept secret, but she held out for the attendance at it of state and church dignitaries. Her list of prospective wedding guests is impressive. It includes Johann Friedrich, the Elector of Saxony, some of Philip's senior councillors, his wife Christina, she herself of course, her brother, Ernst von Miltitz, and, on the clerical side, Luther, Melancthon and Bucer (the three leading figures in the German Reformation), or, at the very least, two of them. However, in the end, she relented to some extent. If the Elector and the Duke were unable to attend, their delegates would do.

The Landgrave was not daunted by these exacting terms. From Augsburg (still in 1539), he summoned one of his most trusted agents - a certain Dr Sailer, who then spent three months at Philip's court. During his stay, he was induced to try to persuade Bucer, an eminent theologian and an old friend and adviser of the Landgrave, to act as intermediary in the delicate task of obtaining the support of his fellow Reformers - Luther and Melancthon - and of the Elector. And in November Sailer set out for Strassburg where Bucer was then settled.

When he learned that Philip was planning to commit bigamy, Bucer was 'utterly horrified'. He feared the devastating effect of such 'novelties' (i.e., radical doctrines) on the weaker brethren in the Reformation, and hesitated to commit himself. Thereupon, Sailer played his trump card. Was Bucer prepared to stand by and see the Landgrave, the Captain of the Protestant forces, make his peace with the Catholic faction, as he would undoubtedly do if he were refused the moral backing that he was requesting. Rather than see the whole movement come crashing down in ruin, Bucer accepted the invitation to broach the question of bigamy to the Reformers.

By the end of November, he was at the Landgrave's castle at Melsungen,

where he was treated to an uninhibited and exhaustive confession by the Prince of all his variegated sins, his physical sufferings and deprivations, and his obsessive Angst about damnation. Under this massive assault, Bucer's

last scruples crumbled. To buttress him for the encounter with Luther, he was given a detailed brief on Philip's request which - it was carefully underlined - was a modest one, covering only one additional wife. What was wanted, ran the instructions to the Reformer, was a written testimony that the Prince would not be committing an offence against God if he contracted such a marriage. The ceremony would be secret, but Luther and Melancthon were requested 'to spy out a way' to make it public at some later date.

The issue was raised in general terms. Margarete's name was never mentioned in the discussions, and indeed Bucer was probably unaware that the Landgrave had already made his choice of a second wife. This silence on Philip's part has frequently been trounced as disingenuous, both at the time and later - as if the principle involved was of secondary importance and the morality or otherwise of bigamy depended on the identity of his 'fiancee' and the date of his marriage to her. On any reasoning, Philip's tactics were justified. He saw no ground for bringing Margarete into the picture until the obstacles to his union with her were removed. However, he can have had little doubt that his plans would succeed, for, early in November, Sailer had been instructed to order the wine for the wedding, and to observe the most scrupulous discretion in making the purchase.

It is doubtful if Bucer felt the same confidence as his master. However, armed with his brief, he set out on the journey and arrived on 9 December in Wittenberg, where he immediately submitted the Landgrave's suit to the other two Reformers. They were horrified. They realized at once the 'unbounded offence' which such a bigamous marriage would cause. The reaction among the Protestants would be one of utter dismay, especially when it came to the womenfolk. Bucer was himself later to write: 'It must be most painful above all for women to hear [of this marriage]. Of all the thousands of pious and kindly women, there will not be a single one whom the news will not stab to the heart.'

And, if this was the effect of one marriage, there would be a cataclysm if the example were followed and a tidal wave of Monstered polygamy surged across Germany. The prospect was by no means fanciful. Some two years later, Bucer foresaw that the publication, with Philip's endorsement, of a work in favour of polygamy would 'raise up a new sect of wild fanatics'. People would imagine that Philip's bigamy could be imitated with impunity -even, as Luther was to put it, by the veriest clodhopper. But it was not only from the masses that danger threatened. Another Protestant divine was to issue the solemn warning that many men of the highest rank shared Philip's views and he feared therefore 'a violent bloody war if this evil or this untimely madness [was] imprudently fanned'.

If dissension would burst into flame within the Protestant camp,

danger from the enemy was equally serious. In the early 1520s, the

Pope had instructed his legate to the Diet of Worms to represent the

Protestant doctrine as pernicious because it favoured polygamy.

And Sir Thomas More had used the same gambit in his defence of Henry VIII against the Lutherans' attack (in the days before he broke with Rome). Lastly and more immediately, the Reformation might, as already shown, be hamstrung if Philip defected to the side of the Emperor, as he openly threatened to do if the Reformers were obstinate in giving him their approval.

And this approval Philip was determined to have. For it both enabled Philip to secure Anna's consent to the marriage, defend his action if it came to an open clash, and, perhaps most important of all, give him some protection against the Emperor. Bigamy had been made a capital offence in 1532. If therefore the marriage became public, Philip could be tried and sentenced by his overlord. The Holy Roman Empire might, as Voltaire put it in a famous joke, be 'neither holy, Roman nor an Empire', but it was still the greatest power in Europe, and Charles V, the ruling Emperor, was the master of Spain and the Austrian dominions, lord of the German principalities, and a brilliant statesman and strategist.

In this delicate situation, Luther and Melanchthon found themselves between the devil of Philip's pressure and the deep sea of potential Protestant disintegration. For two days, they wrestled with the intricacies of the problem and with their consciences. And, on the second, they set their signatures (jointly with Bucer) to a document which is unique in European history - the Wittenberg Deliberation. It bears the scars of the travail that attended its birth. Much of it is taken up with an examination of the Biblical authority for polygamy. And there is a long homily on the virtues of chastity

which quotes the dictum of the Albanian hero, Skanderbeg, to the effect that nothing weakens a warrior's strength so much as indulgence.

But the nub of the matter lies in three relatively short passages. The first, inserted by Melanchthon, stresses the danger that (if Philip were to take a second wife) the enemies of the Gospel would lump the Protestants together with the polygamous Turks and wild Munsterites. The second warns against the temptation of many of the faithful to follow Philip's example in an age when, to a far greater extent than nowadays, 'the acts of Princes cause[d] more of a stir than those of their subjects'. Hence, if the common people saw 'a Prince take another wife, they [would] claim to be allowed similar latitude'. However, 'if [Philip] was bent on marrying again', and they were well aware that he was, there was no alternative. They were being forced at gunpoint to pronounce, and had to come off the fence. 'Bucer [was] pressing to be allowed to go back', and they could not let him leave without an answer. And so, they agreed, with obvious distaste, in the third and conclusive passage that they would not object, provided the marriage were kept strictly secret. 'And so', they wrote, 'you have our written testimony in case of need.'

Having overcome the first hurdle, the Landgrave's ambassador set off on the next leg of his whirlwind tour. On 15 December, he was received by the Elector of Saxony, Johan Friedrich. Bucer's mission to the prince was facilitated by the grant of the Deliberation and possibly even more by an assurance from Philip that he would back the Elector for Emperor if a war of religion were to break out and the Protestants were to defeat the Catholics, and thus be able to nominate an Emperor of their own faith. Even though sweetened by such assurances, the news staggered the Saxon ruler. His reply was studiously cautious. It repeatedly urged the Landgrave to desist

from his plans. If, however, his resolve was unalterable, he should observe the strictest secrecy. And the message ended with vague and diplomatic professions of friendliness and offers of help.

Philip himself had not been inactive. On 11 December he obtained the consent of his wife, by promising that her children would be sole heirs to the throne and - an assurance that may have been

appreciated even more - that he would show her more and not less kindness than before through sleeping with her and through other actions befitting married people.

Having secured the approval, or at least the complicity, of the main persons involved, he was now ready to lay siege to Anna. After Bucer had reported on his mission, the Landgrave despatched two messengers to her (on 23 December) with copies of all the various dispensations and agreements. On 12 January 1540, the messengers returned, but without the unequivocal reply which Philip had expected. Anna had not only maintained her previous demands but had actually added new ones. She now insisted that Christina should issue an invitation to her for the wedding. It appears that the Landgrave ignored this proposal. But he confirmed his agreement to all the other terms, with the exception of the suggested invitation to Ernst von Miltitz, Anna's brother, on the grounds that, 'as a Papist, he was not sufficiently well versed in the Scriptures to grasp the legitimacy of the second marriage.'

For the rest, he now regarded the wedding as certain, and, for the first time, revealed to a few chosen councillors the identity of his 'fiancee'. His court preachers thereupon appended their names to the Wittenberg Deliberation, and (on 18 January) he obtained a further clearance from his wife. Far from being taken aback on learning of his plans for Margarete, Christina - at least so the Landgrave alleges - was even more agreeable to his plans than when they had been put to her in general terms.

Everything then was ready for the ceremony. But what of the bride herself? Hitherto Margarete had received Philip's attentions passively, without pleasure or aversion. She may not even have known of his intentions, since the Landgrave had not confided in her - though her mother had probably given her some inkling of what was afoot. What was more, Margarete was not on good terms with her mother, and might not take kindly to the engagements entered into by Anna on her behalf. Philip was therefore afraid that, at the last moment, the girl might jettison the understanding and try to escape to her friends and relatives. Indeed, he had laid plans to counter any such move by producing Margarete's letters (however innocuous) and thus spoil her marriage prospects.

But his fears proved groundless. Margarete showed herself happy at her fate. By mid-February, she had moved from Dresden to her mother's estate. And on 4 March the marriage took place at the small town of Rothenburg an der Fulda.

Philip kept his word as to the invitations. The Elector and the house of Meissen sent representatives, and Bucer and Melanchthon arrived as well. Strangely enough, the Reformers do not seem to have been told whom Philip was marrying until they entered the church. Philip's written instructions (also dated 4 March) to Melander and Lening, two of his preachers, as to what they were to tell their colleagues do not mention Margarete, but refer to her as 'a person who is now disposed to take me in marriage'. The brief is also revealing as to the preoccupations uppermost in the Landgrave's mind. 'It is vital', says the note, that the Reformers and his own counsellors be present to bear witness that he plans 'a marriage and not whoremonger ing'. The Reformers are urged never to use the word 'concubine', since that usually refers to a whore. Philip must have a wife whom he likes, since he means to retain his first wife! Should Christina die, he plans to keep his second wife as his only one, thus returning to the monogamist fold. Hence, she cannot be 'a person of lowly rank such as a peasant girl'. And he concludes with a statement of what he will say if asked by the guests about the reasons for his marriage. It is intended 'as a medicine and remedy for evil conduct and dissolute living', and it will help him to lead a better and more Christian life.

The Landgrave's instructions were faithfully followed by Melander as the wedding certificate testifies. After paying tribute with the starched pomp of the times to 'our most mighty, most invincible and most gracious Emperor, Charles V,' the document records the presence of 'his Highness, Prince and Lord Philip, Landgrave, Count of KatzeNBogen, Diez, Ziegenhayn and Nidda, with certain councillors of His Highness on the one hand, and the honourable and virtuous maiden, Margarete von der Sale, and certain relatives on the other.'

Melander then explained that Philip wished to marry Margarete although his Highness's first wife was still alive. In order, however, the address continued, 'that this step is not decreed as capricious or frivolous and no offence be caused hereby and the good name of the said maiden and her honourable relatives be not jeopardized, [his Highness swears before God] that it is motivated by important and unavoidable considerations of conscience and body and that it is impossible for him to be saved unless he takes a second wife in addition to his first one.' The marriage was a quiet one, since 'in our times it is unusual to have two wives at the same time ... although in the present case it is licit and Christian.' Thereupon the couple, joined in marriage by the preacher, 'swore undying love and troth to each other.' The following day, Melanchthon himself then urged the Prince, as thanks for the dispensation granted, to take better care of the Lutheran clergy and teachers in church schools, and to abstain from fornication, adultery and boys.

The Landgrave was so overjoyed that he took little notice of such exhortations. Far from being plagued with moral scruples, he was proud of his action. 'I have done it', he said a fortnight later, with God and a good conscience.' And on 5 April, he wrote to Luther thanking him for the dispensation and telling him that he had taken Easter communion 'with a merry conscience', and would as a result be able to further the cause of the Reformation with greater zeal. He added the piquant detail that Margarete had turned out to be a relative of the great theologian's wife, and hence, to his delight, he was Luther's brother-in-law! He was convinced of the legitimacy of his marriage, but what answer should he give if he were asked point blank about it? Luther replied immediately that the bigamy

be kept secret because of the bad example it might set.

But it was too much to expect that all those in the know would be

discreet. Some of them even had an interest in provoking a scandal.

Nor did the Landgrave's friends all help. In April, the court preacher,

Melander, was foolish enough to defend bigamy from the pulpit. And the feverish building work on Margarete's new residence in the country set tongues wagging. By 25 May, another court divine was writing in anguished tones to the Prince that a 'terrible rumour' was all over the land, and was likely to cause widespread defections from the Gospel. A country parson, he added, had even asserted that Luther's permission to celebrate the marriage had been bought at the cost of a cask of wine.

The tales soon reached the ear of Duke Henry of Dresden. He

was the husband of Elizabeth, Philip's sister, and Elizabeth herself

was Margarete's mistress. Henry realized that it would be automatically assumed that he and his wife were a party to the marriage, and he determined to get to the bottom of the reports. It was not hard for him. Anna von der Sale was one of his subjects. On the last day of May, she was fetched to court

by a posse of cavalry and forced to make full confession. The next day, she was escorted back to her estate together with two secretaries, and obliged to deliver up the documents in her possession for copying. As it happened, she surrendered only Philip's declaration to his wife of 11 December and a long document by Bucer, setting out his views for and against polygamy. In the confusion, this had been substituted for the

Wittenberg Deliberation.

The story soon made the rounds of Germany and beyond. Preachers fell to denouncing Philip for his lapse from grace. Other reactions were of unbelieving hilarity. Had one ever heard of anything so silly? asked the Markgrave of Brandenburg. The Emperor himself, who had sired children all over Europe and then had them legitimized by the Pope, felt that it was all a huge joke (but one that could be turned to solid political advantage). And in France there was ribald Gallic laughter. More serious men were profoundly disturbed. Ferdinand, who was to succeed Charles V as Emperor, is said to have been deflected by the scandal from turning Protestant.

The men who had granted Philip his secret dispensation were on tenterhooks, and hastily looked to their defences. Luther wrote to the Elector that he had been misled by the Landgrave. He had thought Philip had meant to take 'only a simple girl' who would be kept in a quiet spot out of harm's and gossip's way. But the Prince, as it now turned out, had married a lady-in-waiting - no less - who and been set up in an imposing country residence. The moral issues appeared to be of less concern to Luther than the social ones. And indeed, to judge by his Table Talk (1540) at the time, he saw the only hope of salvation in the possibility that, who could say? Margarete might soon die!

Melanchthon, for his part, tried to beat a retreat, and delivered himself of a revised, and unfavourable, pronouncement on the marriage. Thereupon, under the weight of the 'mounting evils' springing up all around him, he prayed to God 'to avert the monstrous danger and scandal', and broke down. For days he was unable to touch food or drink, and hovered between life and death. He only rallied when Luther rode out to breathe confidence into him with the power of his robust faith.

The Elector was equally concerned. He had only agreed to the marriage with the utmost hesitation and on the express condition that it was kept strictly secret. He now sent Philip a letter full of veiled reproaches for having caused Melanchthon's collapse - an accusation which Philip heatedly rejected. There was of course no question of Saxon support for the Landgrave's position now that the bigamy was the stock subject of conversation in Germany.

The common factor in all these reactions was an insistence on the need to keep this gigantic skeleton in its cupboard. Philip on the contrary was perfectly prepared to drag it out into the light of day. From the start (as his instructions to Bucer show), he had been eager to have the marriage recognized by all and sundry and not kept as a subject for snickering whispers or open denunciation. The subtle distinction drawn by Luther between what was right in God's eyes and what at could be defended to the world seemed to him the flimsiest of casuistries. He may have been the founder of the great university of Marburg, but he was essentially a bluff military man, more at home on the battlefield or with his hunting dogs than with 'the sapient sutlers of the Lord'. He had clear, straightforward ideas,

and he stuck to them with laudable tenacity. For him, what was right was right and he was prepared to defend his convictions even at the cost of political eclipse. Rather than see his marriage questioned, he would content to retire to a house or two (doubtless for his two establishments), and hand over his state to his children or the Emperor.

He was not disturbed by the prospect of opposition. 'From the world', he wrote to Luther, 'we do not count on extorting recognition of Margarete.' He felt that his position on that score was by no means weak. It was an age when marriage was in a state of flux. Priests had forsworn celibacy and taken wives to themselves on turning Lutheran, but Catholics still regarded such unions as invalid and sacrilegious. Other radical innovations, such as bigamy, would naturally meet with similar condemnation, at least to start with. But this did not make them any less justifiable than priestly marriages. Luther, the ex-monk, married to an ex-nun, need therefore not be so self-righteous. And, in the same letter just quoted, Philip, after affirming that he considers Margarete his wife by God's word and Luther's advice, administers a savage thrust at the Reformer: 'God grant that the world may so regard the wives of our preachers in this and other lands.'

Nor was it merely a question of Philip's own marriage. The relief afforded him should be granted to others as well. To Bucer he wrote acidly that he would not dispute whether bigamy was sinful or not, or whether it was formerly a general usage, 'for we leave that to you, the learned, in your superior wisdom'. 'But', he noted pointedly, 'if anyone falls into the same difficulty, we would not hesitate to countenance a similar remission in his case', though he qualified this threat by making the marriage conditional on the approval of the man's confessor, the state authorities, and, if pressed, the freely given consent of the first wife as well.

Strong in the assurance of the justice of his case, Philip even assembled his notables (on 22 June) at Cassel and tried to induce them to back his stand. He was unsuccessful. His advisers were well aware that such a course would provoke a violent intervention by the Emperor. They therefore suggested a more diplomatic line. The Landgrave should admit to having a concubine, but quibble as to the meaning of the word. The public would take it as synonymous with a mistress, whereas Philip would understand it in the biblical sense of an additional wife, a helpmeet before the Lord, such as those taken by Abraham, David and other holy men. Very reluctantly, the Landgrave agreed, for he had always heartily disliked the immoral associations of the word suggested.

However, the Reformers felt that even this concession was not enough to save the situation. They were particularly apprehensive of the danger of a general tolerance for bigamy. Bucer repeatedly urged the Landgrave to tell a deliberate, holy lie when asked about the rumours, and quoted Scripture in support of his views. Had not Abraham deceived his host when asked about Sarah? And did not even God Himself mislead His enemies by visions and illusions? Bucer even suggested that Philip should revise the marriage contract to make Margarete a concubine, though continuing to treat her as a wife. And he made other improving proposals, such as that Philip should devote less time to hunting and other amusements and more to matters of state and to his wife. The Landgrave, to be fair, heeded the last suggestion, for Christina bore him three further children after his second marriage. But, for the rest, he was adamant. Margarete and her mother, he wrote, would rather be torn to pieces than incur such a dishonour:

We are willing to reply as long as it is possible in dubious and

ambiguous terms, but to say that there is no marriage, that advice should be given to another, and not to us. We cannot and will not lie, for lying does nobody any good, and besides [to show that he, too, knew his Bible] God has forbidden false witness.

The only effect of this sterile round of letters was to cause mounting irritation all round. Philip decided that the one hope of breaking out of the impasse was to meet round a table and thrash out the

disagreements. And, at his request, delegates from himself and the Elector met with Luther at the Eisenach Conference and battled over the issue for four whole days (15 to 19 July).

Any hope of agreement soon faded. Luther upbraided the Hessians for having revealed the details of the marriage, which Philip's men indignantly denied. The dispensation, Luther went on, was valid only for the Landgrave's conscience, and ceased to have meaning if it became known. A private Yes signified a public No. Hence, if the news of the Deliberation leaked out, he would deny its existence. He did not accept the view that what was right in God's eyes was automatically right in itself. For instance, a child by a man other than the husband must be regarded as the legitimate heir.

As a statesman of the church, the Reformer dwelt on the disastrous consequences of a public defence of bigamy. Most of the Lutheran clergy (and all the Calvinists) were opposed root and branch to it. If he were known to have countenanced it, however discreetly, the Protestant church would be rent by a schism. And, if he were to defend his action in writing, the results would be even more appalling.

Quite apart from the purely ecclesiastical aspects of the case, the rules of public morality could not be flouted. If they were, the whole Empire would collapse in anarchy. More concretely, the Emperor would intervene, and Philip, discredited by his unorthodox marriage, would see his army melt like snow.

Luther therefore made no bones about calling on Philip to tell

a good strong lie' for the sake of the church. If the Emperor were to question him, the Landgrave should reply that he did indeed have a concubine, and that he was willing to send her away if all the other princes with a similar attachment would do the same. If Philip were really determined to publish the Deliberation, he (Luther) would take the whole blame on himself and admit that he had blundered, but this was a counsel of desperation.

The Elector's men were equally forthright. The Landgrave's action, they maintained, was against God and public morality, and could not be defended, however close the links between Hesse and Saxony. Philip would have liked to have submitted his case to a General Council of the Protestant movement in Germany and ask the other princes to guarantee him protection until judgment had that been given. But the Elector was afraid, and with good reason Philip would use any such assurance to force the issue into the open, and thus involve the Saxons in what had every appearance of being

a major war - and one fought on very dubious grounds.

The Landgrave, for his part, was just as intransigent. In a letter dated 18 July to his delegates, he expresses bitter disappointment with 'the inconstancy of Luther and the Elector'. He realizes that Luther is a contrary character who digs in his toes the more one contradicts him. He therefore counsels moderation in dealings with the Reformer.

But he himself tackles the Reformers vigorously in some of their arguments, and to considerable effect. He is accused of having had an affair with Margarete before he married her. He flatly denies the charge. He is asked why he chose Margarete and not another, as if his love for Margarete were the cause and not the occasion of the bigamy. He points out that he could easily have had any other girl from the aristocracy on the same conditions. And he agrees that he married Margarete because he was fond of her. But, he says, 'I see that you holy people also take those you fancy.' Had he been allowed to follow his inclinations in his first marriage, the whole debacle might have been avoided.

But the central argument is the one advanced by John of Leyden:

'Better several wives than several whores.' He had been repeatedly urged to desist from immorality, but the whole point of the marriage was to enable him to stop fornicating. Had he taken another whore, he would have been left in peace. But, because he fell in love with a girl and married her, he is being bounded and deserted. How can he be pilloried for following the example of the Patriarchs, including the pious Abraham?

He realizes that his conduct may cause offence, but he is not prepared to spare others' feelings at the cost of his own salvation. 'Oh, would to God', he cries Luther, 'that you and your colleagues would chastise such vices as adultery and drunkenness not merely in word and speech but also in fact.'

He is horrified at the prospect of Luther revoking the Deliberation. 'Oh God, dear Doctor Luther,' he writes, 'what are we coming to ... when excellent people suffer a falling off for fear of other scholars, ... and even only of the world.... If you can answer for the marriage before God, why such fear as regards the world?' His action was Christian, and, if the theologians think otherwise, they should not have lent it their moral sanction by attending the ceremony.

The most that he will promise is to maintain his previous line of equivocation. But he will not lie. Let them crucify him if they will. If the situation becomes intolerable, he will publish the Deliberation and fight for what he regards as a perfectly legitimate marriage. As for the Elector, his delegates should be informed that he (Philip) will no longer act as a Captain of the Protestant cause and that they should withdraw from all negotiations with France for a grand alliance against the Emperor, and take precipitate leave - pretexting urgent business at home. The break was complete, although appearances were saved.

The Eisenach Conference marked a turning point in Philip's relations with the Protestant movement. He had always threatened to turn to the Emperor if his brothers in the faith refused to stand by him. Now they had abandoned him. In July (probably immediately after he learned of the result of the Conference), he drafted a plan of reconciliation; in September it was put into effect. Negotiations between the Landgrave's ambassadors and the Imperial Secretary dragged on, till at last (in January of the following year) Philip demanded a straight reply to the proposals and obtained (on the 24th of that month) a written pardon from the Emperor and a safe conduct to the Imperial Diet at Regensburg for which he set out on 1 February. In return, he made a number of far-reaching political concessions. Under the terms of the agreement, Philip undertook to exclude France and any other non-German power from the Protestant Alliance (the League of Schmalkalden). This move decisively altered the balance of power in Europe in favour of the Emperor - and most historians trace the decline of Protestantism as a political force in Europe back to this agreement.

Philip's defection was not the end of Luther's troubles. The bigamy offered Catholic pamphleteers too good an opportunity of ridiculing and vilifying their opponents. And a steady stream of scurrility poured out, attacking Philip and his 'Monstered ways'. The Landgrave, with his militant convictions, could not resist the urge to reply. For his defence, he turned to his specialist on polygamy, an ex-Carthusian called Lening. This preacher had already composed more than a score of briefs on the subject, including fifteen for the Eisenach Conference and several to set Margarete's conscience at ease. He is not reported as having actually put his theories into practice, but for him monogamy was far from monotonous. He maltreated his first wife, and then, when her sufferings were ended, married, at the ripe age of eighty, one of Margarete's maids.

In response to this latest appeal by Philip, Lening surpassed himself and produced what is the first full-scale apologia for polygamy in Europe, the *Dialogus Neobuli* which, despite its Latin title, was written in German. Philip meant to ensure that his point of view was placed within the reach of the literate public and not just of a learned elite!

The book is, as the title indicates, in the form of a discussion between a supporter of plural marriage and an opponent. It is a remarkable work. 'In spite of its involved sentences and repetitious mode of argument', says one critic, 'the Dialogue is written with great skill, so as to make bigamy [or rather polygamy] appear not only right, but, if that is admitted, attractive.' The work is far too long to analyse. The essence of the argument is that polygamy is not contrary to divine, natural, canonical or Imperial law. Opposition to it has come solely from a perverted view of marriage as something evil in itself and a desire to be holier than God Himself. Polygamy, Lening concludes, would alleviate the prevailing immorality and help to drive back the Turks who were then pressing on the south-east flank of Europe. Polygamy was not of course to be made obligatory. It was only for those who felt a calling, as men in the Middle Ages had responded to a vocation for celibacy.

The book was referred to Bucer for his comments, and he not only examined it, but 'corrected and improved it a little', as he admitted. Indeed, as late as 1900, he was credited with having written it. He did, however, try to restrain the Landgrave from publishing it, but the most that he could achieve was that the work be distributed privately - in mid-August 1541.

For Philip's missionary zeal in the cause of polygamy was unabated. He took the clergy to task for faintheartedness when they remonstrated with him. 'If', he wrote to Melancthon, 'we, you, Luther and others suffer death, yet there will be found people who more godly and trusting than we who will accept this solution which is not forbidden by God and is free and permissible.'

Far from contemplating martyrdom in the cause of polygamy, the Lutheran clergy was outraged at Lening's book. Luther had to persuade a friend of his, Justus Menius, to hold back a counterblast to the Dialogue, but Luther himself castigated the author as a garrulous fool. He also composed a refutation of which one of the milder passages reads: 'Whoever follows this idiot and his book and thereupon takes more than one wedded wife, and desires his action to be regarded as righteous - may the devil bury him in the abyss of hell.'

But Luther in his turn was restrained by the Elector from publishing his work. After a long estrangement, Philip and the Reformer finally met. The discussion was remarkably cordial, Luther merely criticized Lening's book for having used too many arguments of unequal force, rather than a few really sound ones. And Philip thereupon withdrew as many copies of the Dialogue from circulation as he could.

Somehow, the wounds healed and the scandal died down. An open break between the Landgrave and the Protestant Church was avoided, and the issue of polygamy was shelved. (The fact that Philip soon afterwards took his troops into battle for the Protestant cause, and suffered defeat and imprisonment at the hands of the Emperor no doubt helped to reconcile the former hostile allies.) It was not till well on in the seventeenth century that the Wittenberg Deliberation and the other documents on the bigamy were published by the great French Catholic controversialist, Bossuet, and used to devastating effect in his *Variations of the Protestant Church* (1688).

Nowadays, the whole episode leaves most readers unmoved, if not unamused. Old Testament polygamy has long ceased to be of interest. And Philip's bigamy is mainly interesting as an illustration

of the eternal conflict between the crusader who puts principles above everything else and the realist who lets practical considerations weigh heavily in the scales. But, if Luther

showed great statesmanlike qualities in his handling of the affair, it is Philip who comes out of it most creditably, if the moral issues alone are examined.

He had scored a very shrewd hit by insisting on the revolutionary character of priestly marriage, introduced by the Reformation. If, he asked, it should suddenly be possible to overthrow such a firmly established institution as the celibacy of the clergy, why should the institution of bigamy be a priori excluded? The only effective answer would have been that polygamy is condemned by Christian doctrine. This is the reply which most Protestant thinkers (such as Calvin) have been stamped unequivocally as a radical or a heretic. But this was a stand that Luther and his colleagues never took - and for very good reasons. They could not. They themselves did not believe that polygamy was against divine or natural law. They took their stand solely on grounds of expediency.

Luther, it is true, had curious views on a number of subjects, including sex. 'Had God consulted me,' he wrote, 'I would have advised Him to propagate the species by fashioning human beings out of clay, the way Adam was created.' However, sexual activity was an essential part of life (though sinful), like eating and drinking. Luther even alleged that Jesus had probably committed adultery with Mary Magdalene and other women in order to partake fully of the nature of man.

But the main reason for his indulgence to polygamy had little direct connection with sex. His attitude stemmed from a problem that had faced the Church from the beginning - how to defend certain acts of the patriarchs which were of questionable morality when judged by Christian ethics. The Manichaeans (an early Christian sect), for example, had laid it down that Abraham was not a Christian since he was guilty of sensuality in his conjugal relations. Saint Augustine immediately sprang to his defence. Abraham, he argued, had lived more chastely with his several wives than most men in monogamy, and in any case polygamy in his time was the custom, and hence no sin. Luther took the same line. For him, Abraham was the first Christian 'and more important than all the Popes together'. His morals had to be stoutly defended. And so, right from the start, Luther lays it down that polygamy is not wrong in itself, and definitely preferable to divorce. He was never to diverge from this position.

He had frequently occasion to pronounce on the question himself. Early in 1525, a pastor called Karlstadt sponsored a request from one of his congregation for permission to take a second wife, since his first one was a leper. Luther replied that the man's confessor must first give his permission. He himself could not forbid such a marriage, but he would not advise it either. What was permissible must often be sacrificed for the general good. In 1526, Philip, who was even then looking for a way out of his marriage troubles, asked Luther whether polygamy was permissible in principle. The reply ran that no Christian should have more than one wife, because that would give offence, and because there was no positive word from God suggesting that polygamy be revived. Heathens and Turks might do as they pleased. True, some of the patriarchs had been polygamous, but it was because they had a definite reason (such as the need for progeny). A Christian, before adopting polygamy, must first have a calling from God. Plural marriages, therefore, were to be rejected except in case of extreme need. Philip did not insist, and the matter was dropped for the time being.

A little later, Luther admitted (contrary to the doctrine of the Catholic church) that polygamous converts had been admitted into the early church.

His convictions were put to the test when, in 1531 he was asked by one of Henry VIII's agents whether that king could regard his marriage with Catherine of Aragon as void - the annulment of his marriage being an essential precondition of wedding Anne Boleyn and having a male heir. Most of the theological authorities consulted (many for interested reasons) agreed that he could repudiate his queen. Luther - as well as bucer and Melanchthon - took the opposite view, and advised him to keep Catherine but take a second wife. 'I would allow the King', wrote Luther, 'to take another queen

in accordance with the examples of the patriarchs of old who had two wives at the same time.'

Melanchthon was equally favourable to this course. 'Henry', he opined, 'could try to obtain a male heir without any peril to his conscience or to anyone else's by a second marriage.' He would not, however, concede polygamy to all. And he added the piquant observation that the Pope would, in his view, accord the necessary dispensation 'as an act of love'. If such permission were refused, Henry should disregard the Pope's ban and take a second wife notwithstanding.

Bucer joined his voice to those of his fellow Reformers. Bigamy, which had been practised by the patriarchs, could not be denied to Christians in modern times. It was in accordance with the law of Moses and did not offend against decency.

Philip was well aware that these pronouncements formed a very strong card in his hand. His brief to Bucer goes over the familiar Biblical propositions from which, he was certain, Luther could not dissent. There were the patriarchs who walked (unreproved for their numerous wives) with God, the absence of a ban on polygamy in the New Testament (despite the long list of things forbidden to new converts), the injunction in Timothy that a bishop should have only one wife (and hence that others might have more). And later he was to draw the conclusion from the situation as to the early converts. If it is possible for a Christian to keep his many wives a man can be a Christian and take more than one wife.'

If it makes effective play with the Reformers' opinions on Henry VIII's submission. If that King could be allowed a second marriage, why not he? Admittedly, Henry needed a male heir to avoid civil war. But he, Philip, would suffer damnation unless he was helped to put a stop to his sins by a second marriage. And were not spiritual matters more deserving of care than mere worldly issues such as the stability of the English government?

And so, when Bucer learned of the Landgrave's proposal, he found it difficult to resist, not only on political, but also on theological grounds. The Reformer subjected himself to a long examination of conscience, the results of which are recorded in a work (not published till 1878) which sets out the arguments for polygamy and those against. The nub of this exhaustive dissertation is that polygamy should be left to the individual conscience. Like marriage, it is a remedy against fornication. Each case must be judged according to its need, and, for Bucer, there was little doubt, in the light of Philip's sad tale of spiritual and physical woes, that the Landgrave's need was real and justified.

Luther and Melanchthon were equally vulnerable to Philip's theological arguments. They were in the dilemma where the poor heart would fain deny but dare not. The agonies stemming from their hesitation are visible at almost every turn in the Wittenberg Deliberation. The document agrees that polygamy (though inferior to the ideal of monogamy laid down in the Bible) was allowed under the Mosaic Law, and was not forbidden in the New Testament. It is permissible in the case of a man with a leper wife or of a captive who badly needs to be looked after. Provided that the approval of the confessor is forthcoming, therefore, a dispensation may also be given in cases of extreme need. But

all this does not alter the rule of outward life, and there can be no question of a general introduction of bigamy. Hence, to avoid offence, the dispensation in Philip's case must be secret.

Small wonder that Luther found it difficult to defend his position at the Eisenach Conference. All he could muster by way of theological argument was that his earlier writings should not be regarded as infallible, and that he was learning every day. Who could say what he would change next in his theories? Paul had said: 'Let every man have his own wife', and there were no examples of polygamy in the New Testament. Luther was usually more cogent than this.

The truth is that the Deliberation was taken on political, not doctrinal grounds, and Luther knew it. The same considerations had prevailed when he advised Henry VIII to take another wife (though his horror of divorce was genuine enough). That approval, as he was later to put it, was accorded because bigamy was more tolerable than a situation in which both country and people would be torn asunder in civil war. Luther was at that point in time not so concerned about the possible extension of bigamy to the lower orders. The Monstered rebellion lay in the future. And besides, England was a foreign country, and a Catholic one at that (since Henry had not yet broken with the Pope), so that there was no danger of the King going over to the other side.

For Bucer, political considerations - those of status in particular - were just as important as for Luther. Latitude for bigamy, he wrote, 'as the Scriptures show, is accorded more generously to Kings than to others ... and hence should be refused least of all to great lords'.

The decision was political, too, in Philip's case. If he were not given his way, he would defect to the Emperor and work against the Reformation. 'It was', said Luther, 'an emergency that could only be patched up with the help of Moses [i.e., of the Mosaic law]'. But the threat was a serious one only because of the Landgrave's power and rank. Luther was far less forthcoming to the anonymous but humble petitioner of 1525 afflicted with a leper wife. Conversely, he was shocked to learn that Philip had committed bigamy with

lady-in-waiting and not a simple peasant girl.

There is no need to veil one's face at the Reformer's recognition of the power of social hierarchy in the sixteenth century. He was merely taking account, as any statesman should, of the dominant forces at work. In particular, he dreaded the impact of a bigamous marriage contracted by someone of Philip's standing. 'The actions of princes', quoted the Deliberation rightly, 'cause more of a stir than those of private persons.' Others, down to 'the veriest clodhopper', would seek to copy such a prestigious example. There is no mystery as to the ideas guiding Luther's policy in the whole affair. He was obsessed by the danger to social stability inherent in peasant revolts such as the risings of the 'twenties when he had urged on the German rulers to hunt down 'the mad dogs' and suppress the revolt in a river of blood. And more recently (and even more pertinently) there was the visionary Monstered Kingdom in which polygamy had formed a diabolical adjunct to the wildest social radicalism. If, as Bucer explicitly feared, popular agitation were to find leaders in the nobles eager to introduce polygamy, a match would be set to a powder barrel which might blow up the whole of Germany. And, had Bucer's nightmare been realized, the whole evolution of European mores would have been utterly different.

APPENDIX W:
EXTRACT FROM "CURIOUS CUSTOMS OF SEX AND
MARRIAGE"
BY GEORGE RYLEY SCOTT

Another book which I was led by the Spirit of God to pick up in a book shop and open at a particular passage, was "Curious Customs of Sex and Marriage" by George Ryley Scott.

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INTRODUCTION

III

Fifteen centuries of Christian civilization had to go into the limbo of the past before the Church made any serious and determined attempt to gain control over marriage, by making an ecclesiastical ceremony a necessary prologue.

Church and State concentrated on making the union, as far as possible, and in the vast majority of cases, an indissoluble one. Hence the evolution of marriage ceremonies calculated to stress the "till death doth us part" aspect; hence the appeal to superstition; hence the formulation of laws designed to put every conceivable bar in the way of dissolution.

Inevitably difficulties were encountered. Always has there been a risk that in the attempt to make the marital alliance permanent, in combination with the responsibilities inherent in the contract, society might conceivably drive man into promiscuity as an alternative means of satisfying a biological urge. This risk, from time to time, has been underlined by the steps which it was sometimes considered necessary to take, even in civilized communities, to make men marry. Thus in seventeenth century New England the life of a bachelor was made most ignominious by his subjection to many forms of persecution.[1] In Hartford, for instance, the penalty for remaining unmarried was the payment of twenty shillings a week to the town.[2] In other towns, single men were compelled to live in houses assigned to them; they were continually spied upon; and their lives generally made miserable. "In those days," said Alice Morse Earle, "a man gained instead of losing his freedom by marrying .[3]"

[1] Even to-day in some parts of the world indirect coercion is not unknown.

In the Daily Mail (March 24, 1951) appears the following paragraph: "Tirana, Albania - A tax on bachelors between 20 and 50, and unmarried and childless women between 20 and 40 has been imposed by the Albanian Government. Reuter."

[2] Alice Morse Earle, Customs and Fashions in Old New England, 1893, P. 36.

[3] Ibid., p. 37. 1

Pages 81 to 83:

CHAPTER VIII : PLURAL MARRIAGE IN ITS, VARIOUS FORMS

I

Polygamy: Its Origin and Incidence

However unpalatable, from the standpoint of modern ethical ideals, the statement may be, it is a fact that man, biologically and inherently, is polygynous. The promiscuity which is so prominent and so characteristic a feature of savagery provides unmistakable evidence of the truth of this. No feature of mankind has provided religion and morality with so many difficulties, not in connexion with its prohibition, which is plainly an impossibility, but in its curbing. In modern civilization, the monogamic concept in combination with the laws relating to marriage, have succeeded only to the extent that economic conditions have been able to fortify them.

It should be noted that in these remarks I am referring to the polygynous nature of the male rather than to the polygamous feature of the human race as a whole. The distinction is important. Polygamy, contrary to popular opinion, involves more than the marrying of a number of women by one male; it includes the analogous appetite displayed by the female for a number of husbands. Polyandry, as this latter phenomenon is termed, is nothing like so pronounced or so widespread a characteristic in the female as polygyny is in the male. In fact it may be looked upon as abnormal or exceptional, for whatever may be its incidence in those early days when promiscuity was the order of the day, polyandry has proved to be capable of regulation or prohibition in a manner which is impossible with polygyny. Moreover, even in primitive society, it is a much rarer phenomenon than polygyny, being virtually restricted to societies where the number of females is much fewer than that of males, or where poverty of an extreme nature is widespread. In some North American tribes it was customary for a woman

to have several husbands; as also in Tibet and Bantan. According to Father Tanchard, in Calicut, he came across women with as many as ten husbands, all of whom were looked upon as so many slaves.

In the Old Testament we have plenty of evidence of the existence of polygyny. Esau undoubtedly was a polygynist; so too, Adam's son, Lamech; King Solomon, also, had a g number of wives. Indeed, there can be little doubt that polygyny was widely practised in the time of Moses, and his supposed prohibition of multiple marriages, as instanced in the passage : `Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, besides the other in her lifetime," has been the cause of considerable controversy, as in the case of so many other Biblical commands and prohibitions. Apropos of this passage, Dr. Gardner says: " Michaelis, following the Talmud, alleges that the Mosaic law does not prohibit more than one wife, although he admits that it does not sanction a man having as many wives as he pleased. Selden, in his learned work *De Uxore Hebraica* (On Me Hebrew Wife), informs us, that the Jewish Rabbis held the prohibition of Moses to extend only beyond four wives. And Mohammed, following as he did in many cases the Rabbinical interpretations, fixed upon four as the number of wives to be allowed to the faithful, and commands that that number should not be exceeded." [1]

For centuries the ancient Romans prohibited polygyny, the Justinian Code proclaiming it to be a punishable offence. Later Mark Antony caused the rule to be altered: he took two wives himself.

In ancient Egypt all men other than those of the poorer classes, who could not afford a plurality of wives, and the priests, who were prohibited from having them, were accustomed to practise polygyny; although, according to Kenrick, one of the wives, under the title of Lady of the House, " enjoyed a superiority in honour and authority over the rest." [2] A similar custom prevailed among the Turkish princes, says Burder, where it was usual " to have one among their many wives superior to all the rest in dignity." [3]

According to Huc, polygyny is a legal institution in China. [4]

[1] *James Gardner, Faiths of the World. Vol. II, p. 679.*

[2] *John Kenrick, Ancient Egypt under the Pharaohs 1850 Vol. II, p. 58.*

[3] *Samuel Burder, Oriental Customs 1840, P. 277.*

[4] *M. Huc, The Chinese Empire, 1855.*

At one time the practice was restricted to Mandarins and childless forty-year-olds, but more recently the taking of secondary wives has become general. Here, as in Egypt and some other countries, the first wife is the mistress of the house, all others holding subordinate positions.

In many of the tribes of North American Indians polygyny was practised. Catlin said it was " no uncommon thing to find a chief with six, eight, or ten, and some with twelve or fourteen wives in his lodge." [1] Among the Indians of Guiana, the more wives a man possesses the more is he esteemed by his fellow-men. [2]

A form of polygyny practised by many primitive races is the custom of marrying sisters, known as sororate. However many daughters there are in a family, the man who marries one marries the lot. It is found among the North American Indians, the Australian Blacks, and the Kaffirs of Africa.

In Tibet, somewhat surprisingly, polygyny and polyandry are both widely practised. According to Henry Savage Landor, the arrangement is a somewhat complicated one. [3] A man who marries the eldest of a number of sisters acquires the lot as wives, that is, providing the younger ones are unmarried; but if he chooses to marry a younger sister in the family he has no claim to the elder sister or sisters, whether or not she or they be single. On the other hand, the girl who marries one of a number of brothers, becomes the wife of them all. In some parts of the country, owing to the extreme poverty of the inhabitants, the wife-sharing method is apparently the only form of married life possible. In addition to the question of economics, the dangers to which women who have to be left alone are inevitably exposed, make polyandry a matter of expediency. It is not likely, in such circumstances, that a wife will be without companionship and protection where there are two or more husbands in the household, a point which may well be brought forward "in defence of even so startling a social arrangement as this, at least among races of so phlegmatic a temperament as the Tibetans." [4] Moreover, apart from any need for protection, it would appear

[1] *George Catlin, North American Indians, 1876, p. 118.*

[2] *W.H. Brett, The Indian Tribes of Guiana, 1868, p. 351.*

[3] *A. Henry Savage Landor, In the Forbidden Land; An Account of a journey in Tibet, Capture by the Tibetan Authorities, Imprisonment, Torture, and Ultimate Release, Heinemann, 1898. Vol. 11, pp. 61-63.*

[4] *Constance F. Gordon Cumming, From the Hebrides to the Himalayas : A Sketch of Eighteen Months' Wanderings in Western Isles and Eastern Highlands, Sampson Low, London, 1876. Vol. I, p. 204*

that the women of this remote country are not without skill in handling a plurality of husbands. As a rule a wife displays considerable ingenuity in seeing that they are not all at home at the same time. Says Landor: " Only one remains and he is for the time being her husband; then when another returns he has to leave his place and become a bachelor, and so on, till all the brothers have, during the year, had an equal period of marital life with their single wife."

Polygyny is inherently evil, and it can only produce evil results. So true is this, that in China many women will go to any lengths to avoid marriage with a man given to its practice. Some shut themselves up in nunneries; others take their own lives. Gray tells us that " during the reign of Taou-Kwang, fifteen virgins whom their parents had affianced, met together upon learning the fact, and resolved to commit suicide. They flung themselves into a tributary stream of the Canton river, in the vicinity of the village where they lived. The tomb in which the corpses were interred is near Fo-Chune, and is called the Tomb of the Virgins. The same authority mentions another multiple suicide for a similar reason. It occurred in the month of July, 1873. In this instance the affianced girls, numbering eight, had bound themselves together, before jumping into the river.

The closing paragraph of this extract illustrates a common phenomenon amongst many writers who oppose a man having more than one wife. The opening statement that "polygyny is inherently evil" argues for a specific instance where other information which presumably applies to the situations referred to is not presented. One must assume that if the situation was a generally evil as the example suggests then it is almost impossible to consider how it could have existed in the first place since it would appear that every woman faced with such a prospect would have taken such extreme measures to avoid such marriage. The fact that millions of people around the world live happily in such marriages is ignored.

One has to ask why, if the practice of a man having more than one wife is against scripture, it cannot be refuted without emotional rhetoric. Equally, one must surely recognize that the society in question was not a society in which Yahweh is Lord and in which the Love of God is shed abroad in the hearts of the people.

APPENDIX X:
EXTRACT FROM "STRANGE CUSTOMS OF COURTSHIP AND
MARRIAGE"
BY WILLIAM J FIELDING

Another book found on being led by the Spirit into a second had bookshop was "Strange Customs of Courtship and Marriage", by William J Fielding, published by "The Blakiston Company", Philadelphia in 1942.

Pages 2 to 5:

***A DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE** - This great urge has had as it's impetus the bringing together of the couple in sexual union With it ultimately came the establishment of marriage, of vary. ing periods of duration, depending upon the conditions which determined the arrangement, the most important of which has been the raising of children.*

The situation as gleaned by the anthropologists - those tireless students of the history of mankind-is of course too complex to be related in a few pages. In primitive life, precise and orderly forms of mating could scarcely be expected, nor did they exist. There have been countless sorts of variations and many contradictions.

According to the great authority on the subject, Professor Edward Westermarck, author of The History of Human Marriage, human beings have always lived in what may be broadly described as a state of marriage. Not in the definitely formulated sense that we now know this institution, but in a recognizable and definable form.

Westermarck thus defines marriage as a relation of one or more men to one or more women which is recognized by custom or law and involves certain rights and duties both in the case of the parties entering the union and in the case of the children born of it.

Continuing, Westermarck says that marriage always implies the right of sexual intercourse; society holds such intercourse allowable in the case of the husband and wife, and, generally speaking, even regards it as their duty to gratify in some measure the other partner's desire. But the right to sexual intercourse is not necessarily exclusive. He adds, as an alternative definition: a more or less durable association between male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of the offspring.

In support of this theory, it is argued that marriage has developed out of primordial habit-the habit of a man and a woman (or several women) to live together, to have sexual relations with one another, and to rear their offspring in common. The man became the protector and supporter of the family, the woman his helpmate and the nurse of their children. This habit in time became sanctioned by custom, and eventually by law, and thus was transformed into a social institution.

It is shown that many of the higher animals have a family life analogous to human marriage in its primitive form. Indeed, it has been observed that the highest form of paired mating - not excluding man-is to be found among many species of birds.

Among the great majority of birds, the male and female keep together even after the breeding season, and in a great many species the parental instinct has reached a high degree of intensity on the father's side as well as on the mother's. So true is this that Brehm, the naturalist, has remarked that "real marriage can be found only among birds."

So the terms "marriage" and "family" are used to describe a definite human and sub-human relationship, and our modern marriage and family are a development of this process which began at a very primitive level of life.

Comparatively early in its development marriage became an economic institution, affecting the proprietary rights of the parties.

Among certain peoples, as we shall see in later chapters plurality of wives is legally permissible; among others, more primitive, the marriage is a loose and temporary union, lasting little beyond the birth of the offspring. This situation account for Westermarck's qualifying definition.

On the other hand, higher in the social order, we find an established condition wherein marriage means something more than sexual congress. In this order man and wife main, tain a household together. They may have a community of goods. There is a common interest and responsibility in the care of the children. It is upon this basis that there has developed the system of monogamous marriage now prevalent throughout most of the modem world.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD "WEDDING". - *When we look into the origin of certain words we get an intimation of the development or transformation of the system described by the word in question. This is characteristically true of the word "wed. ding". It derives from the barbaric stage of wife purchase through which marriage passed. The wed was the purchase money or its equivalent, horses, cattle or other property, which the groom gave to the father to seal the transaction.*

In the early days of the Anglo-Saxons children were often betrothed by the parents, the bridegroom's pledge of marriage being accompanied by a security, or wed, furnished by the father of the groom. Thus originated the term wedding, or pledging the troth of the bride to the man who secured her by purchase.

It is said that traces of the ancient legal procedure connected with wife purchase remained in England as late as the middle of the sixteenth century. In France, even until the time of Louis XVI, it was the custom to pay down thirteen deniers upon conclusion of a marriage contract. This latter practice was doubtless merely a symbolic relic of the time when marriage was an outright cash transaction.

THE ANTIQUITY OF MARRIAGE - *As we have already seen, marriage appears to have had its origin at the very dawn of human society, perhaps being a continuation of an analogous relationship in subhuman life. There are, however, different schools of thought on this subject, as we shall presently see.*

Among many species of the animal kingdom, the male and female remain together not only during the pairing season, but until after the birth of the offspring. It seems reasonable to assume that they were

induced to do so by an instinct which had been acquired through the process of natural selection. This tendency preserved the next generation, and thereby perpetuated the species.

Confirmation of this theory is found in the fact that in such cases the male not only stays with the female and young, but also takes care of them. Prince Peter Kropotkin, the great Russian naturalist, cites numerous instances of devotion, loyalty and self-sacrifice among the denizens of the animal world in the wild stage that would be a credit to humanity at its best.

Among mammals the young are dependent for a considerable time upon the mother, who consequently is concerned for their welfare, attending to them with much affection. While in most cases the relations between the sexes are restricted to the pairing season, there are however certain species in which they are of a more permanent character, and the male acts as guardian of the family.

What is particularly apparent from the latter part of this text is the tendency to base the understanding of marriage on animals and therefore on the theory of evolution. In other words, the thesis is that since man evolved from animals we can better understand man from the study of animals. This is in stark contrast to the Christian and Jewish knowledge of creation by Yahweh as set out in Genesis 1.

Pages 27 to 30:

Modern Survivals of Ancient Customs

THE WEDDING RING.- While there is no exact history of the origin of the wedding ring, it is believed to have evolved from the older betrothal ring. The earliest record of the wedding ring appears in Egyptian literature. The idea fitted in with Egyptian thought, as in hieroglyphics the circle represents eternity. By applying the name to a plain band or circle for the finger, marriage was thus identified with a tie through eternity.

According to tradition, the early Hebrew wedding rings were usually plain gold, without setting. They were permitted to be of silver, and even base metals were acceptable. It is apparent that the Jewish wedding ring was of ceremonial or symbolic meaning because it was often too large for wearing as a finger ornament.

The Christian form, on the other hand, has always been the true finger ring, usually of gold, and generally devoid of ornament. The use of the wedding ring among Christians been traced back to the year 860. It is said that when a marriage settlement had been properly scaled, rings bearing the name: of the newly married couple were passed around for inspection among the guests.

There have been many variations of wedding or marriage rings-such as double rings joined by a pivot (gemmal rings), rings set more or less elaborately with gems, and even so-called puzzle rings, in which several individual loops were so shaped as to form together an apparently indivisible ring - but the single unadorned band has been the most common form of wedding ring.

Marriage rings have been made of a great variety of materials. Besides the various metals, such as gold, silver, iron, steel and bronze, wood, rush and leather have also been used. The Romans used iron, which had an appropriate significance because of the traditional strength and durability of this metal. Medieval peasants used circlets of rush, wood or leather because they could afford no better, but they insisted upon some sort of a ring to seal the union. At the beginning, the use of gold bore the association of purity, and its value indicated it as a token of the wealth the husband brought to the consummation of the marriage contract.

Platinum has come into extensive use in later years for wedding rings as in other jewelry, and the wedding ring set with a row, or forming a circle, of small diamonds has had considerable vogue. Among the novelties have been the "Orange Blossom" ring, bringing the symbolism of one of nature's most prolific fruits into association with the marriage, and the "Venus" ring, harking back to the goddess of Love.

Aside from the symbol of unity and eternity associated with the wedding ring, it has been maintained that the finger circlet of marriage developed from the circular fetters or bracelets placed upon the captive woman of primitive times, thus being a symbolic relic (although an unconscious one) of her ancient status of subjection and servitude to the master.

The exchanging of wedding rings has likewise symbolized loss of freedom-the "ball-and-chain" concept, in another form -bondage for the man and subjugation for the woman. These associations of servitude and inferiority undoubtedly sprang in part from the language of the Christian marriage ritual, when it took over the traditionally secular marriage contract. The sacramental view of marriage, with its emphasis on the permanent spiritual union, denotes the surrender of freedom. The use of the phrase "to obey" in the woman's vow, so long a feature of the Christian marriage rite, but now more and more omitted by mutual wish, was a further note of her subjugation to the husband's will.

THE RING FINGER - Further evidence of the concept of servitude, symbolized in the use of the wedding ring, is indicated by the wearing of the ring on the left hand. From earliest times, the right hand has symbolized power and authority; the left hand, subjection.

The particular digit upon which the ring is worn-the fourth finger-once had special significance. It was thought in ancient times that a certain vein or nerve in the fourth finger of the left hand ran directly to that time-honored seat of the affections the heart. This significance is no longer known by the great majority of women who wear the ring, and it is known to be an anatomical fallacy. Nevertheless the old custom continues. Many women would consider themselves something less than properly married if they wore the wedding ring on any other finger.

The utilitarian argument has been presented that the fourth finger is a logical choice because it is guarded by the fingers on either side, that of all the fingers it is the least used, and, furthermore, that the left hand, as the hand less used, is the place of least wear. As in most cases of trying to prove a point, where tradition, sentiment and superstition are involved, this seems like a choice bit of rationalization.

As a matter of fact most fingers of both hands, including the thumbs, have been used for wearing rings. During the Elizabethan period in England, the wedding ring was worn on the thumb, as is shown in portraits of ladies of that time.

Here we clearly see the pagan, superstitious background to the wedding ring in terms of which Satan has deluded the church into believing that the metal ring has some covenant significance which appears nowhere in scripture.

APPENDIX Y:
EXTRACT FROM "SEX, LIFE AND FAITH
A MODERN PHILOSOPHY OF SEX"
by ROM LANDAU

The book "Sex, Life and Faith; A Modern Philosophy of Sex" by Rom Landau, published by Faber and Faber Limited, 24 Russel Square, London in 1946 provides further insight into the intellectual thinking behind the doctrine of enforced monogamy.

Pages 136 to 138:

SEX IN ACTION

4. Spirit and Polygamy

In an imperfect world, such as we live in, polygamy must be considered both natural and legitimate. In an ideal world monogamy would undoubtedly be sufficient. To eliminate polygamy completely, we should first have to change the entire character of our civilization, then the nature of man, and, finally, Nature herself.

It is both revealing and somewhat disturbing to find that only among the least civilized tribes is divorce unknown and marriage considered indissoluble.* We find an overwhelming prevalence of lifelong monogamous unions only among some of the lowest hunters and agriculturists of Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, and Ceylon. It would seem that the more civilized and individualized man becomes, the more strongly does he develop polygamous tendencies.

Whether polygamy can be equally justified on moral grounds is a different question. But, as we have seen already, civilizations and religions exist which recognize that polygamy is as natural to man as monogamy, and which, in consequence, sanction it openly. To-day Islam is the most obvious

* Among civilized peoples I can find records of a similar situation only in the State of South Carolina in the U.S.A. which represents the sole community in the Christian world which still holds marriage indissoluble and grants no divorce whatsoever. The Roman Catholic Church, while asserting the indissolubility of Christian marriage, admits a 'separation from bed and board', and, under certain circumstances is not opposed to dissolving such marriage. As Lord Bryce observed, 'the rules regarding impediments were so numerous and so intricate that it was easy, given a sufficient motive, whether political or pecuniary, to discover some ground for declaring almost any marriage invalid.'

example, and it implies that some 350 million people (adherents of this religion alone) are officially at liberty to lead either monogamous or polygamous lives.

Not only in ancient or primitive societies is it accepted that polygamy is rather more natural to man than monogamy. We know already what Dr. Johnson had to say on the subject of marriage when surveying the civilization of eighteenth-century England. The French - those supreme realists and

exponents of a particularly refined civilization - gave tacit approval to polygamy by sanctioning the custom of a man's having a mistress as well as a wife. This custom was adhered to quite openly and not in secret and shamefacedly as though it were something reprehensible. French history is rich in examples of mistresses who enjoyed greater respect than the legitimate wives. In this France followed the lead of Athens, where the hetaera was afforded a higher social position than the wife. No Athenian woman was more honoured than Aspasia, the mistress of Pericles, 'the Olympian'. Muhammad would hardly have sanctioned the simultaneous possession of four wives by one man if polygamy had not been natural and necessary to the Arabs.

Yet in spite of the acceptance of polygamy by so many different civilizations, the fact remains that in most societies (at least so far as the Western world is concerned) moral, social, and legal codes prescribe monogamy, and do everything in their power to enforce it. This is partly because an officially sanctioned polygamy easily leads to innumerable social, legal, and personal complications. But though in the West the law prohibits polygamy 'in space', it finds itself forced to condone it 'in time', namely by granting divorce. A man may not have two wives simultaneously, but no-one can prevent him from having ten wives over a period of years. Such a state of affairs reveals our unwillingness to face sexual realities squarely.

All the evidence provided by history and science makes it imperative that polygamy should be recognized more honestly. This, however, must not blind us to the fact that a religious sanctioning of polygamy such as we find in Islam, denotes a weakness in the particular creed. The weakness is not necessarily of a moral character. (Most moralities are man-made, relative to the circumstances of a given time and place, and thus not absolute.) The weakness, rather, is of a spiritual nature.

The desire for a permanent monogamous partnership originates in a deeper stratum of man's spirit than does that for polygamous attachments. To satisfy that desire calls for greater effort at a higher price than that demanded by polygamous tendencies. Had Muhammad accepted polygamy merely on grounds of local usage and expediency, little spiritual significance would need to be attached to his decisions, but we know from his private life that the determining motive was his own inability to master his sexual impulses. On personal and purely spiritual grounds his sanction of polygamy suggests a weakness. Spiritually - though not necessarily morally - this sanction strikes us as less valuable than the opposite principle as seen in the Christian gospel.

Yet does even such a verdict give us a right to shut our eyes to the legitimacy of polygamous practices in Christian countries or elsewhere? When we study a living society we obviously deal with imperfect realities and not with Utopian ideals. We cannot possibly dismiss the existing imperfections - whether of nature, customs, or conditions - as though they had no effect upon our lives. And to cling to laws and conventions that ignore those imperfections is, to say the least, neither helpful nor morally justifiable.

5. Polyandry and Women

If polygamy be natural and legitimate for men and, if as nowadays even intelligent women are wont to claim, there is absolutely no difference between the two sexes, we must conclude that women are similarly entitled to polyandry. The subject is important, and even if it cannot be treated here in all its aspects, at least some outstanding features must be mentioned.

Legalized polyandry has been known to many different nations and civilizations. According to Strabo polyandry was common in Arabia Felix; and Al Bukhari reports that it was a custom among the pagan (pre-Islamic) Arabs for several men to cohabit with one wife, who herself nominated the father of any

child to which she gave birth. Cases of polyandry have been noticed among South American Indians, the Eskimo, and various tribes of the Alaskan coast. As late as in the fifteenth century most of the women of the Canary Island, Lancerote had three husbands 'who wait upon them alternately by months'. In the Marshall Islands polyandry has been practised on a large scale, and all the brothers of a newly betrothed man automatically became the secondary husbands of his wife. In Tibet polyandry is common to the present day; and it can also be found among various communities of the North Indian plains.

In this passage it is apparent that there is a disparaging, perhaps even sarcastic condemnation of polygyny, again seemingly based on prejudice and by extension of an argument which fails to address scripture we see that it is suggested that polyandry, clearly fornication in scriptural terms, is ranked on the same terms as polygyny. Surely any person of integrity must question why, if monogamy is the will of God, it is necessary to resort to such contrived and offensive argument to defend it?

APPENDIX Z:

EXTRACT FROM "THE CHRISTIAN CENTURIES"

by FRANCES GUMLEY AND BRIAN REDHEAD

In one of the most dramatic instances whereby material for this book was acquired, I was led several miles through the centre of London to a book store where I was led to purchase the book "The Christian Centuries" by Frances Gumley and Brian Redhead, published by BBC Books in 1989. On opening it I found the following passage on page 62:

"Benedict had not been the only one laying down the law. While he was sitting in the monastic eyrie of Monte Cassino putting the final touches on the rule of life for generations of monks and nuns to come, across the Christian world in Constantinople a very different operation was in full swing. Justinian, the emperor, who had great difficulty in sitting still, was codifying Roman law from all the centuries past. He seems to quote from Benedict's Rule on at least three occasions. He was a reserved, cerebral man responsible for the building of Hagia Sophia, acclaimed as the most beautiful church in the whole of Christendom, but he and his empress Theodora had their enemies. Justinian was a strange character. His official biographer, Procopius, says that he considers that Justinian was nothing less than a demon in a human body. The Reverend Michael Smith says he has rather more sympathy with Theodora than he has with Justinian.

Justinian was a very inward-turned man. When you look at some of the mosaic portraits of him you can see a weak man, whereas Theodora, whatever her faults, was strong and consistent. Justinian was rigidly Orthodox. Theodora was an ex-prostitute from Alexandria who had been converted by Monophysite monks and so she was ardently Monophysite herself. She was quite ready, when Justinian was turning against the Monophysites, to hide the Monophysite monks in her part of the palace.

When the football hooligans of the day, the chariot race supporters, turned against Justinian, burned down Constantinople and had him besieged in the palace, he did not know what to do. He was all for abdicating. Theodora turned and said, in effect, 'Get up you wretched wimp - you might as well stand up and fight: for my part, I believe the imperial purple is the best shroud of all.' And she set General Belisarius on the mob and sent out somebody to bribe some of them to break ranks. She was a great power behind the throne. They called her 'Despoina':the lady, the mistress - a title she fully deserved.

Given that Justinian is credited by various sources as being the person who first officially promulgated the doctrine of enforced monogamy as official Christian doctrine, surely we must conclude that this passage clearly demonstrates the influence of Roman feminism and demonic influence in the false doctrine of enforced monogamy?

APPENDIX AA :
EXTRACT FROM "LOVE IN THE SOUTH SEAS"
by BENGT DANIELSSON

Another unusual book that came into my possession is entitled "Love in the South Seas" by Bengt Danielsson, and translated from the original Swedish by F H Lyon, published by George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London 1956.

Pages 129 to 139:

CHAPTER VI: THE ADVANTAGES OF POLYGAMY

The Polynesian marriage custom which has attracted most attention in Europe is, curiously enough, polygamy. This exaggerated interest can ultimately be traced back to the American lawyer Lewis Morgan, one of the most controversial figures in the short but eventful history of anthropology. In the middle of the nineteenth century Morgan happened to undertake the defence for an Indian tribe in a legal dispute with some settlers eager to acquire land. As he was a skilful counsel, he gradually obtained more and more briefs of this kind, and, fascinated by the strange customs and ideas he met with among his Indian clients, he began to devote all his spare time to anthropological studies.

Another event of decisive importance for Morgan's career was the publication of Darwin's famous work *The Origin of Species*. Convinced of the correctness of the theory of biological evolution, Morgan at once conceived it to be his duty to undertake a corresponding description of the origin and evolution of human culture. He thought that here and there among the primitive peoples it should be possible to find the remains of customs and implements which in past times existed among our own ancestors, and that by arranging these in a series, from the simplest to the most perfected, a picture could be obtained of the different stages through which humanity had passed.

In his work, which appeared in 1877 under the title *Ancient Society* Morgan deals at length with marriage conditions and endeavours to show that the human race has passed through various stages of development, from general promiscuity to strict monogamy of the Western type. After the quite unregulated original state, during which everyone in the same horde had sexual intercourse without difference or distinction, there was a second stage called by Morgan the punalua stage. His most important evidence came from Hawaii where 'at the time the American missions were established upon these Islands (1820), a state of society was found which appalled the missionaries. The relations of the sexes and their marriage customs excited their chief astonishment. They were suddenly introduced to a phase of ancient society where the monogamian family was unknown, where the syndyasmian family was unknown; but in place of these . . . they found the punaluan family, with own brothers and sisters not entirely excluded, in which the males were living in polygyny and the females in polyandry. It seemed to them that they, had discovered the lowest level of human degradation, not to say of depravity' (77, P. 414). Morgan's book was immediately noticed by Marx and Engels, who had quite recently worked out a corresponding scheme of economic evolution, and the fact that Morgan even happened to use the term 'communistic' of the earliest family groupings further

Varoa Tapu:	1
Tapuhoe:	1
Varoa Kaipani:	2
Teuruotiki:	1
Varoa Nui:	3
Tefau:	1
Varoa Tikarua:	5
Kaoko:	3

This gives an average of 2.1 wives per chief, and it was exceptional for the commoners who occur in the genealogies to have more than one wife.

The table on page 133, showing the number of wives in 134 marriages during five generations in the Vara descent group on the island of Mangaia in the Cook group, proves that by no means all nobles and chiefs had more than one wife.

Thus only 20 per cent of the marriages were polygynous. Similar computations from other islands show about the same percentage.

Generations	Number of marriages	Number of wives					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
6	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
7	6	4	1	-	-	-	1
8	17	11	2	4	-	-	-
9	53	43	9	1	-	-	-
10	57	48	5	3	1	-	-
Total	134	107	17	8	1	-	1
Percentage	-	80	12.7	5.9	0.7	-	0.7

There are certainly few customs which have been so fundamentally misunderstood and misjudged in the Western countries as polygamy. This is not surprising, for the polygamous marriages which have attracted most notice in the West (alongside Morgan's Polynesian fantasies) are those of the Mormons and the Oriental despots, and these are exceptional cases. I have therefore divided the following survey of conditions in Polynesia - which in all essentials correspond to those existing among most primitive peoples - into three sections, each of which endeavours to refute a widespread misconception.

Mistake number one: a man keeps several wives to satisfy his desires.

In the first place, if this had been the case, all chiefs' wives would always have been fresh young beauties, which seldom was the case. Nor would a chief have kept his old wives, as he often did. In other words, a frequent change of wives would have been the rule, and not polygamy. Another weighty argument is that a chief interested in change and sensual distractions could have satisfied these needs by the many extramarital liaisons to which he was entitled, or entitled himself, than by polygamy.

Finally, the Polynesians themselves have stated with perfect clarity the reasons for their system of polygamy.

These reasons are:

1. Family considerations. All men, but especially the chiefs, wanted a male heir to continue the family. Further, all rulers wanted as many children as possible so that their own family might be strong and be able to maintain itself against other families which were competing with it for power. If the first wife was barren or produced only girls, the husband regarded it as his duty to the family and the community to take another wife. As he rightly considered it an injustice to turn away the first wife on this ground only, polygamy was the result.

2. Economic reasons. A chief had a much higher standard of living than his subjects, and he was, moreover, compelled to put up and entertain guests of all kinds. A European business man or captain of industry gets through his comprehensive duties as a host pretty easily without any harem by frequently taking his customers to a restaurant, but of course this was impossible in Polynesia. Not only were dinners and entertainments held in the home, but even all clothes and household articles had to be manufactured by members of the family. It was therefore necessary for chiefs to have more than one wife for economic and practical reasons.

3. Social and political advantages. As new and important political alliances had continually to be concluded and social connections established, and these objects were best attained by marriage, the chiefs found it only natural to remarry now and again. In order not to lose the advantages secured by a previous marriage they all kept their previous wives. This coldly calculating attitude of mind may seem to us unattractive, but it implied nothing specially derogatory to the additional wives, for the first wife was generally chosen on the same principle.

As sex was subordinated to practical considerations the chiefs often chose sisters or relatives of their first wife as additional wives, and this testifies to their psychological insight, for there were considerably greater chances of all parties pulling together evenly if the new wife had the same outlook and habits as the first. Further, a man had generally had sexual intercourse, with his wife's sister even before marriage, so that it made no difference worth mentioning if she moved into her brother-in-law's household.

But it was even commoner for a chief to marry two sisters at the same time, and Aginsky has explained why. 'When the woman marries into another group, she very often takes with her a younger sister so that if she becomes ill, sterile, or dies, the sister will be with her to take her place. Her sister, having lived with her and the children, is familiar with the conditions and takes over the rights and duties with little friction.... Thus, a satisfactory condition prevails where the family of the female perpetuates its rights, as does the family of the male, and the male is not bothered with looking for another female to take care of him and his children' (2, P. 208).

Nor, when analysing the causes of polygamy, must we forget that a chief was often compelled to increase his family by adding to it a new wife, since, as I pointed out earlier, a man was as a rule considered to be bound to marry the wife of a deceased brother. It sometimes happened, too, that a chief was presented with a slave woman by a neighbouring chief; in such cases she was regarded as an additional wife, but had an infinitely lower position than the other wives (supposing that they consented to receive her into the household).

A most unusual and grossly materialistic method of forcing new wives on a chief existed in Samoa, according to Turner. 'The marriage ceremony,' he writes, 'being such a prolific source of festivities and profit to the chief and his friends, the latter, whether he was disposed to do it or not, often urged on another and another repetition.... They took the thing almost entirely into their own hands, looked for a match in a rich family, and if that family was agreeable to it, the affair was pushed on, whether or not the daughter was disposed to it'. In this way a chief could be forced to remarry a dozen times in the course of his life. Luckily for him the wives disappeared as rapidly as they had appeared.

Mistake number two: in a polygamous marriage the women are the husband's slaves.

Polynesian chiefs' wives undeniably occupied quite a subordinate position, but this was not because they lived in polygamy, but because Polynesian society as a whole was a man's society. This is clearly shown by the fact that the other chiefs' wives, who did not share their husbands with any other woman, also occupied a subordinate position. For that matter, we need only draw a comparison with conditions in Europe, where in a number of countries the women are treated like children, while in others they have almost complete equality with men, although there is monogamy everywhere - to see that there is not necessarily any connection between the form of marriage and women's rights.

Instead of their freedom being reduced, it seems that the wives in a polygynous marriage were rather better placed than the women who had sole rights to their husbands. One obvious advantage was that the burden of work was divided and was therefore lighter for each wife; but their number was of use to them in another way also. By giving each other mutual support the wives could often get their way, and one may be sure that even the most powerful chiefs sometimes had to acquiesce in the decisions of the family majority.

Most wives, too, were glad to have a substitute within the family during a pregnancy - when sexual intercourse was avoided - as the risk of the husband being thus unfaithful with other women was thus considerably diminished. Moreover, there is every reason to suppose that a chief tried to behave himself when he knew that after every false step he had to pacify not only one, but perhaps as many as half a dozen angry wives with rolling pins, or rather stone mortars, raised to strike.

Again, for a woman who was really attached to her husband it must have been pleasant to feel that she need not be abandoned in her critical middle-age, if her husband should have a relapse into youthful sentiment and want to marry again with some little teenager. Instead of making scenes and getting a divorce she could propose to the husband that he should marry his latest flame as well. Although we have only scanty information as to the result of such experiments, I am convinced that they must have been excellent correctives for the husband.

A feature which may not seem so attractive from the Western point of view, but which was important to the Polynesians, was that polygamy made it possible for several women to be married to an especially high-born sought-after chief. All the indications are that most women of noble birth preferred to marry a chief of high position, even if he had several wives already, than a nobleman of lower rank who was a bachelor.

The many stories of wives who themselves, for one reason or another, proposed to their husbands that they should take another wife, afford another eloquent proof that a Polynesian woman saw nothing humiliating and irrational in living in polygamy. Handy says of conditions in Hawaii: 'A wife might say to her husband, "I love my cousin so much that I do not want her to go away, so you take her for your wife", and to the cousin she might say, "Eia no ka kua kane", or "Let him be our husband". The children of one were the children of the others' (4.8, P. 276).

Mistake number three: Jealousy and quarrels were the order of the day in all polygamous marriages.

'There was once a chief who admired a famous beauty and decided to pay court to her. When his wives heard this they advised him to make a careful toilet, as he had many rivals, and worked a new girdle and plaited a sweet-scented wreath of flowers for him. . . .' So begins an old Tongan story, and as might be expected the chief finally won the fair lady's hand. A magnificent wedding took place, after which he and all the other wives lived happily and cheerfully together, till death parted them.

Even if the old stories, as their way is, exaggerate a little, there is no doubt that jealousy among the different wives in the polygynous marriages was very rare. The prevalence of jealousy among us is obviously due to the exclusive sexual monopoly owned by two married persons. There was no such exclusiveness in Polynesia, as all married people had connections with certain definite persons such as brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, sworn brothers, sworn brothers' wives, etc. A woman, therefore, was already accustomed to her husband having sexual intercourse with other women, and as she did not demand of her husband absolute fidelity outside the home, there was no reason for her to demand it in the home. The absence of sexual jealousy in the Polynesian polygamous marriages is thus only a logical consequence of the general view of sex life.

There was often, however, a kind of socially determined jealousy. A woman might be bitterly envious if her husband took a wife of higher rank, as this diminished her own power and prestige in the household, and her children lost their privileges. On the other hand, it was a downright insult if the new wife was of too low birth. A New Zealand authority on the Maori tribes tells of a chief who one day married a slave girl despite the protests of the wife he already had. Next day wife number one, who was of noble birth, took wife number two on a fishing expedition, and when she returned she was alone. Her husband was not slow to understand the delicate hint, and took care in future not to bring home any more slave girls.

Although jealousy was rare, this did not mean that all the problems of co-existence were disposed of. Quarrels and disturbances were naturally bound to occur in families where there were so many possible causes of friction as in a big Polynesian family. To remove, or at least reduce, controversy between the different wives the Polynesians had made a number of cunning arrangements, of which the four following are worthy of mention:

1. The wives were placed in order of rank.
2. Work was divided between them.
3. They had separate houses or sleeping places.
4. The husband visited them in turn.

The benefits of this arrangement are easily seen. The wives being placed in order of rank, and this, according to Polynesian ideas, depending on birth, each wife's position was fixed once for all. The struggle for power which would certainly have raged if all the wives had been in a position of complete equality from the beginning was thus avoided. The wife of highest rank directed the work of the household and passed on the husband's orders, which were obeyed as a matter of course. But the custom which best shows how profoundly the Polynesians understood the special problems created by polygamy was that of giving each wife a house, or at least a sleeping place, of her own, where the husband regularly spent so many nights with her according to a programme drawn up in advance.

The chief reason for the failure of the Mormons' celebrated attempt at polygamy during the latter half of the nineteenth century appears to have been that they entirely overlooked the practical and psychological difficulties. A recently published study of the Mormon marriages in America shows that all four of the Polynesian precautionary measures enumerated above had been neglected. In the Mormon marriages the husbands crowded all their wives together in a dwelling which most often was too small, exhorted them to regard one another as sisters, did not allot each wife any special work, and finally committed the sin, unforgivable in polygamy, of having a special favourite. If the Mormons had studied beforehand the conditions in any of the many Indian tribes round about them which practised polygamy, their experiment would certainly have been a good deal more successful.

As in so many other respects, the Marquesas Islands occupied a special position in regard to family conditions. While everywhere else in Polynesia the preferred form of polygamy, was polygyny, the Marquesans were markedly addicted to polyandry. The exception is all the more remarkable seeing that polyandry is an extremely rare form of marriage in other continents also, whereas about 80 per cent of the peoples of the world allow polygynous marriage.

M. K. Opler, who has made a critical study of all alleged cases of polyandry, sums up by saying that polyandry has been reported to be the general form of marriage among two peoples only, the Toda tribe and the Marquesans. And as regards the Toras it is, according to Rivers, doubtful whether the cases in which the husbands were not brothers can be regarded as polyandry at all.

This account certainly presents a very different picture to the previous quotes and, while still lacking the vital component of recognition of the Creator God, Yahweh and His Son Jesus Christ and without the Holy Scriptures to guide them we see a form of life which is in many respects more readily recognizable as being scriptural than is the case in many instances of enforced monogamous marriages in Western Society.

TABLE OF SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

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INDEX OF KEY WORDS

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THE SCRIPTURAL DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

1 Timothy 4:1-3 states:

- 1 *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,*
- 2 *speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,*
- 3 *forbidding to marry (NKJ)*

This book provides a comprehensive scriptural analysis of what the Word of God really says about marriage, divorce, adultery and related subjects. It takes particular account of 1 Corinthians 6:9 and other scriptures which clearly indicate that adulterers will not inherit the kingdom of God and offers a comprehensive scriptural analysis of the scriptural definition of fornication, adultery, marriage and divorce. The book clearly shows that the act of sexual intercourse with a virgin IS the ACT of marriage and that the marriage covenant is cut in the virgin flesh (hymen) of the woman.

In 1 Samuel 13:14, Samuel, speaking to Saul, declares David to be a man after THE LORD'S "own heart". In 1 Samuel 25:42-44 we see that subsequent to this David took two wives in addition to the wife that he already had. In 2 Samuel 5:13, we see that David took further wives. Yet in 2 Samuel 12:7-8, after God sent Nathan the prophet to David to rebuke David for his adultery with Bathsheba we see that God says that HE gave David Saul's wives. In 1 Kings 15:5 we read that AFTER David's death, scripture STILL say's that David had done right in the sight of God. In fact, we find at least fourteen (14) instances in the books of Kings and Chronicles where we are told subsequent to his death that David "did right in the eyes of THE LORD all the days of his life".

Subsequently, about one thousand years after David's death, God, speaking through Paul, reported in Acts 13:21-23, confirms that David was a "man after THE LORD'S own heart" and from David's seed God raised up for Israel a Saviour (Jesus):

- 22 *"... 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'*
- 23 *"From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Saviour-- Jesus-- (NKJ)*

Here we see that despite his approximately eleven wives and ten concubines and despite a number of errors of which David was quick to repent, God referred to David as "a man after His own heart" about one thousand years after David's death! Surely it is utter foolishness to suggest that David was an adulterer for having more than one wife, as some have done? This book presents a comprehensive analysis of scripture to demonstrate that it is indeed GOD'S OWN HEART that a man should have more than one wife! It also demonstrates that Isaiah 4:1 indeed applies to this age:

- 1 *And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach." (NKJ)*

Finally, from a variety of secular references the book provides some clues as to how the heresy of enforced monogamy came into existence in the Christian church and why this heresy is such an important part of Satan's plan to prevent the return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This is a challenging book which requires the reader to set aside all preconceived ideas and put THE WORD OF GOD FIRST.

If you are truly committed to serving THE LORD YOUR GOD with ALL your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength (Mark 12:30), this is a book you cannot afford not to read.

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Note: Please refer to the **Caveat on page xii** and the section on **Vocabulary on page xv** for cautions regarding doctrine and word usage in the older eBooks that is inaccurate. Apart from these errors these eBooks contain much valuable information.

eBook 5:
The Responsibility of Believing Men
Towards Single Believing Women -
Published in 1999

This eBook presents a discussion of some key principles
relating to the reality that
there are far more women than men in the body of true believers.

What is advocated here is very challenging and
I have found it to be almost impossible to apply in practice.

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED
AS A BASIS OF DISCUSSION WITH THOSE
DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH SITUATIONS
INVOLVING SINGLE, MATURE, DEVOTED CHRISTIAN WOMEN
WHO ARE DESPERATE ABOUT THEIR LOT
IT IS THE CULMINATION OF YEARS OF BIBLE STUDY
PRAYER, QUESTIONING AND LIFE EXPERIENCE AND LIFE OBSERVATION
NEVERTHELESS, AT THIS STAGE
IT PROBABLY RAISES MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS
AND IT MAKES NO CLAIM TO BE COMPREHENSIVE
THEREFORE, PLEASE SIFT WHAT IS WRITTEN AND,
IF YOU FIND THAT IT IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH
YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE,
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO LET ME KNOW
I LOOK FORWARD TO LEARNING MORE WITH YOUR HELP

**A PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE
ON THE SCRIPTURAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CHRISTIAN MEN
TOWARDS UNMARRIED CHRISTIAN WOMEN
IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST:**

(AFTER YEARS OF SEEKING GOD ON THE SUBJECT)

A scriptural review of Ruth in 1999

AN END TIME ISSUES PUBLICATION

***"Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem:
Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be
established;
believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."....***

***...."Praise the Lord,
For His mercy endures forever."***

2 Chronicles 20:20,21

SCRIPTURE GIVEN TO ME WHEN I ASKED GOD IF HE REALLY WANTED ME TO WRITE THIS

MARK 7:

7 *"In vain (fruitlessly and without profit) do they worship Me, ordering and teaching [to be obeyed] as doctrines the commandments and precepts of men. [Isa 29:13]*

8 *You disregard and give up and ask to depart from you the commandment of God and cling to the tradition of men [keeping it carefully and faithfully].*

9 *And He said to them, You have a fine way of rejecting [thus thwarting and nullifying and doing away with] the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition (your own human regulations)!"
(Amplified Bible)*

1. INTRODUCTION

This document has come about in response to a specific situation which is, in turn the culmination of years of intensive Bible Study, prayer and Spirit Led observation since I first became concerned about the level of Divorce in the Church and the extent of distress of single Christian women.

When I first cried out to God to ask Him "Why is there so much divorce", I had no idea of the magnitude of the problem both spiritually and in the "natural". Nearly four years later I continue to obtain

additional insight, sometimes on an almost daily basis. While diagnosing the spiritual, doctrinal and carnal roots of the problem is one thing, formulating a technical response to the problem is considerably more challenging. **Reaching a point where an approach can be identified which leads to practical, faith filled action is a far greater challenge.** At this stage, this document will only go so far as to suggest the broad, scripturally correct action that is indicated, considerably more experience with the practical application of these scriptures will be required before it is possible to write more than theoretically about the practical aspects.

This document is my first attempt to set in writing for comment a small fraction of what I have seen in this study. **It is prepared in response to a specific set of circumstances and is by no means intended as a general document to be applied by any person who happens to lay their hands on a copy.**

There are numerous issues of a social, religious and legal nature which are inevitably confronted by the interpretation presented in this document of which I am aware. Some of which I have answers for. There are many for which I do not have answers at this time but have no doubt that God does. No doubt there are many other factors which I am not even aware of at this time. Many other answers can be obtained from the God's Free Men and Women internet web site at bfree.org.

At the same time I have no doubt that this document is the beginning of a work in the Church of Jesus Christ to remove what seems to me to be perhaps the biggest single doctrinal blemish on the "Bride of Christ" that must be dealt with before the return of THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. As such, this is an intensely serious and heavy teaching. I appeal to all readers to address this document with the seriousness and reverence that the subject deserves.

As you read further, please consider that it is possible that more people are being spiritually destroyed on the earth daily through ramifications of this teaching, which I will not even attempt to address in this document, than through any other area of dark ages doctrine that remains in the church today!

2. SOME KEY SCRIPTURES WITH REGARD TO THIS INTERPRETATION

In presenting this interpretation it is essential that we recognize some key scriptures which indirectly relate to interpretation of contentious scriptures such as those that follow.

As indicated in the focus block above, before I started writing this document I was seeking a final confirmation that God really wanted this document written now. Having prayed, I opened a Bible at random and found myself confronted with Mark 7:7 to 9:

"In vain (fruitlessly and without profit) do they worship Me, ordering and teaching [to be obeyed] as doctrines the commandments and precepts of men. [Isa 29:13]

8 *You disregard and give up and ask to depart from you the commandment of God and cling to the tradition of men [keeping it carefully and faithfully].*

9 *And He said to them, You have a fine way of rejecting [thus thwarting and nullifying and doing away with] the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition (your own human regulations)!"*
(Amplified Bible)

Having assimilated what the Lord was saying to me through these scriptures I finally confronted a key issue that was proving a stumbling block to my understanding of what I was to write in this document. In God's sight, the issue is one of men accepting their God given responsibility towards women. I have no doubt that it is a responsibility for which we will be judged if we fail.

As I continued with my bible reading the scriptures which say that if we love God we will keep His commandments (1 John 5:3) came to mine. I also found myself reading Jesus' rebuke to the Pharisees and Lawyers in Luke 11:39-54 and realized that He almost certainly would express himself at least as strongly with regard to the issues addressed in this document. I also saw afresh verse 53 and 54 with regard to the scribes and Pharisees being "enraged with and set themselves violently against Him" and realized that the opposition that I have met in seeking to discuss some of these issues with Christian leaders was no different.

Jesus sees things so differently to us most of the time, a fact that we ignore at our peril.

3. TARGET SITUATION

This document seeks to address a very specific target situation:

The responsibility of mature, sincere, committed Christian men who truly fear God and desire to do His will towards similarly mature, devout and committed Christian women who do not have a husband, have been crying out for a husband and whose lives are being destroyed as a consequence of their difficulty of coping with their situation and the resultant attacks that Satan is making on them. Such men should also have a real burden for women in this situation and be aware of a specific situation which they truly believe that God has brought to their attention.

It is recognized that there are an enormous number of additional men and women to whom this teaching theoretically applies, however, under current social and church circumstances, it is doubtful whether people who do not satisfy the above conditions will have any hope at all of surviving the religious and demonic onslaught which will almost certainly follow a decision to act on this teaching. My wife and I have been through a time of intense testing, trial and tribulation over several years getting to a point where we can seriously say "Father your will not our will be done". Nevertheless, "all things are possible with God" and He is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all we can ask or imagine.

It is also important to understand that the spiritual consequences of putting this teaching into effect are enormous. Acting on this teaching without a clear understanding of the spiritual consequences and how to deal with them could be tantamount to signing a warrant for your own spiritual destruction. This is NOT about sexual licence and promiscuity as some might claim, it IS about a critical end time responsibility of awesome eternal significance!

4. SUMMARY

The essence of this document is summarized by three scriptures:

RUTH 3:9 (Amp) "..... And she answered, I am Ruth your maidservant. Spread your wing (of protection) over your maidservant, for you are next of kin." That is "please marry me", refer also 1 Corinthians 11:5 & 8-10, Ephesians 5:23-26.

ISAIAH 4:1 (Amp) "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by your name to take away our reproach [of being unmarried]". That is there will be seven women saying "please marry us" for every man in the Church of true believers (refer rest of Isaiah 4).

EXODUS 21:10 (NAS) "And if he takes to himself another woman, he may not reduce her food, her clothing, or her conjugal rights." This refers to the rights of an existing wife when a man takes an additional wife even if the existing wife is a slave, maidservant or concubine.

The nett effect of these three scriptures, as I currently understand them after all the Bible Study, prayer and spiritual and practical observation of my entire life to date, is therefore quite simply that any single Christian woman who is under attack from the enemy and needs the protection of a Godly husband will in all likelihood find that she is competing with many other women for any unmarried Godly man that she may meet and will only find a husband by asking an already married man to take her under his wing as a second, or subsequent, wife. Furthermore, by extension of the scriptures in the book of Ruth, it appears that the man (and therefore his existing wife) has a serious obligation to honour such a request subject to prayerful seeking of God and mature discussion between all three parties involved.

In the sections that follow I will endeavour to develop the scriptural basis of the above summary and thereafter will seek to set out some of the consequences and practical implications of this teaching, as best I understand them at this time. In doing this, I am woefully conscious of my own limitations in terms of my ability to hear God clearly and to discern His true will with regard to this situation in a religious environment which I have repeatedly found to be intensely hostile to any discussion around this topic. Satan is dragging millions of men and women into hell with him and he is not about to give up this battle without a fight. There is no doubt that he will constantly seek to infiltrate deception and error into the lives and teachings of any person who seeks to address this topic. I therefore encourage readers to be constantly vigilant, to test all that is written here against the Word of God and to pray at all times in the Spirit without ceasing while considering what follows.

5. ELABORATION ON INTERPRETATION OF RUTH 3:9

This verse reads in part "*..... And she answered, I am Ruth your maidservant. Spread your wing (of protection) over your maidservant, for you are next of kin.*"

The context of this verse is one of Ruth, a Moabite woman who had married a Hebrew sojourner in her land. Her husband, his father and his brother all die and Ruth is left a widow with her mother-in-law Naomi and returns to Israel with her, declaring that "your people shall be my people and your God my God" (Ruth 1:16). This acceptance by Ruth of the God of Israel and the people of Israel, thus forsaking her gentile inheritance is a clear type of any person accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as saviour and wholeheartedly adopting the Christian faith. From other verses we gather that Ruth had not made a shallow decision but an uncompromising decision to "go all the way". She left her family and native land and adopted and complied with the social practices of her adopted faith and land. In fact, Ruth is so esteemed in the sight of God that she became the mother of Obed, the father of Jesse the father of King David and thus her name is recorded for eternity in the genealogy of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ!

On this basis, we must accept that the steps taken by Ruth, a widow, to seek the protection of Boaz, a "near kinsman" is entirely appropriate and correct in the sight of God. She was not being forward when she approached Boaz, she was acting in accordance with laid down scriptural protocol in accordance with Deuteronomy 25:5-10.

The interpretation of this verse of scripture is very eloquently presented by William Schnoebelen in his book "Masonry, Beyond the Light". I quote verbatim from pages 230-232:

"HEADSHIP

"Paul teaches that the 'head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man' (1 Corinthians 11:3). This is how men and women are created by God. Two other key verses in this passage tell us:

'But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as is she were shaven...For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. 1 Corinthians 11:5, 8-10

"Although this is a rather deep passage, it is not too deep that it cannot be interpreted by turning to the Bible itself for help. The first part is clearer. The husband is to be the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. Paul clarifies this principle elsewhere, telling us:

'For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. Ephesians 5:23-26

"It is not a question of the husband 'lording it over' the wife as much as it is the husband giving himself up for his wife, laying down his life for her as Jesus did for the church. This is not a permit for abusive behaviour on the part of husbands in any way, shape or form. The wife must be submitted to the husband, but the husband must be Christ-like in his care and devotion to the wife. He must be the channel through which the Holy Spirit can 'sanctify and cleanse' his wife.

"TO SPREAD YOUR COVERING

"The last part of the passage quoted above is the most puzzling. What does 'For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels' mean? This verse, and the ones preceding it, have often been interpreted with total literalness, to the extent that women have felt obliged to wear veils or hats to church.

"However, the word here is 'power', which obviously means more than a veil. If we stand aside and let the Bible interpret this passage, it all becomes clear. In Ruth 3:8-9, we find the elegant Hebrew custom to which Paul is referring:

'And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid: for thou art a near kinsman.

"Ruth is asking Boaz, her near kinsman, to marry her out of obligation to his dead relation, Mahlon, her former husband. For him to cover her with his skirt was a way of saying that he would marry her, taking her under the mantle of his protection, even as we, the church, are under the mantle of Jesus' protection.'

"When a Godly man marries a woman, he takes 'power' over her because of the angels. Which angels are being referred to is unclear. Some say they are not good angels, but fallen angels, which might attack or tempt the wife, Others say they are good angels who are scandalized by seeing a wife out from under the authority of her husband.

"Although we cannot be certain, I prefer the first explanation, especially since there are two other places in scripture which seem to indicate that fallen angels might be very dangerous to unprotected women (Genesis 6:2, Jude 6-7). Thus, it is the duty of the man to provide a spiritual covering for his wife.

"Why is this? Because it is the way the Lord made the marriage relationship. It is the way men and women are put together, In a good, Christian marriage, the husband is the covering for the wife -- her shepherd, her 'lightning rod', if you will. He takes all the flak for her, even as Jesus did for us. He should be both a unique font of blessing for her and her strong protector from attack, whether spiritual or physical."

I have no doubt that the above interpretation is substantially correct, I have independently encountered a teaching by Benny Hinn on "Demons and Devils" which makes a related point about Genesis 6:2-6 referring to fallen angels taking on their human form and having sexual intercourse with women, thus giving rise to the race of giants of which Goliath was one of the last. It is these same angels which are referred to in Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4 "*For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgement.*"

Genesis 6:2-5 reads:

"The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair, and they took wives of all they desired and chose. Then the Lord said, My Spirit shall not forever dwell and strive with man, for he also is flesh; but his days shall yet be 120 years. There were giants on the earth in those days -- and also afterward -- when the sons of God lived with the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination and intention of all human thinking was only evil continually."

It seems that there are a reasonably large number of believers who accept that the term "sons of God" refers to angels and that the passage above therefore refers to fallen angels marrying women. One teaching holds that since Satan realized that the only way that God could regain dominion over the earth legally was for the Messiah to be born of a woman and that, by instructing his fallen angels to marry as many women as possible he could corrupt the blood line so completely that it would not be possible for a sinless man to be born of woman. According to this interpretation Noah and his sons were the only remaining men on earth who were genetically and spiritually uncontaminated by this impregnation, hence the need for the flood to destroy all other humans. Apparently one or more of Noah's sons wives was not pure and that was how the giants propagated after the flood and why Israel had to completely destroy them when they came out of Egypt and why David's victory over Goliath was so significant.

According to this interpretation, once an angel has sinned by having intercourse with a human woman he is cast into chains for the day of judgement as referred to in Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4. As a consequence, Satan's compliment of angels was seriously diminished and he could not afford to again try this avenue. Presumably this does not prevent him from trying again at the end of the age should he conclude that there is benefit to be gained. Something like this may be a prerequisite for the birth of the "beast" of Revelation but this is outside the scope of this document.

In this light, the responsibility of Christian men to provide covering to Christian women in these last days becomes of greater significance if we take account of the level of deception that is expected to accompany the end of the age.

General observation of daily occurrences also indicate that many unmarried Christian women become desperate about not having a husband and often fall into the trap of marrying unsaved husbands who frequently abuse them. This leads to immense suffering, sometimes to backsliding and often to divorce. Others fall victim to their sexual needs and find themselves repeatedly succumbing to the advances of men who take advantage of their vulnerable position. Many Christian women in this situation become desperately unhappy.

In continuing with our analysis of Ruth, it is important to note that at no point is there an indication whether Boaz already had a wife and it will be apparent from Exodus 21:10 that this is not a relevant

question. Since scripture explicitly permits a man to take more than one wife there was no need for Boaz to be unmarried and, in fact, careful scriptural analysis indicates that it is probably highly unlikely that he was unmarried.

We should furthermore note that there was another man who was a closer kinsman than Boaz but that he declined to marry Ruth because she was a Moabitess, prohibited by Deuteronomy 23:3 & 4. From this we observe a degree of discretion on the part of the person who was technically the first in line who, on the grounds of a scriptural constraint, chose to decline to perform the required service. Note that Deuteronomy 25:5-10 lays down a serious reproach for the man who declines to perform this duty without scriptural grounds:

"But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him; and if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,' then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.' And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'"

Clearly, refusing to marry such a woman is not a decision to be taken lightly.

As a counterpoint, it is apparent that the application of these scriptures in these days cannot be taken entirely literally. However, Paul in 1 Timothy 5:11 & 12 states:

"Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some have already turned aside after Satan."

We see the same principle, with the same implication of entry for Satan carried into the New Covenant, again with no indication that Paul foresaw the possibility of there not being enough unmarried men to go round. The implication again being that the fact that a man was already married did not prevent him from marrying a widow in order to give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

Again, in 1 Corinthians 7:8 & 9, Paul states:

"But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; [unmarried] but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry, For it is better to marry than to burn with passion."

It is clear that nowhere in scripture does God envisage women being forced to remain unmarried.

In 1 Corinthians 7:39-40, Paul goes on to state:

"A wife is bound to her husband by law as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she will, only [provided that he too is] in the Lord. But in my opinion [a widow] is happier (more blessed and to be envied) if she does not remarry. And also I think I have the Spirit of God."

Here we observe Paul expressing his personal opinion that a widow and presumably a legitimately divorced woman, will be happier if they remain single. The implication is clearly that there are

women who will be happier in this state and therefore, by extension, it would seem that the principle of covering is not a rigid spiritual requirement.

We also observe a clear instruction that if she is to remarry the man she marries must also be a believer. This is a qualification inherent in the passages in Deuteronomy and Ruth cited earlier. Clearly Ephesians 5:22-33 can only apply if husband and wives are believers. Accordingly we must again deduce that all that we have studied here indicates the necessary implication that a woman must marry a believing man who already has a wife or wives rather than marry an unbeliever.

In the light of all the above, there can be no doubt that God intended, and in fact almost requires, all adult women to be married (joined) to a believing husband

6. ELABORATION ON INTERPRETATION OF ISAIAH 4:1

This verse reads ***"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by your name to take away our reproach [of being unmarried]"***.

In interpreting this verse of scripture there are a number of factors to take into account.

Firstly, the question arises as to the time period which is referred to as "that day". Isaiah 4:2 states that:

"In that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be excellent and lovely to those of Israel who have escaped."

It seems to be generally accepted that the reference to the "Branch of the Lord" relates to the Messiah and therefore to the end of the age. In principle, it would appear that this passage relates to the millennium which many agree is nearly upon us and that the escape may refer to the coming tribulation although there are others who hold that the current spiritual upheavals may already constitute the beginning of the "great tribulation". It does not seem necessary to enter into a detailed analysis of this issue, suffice it to say that Isaiah 4 clearly refers to the end of the age and therefore to a date and time which is many thousands of years closer to us today than it was to Isaiah. I am personally strongly persuaded that God is saying that this time is at hand and that the church is being confronted with the Isaiah 4:1 situation right now.

On a simplistic note, there are probably very few Christian leaders who would deny that there are many more committed and devout Christian women in their congregations than men and also few who would deny that those women are struggling to find Christian husbands, that many are marrying "unbelievers" and that many are facing tremendous suffering as a result. On a casual observation basis, I have observed congregations where the ratio of women to men in the congregation has, I estimate, ranged from 2 to 1 to 10 to 1. While the overall ratio today may not be exactly 7 to 1 it is probably not far off.

The footnote to Isaiah 4:1 in the Amplified Bible refers to Jerusalem and Isaiah 4:3 refers to Zion and Jerusalem, other verses in the proximity also refer to Jerusalem. Most authorities seem to agree that references to Zion and Jerusalem in end time prophecy, particularly in Revelation, are types of the body of "true believers" whereas Babylon represents carnal Christians who are not really committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and who will fall away in the coming tribulation. **It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that the ratio of seven women to one man relates to sincere, devout and committed Christians, those who are prepared to take up their cross and follow Him, no matter what the cost.**

If this interpretation is correct then, viewed in the light of the previous section on covering, it is apparent that sincere, devout and committed Christian women face an enormous challenge finding a husband. It is equally apparent that the eternal implications of effectively addressing the implications of this teaching AND IMPLEMENTING THEM in the body of Christ is an enormously important challenge.

Isaiah chapter 3 refers to the immoral and improper conduct of the women of Jerusalem. Isaiah 3:16-17 states:

"Moreover, the Lord said, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with outstretched necks and with undisciplined (flirtatious and alluring) eyes, tripping along with mincing and affected gait, and making a tinkling noise with [the anklets on] their feet. Therefore the Lord will smite...."

Much of the latter part of the chapter is in similar vein, clearly referring to the age in which we currently live where there is a seemingly complete disregard for modesty even among women within the church. A casual visit to most churches in the area where I live will reveal many women who in broad terms conform to this description. In the same vein, it seems quite possible that the level of affliction being experienced by many women is because, at some time in their lives, they have been guilty of such sin and that the smiting that is referred to is what they have been or are going through. It would seem that the process of cleansing and dying to self and dying to the world referred to in Isaiah 3 may be a necessary precursor to any person entering the era of spiritual blessing referred to in Isaiah 4. **If this interpretation is correct, this would suggest that much of what is presented in this document should only be applied to women who have reached a level of spiritual maturity in Christ to be responsible wives within the context of this teaching.**

In the analysis of Exodus 21:10 I will further discuss the marital implications of Isaiah 4:1 but it is important to note that the terms and conditions for taking another wife, which are set out in Exodus 21:10, that is that the food, clothing and marital privileges of the first wife are not diminished, are echoed in Isaiah 4:1 with the important distinction that the potential second and subsequent wives will waive any requirement for provision of food and clothing and will only request marital privileges.

This accords with current reality where many of the women to whom Isaiah 4:1 would apply in this generation already have their own house and a job that provides all their material needs. What they lack is the spiritual covering of a husband and all that goes with it.

7. ELABORATION ON INTERPRETATION OF EXODUS 21:10

This verse reads *"And if he takes to himself another woman, he may not reduce her food, her clothing, or her conjugal rights."*

This verse of scripture, together with many others and the analysis provided in previous sections of this document clearly overrules the widely held doctrinal view that Jesus in some fashion during His three and a half years of ministry prohibited polygamous marriages. This doctrine has its roots in the rule of Justinian in about 600 AD where, after marrying a reformed prostitute who is reported to have been very dominant and would therefore seem to have had a Jezebel spirit, he issued a proclamation banning plural marriage. With this established, it is possible to complete the interpretation of Ruth 3:9 at a first level of interpretation.

As noted above, the terms and conditions for taking another wife, which are set out in Exodus 21:10, that is that the food, clothing and marital privileges of the first wife are not diminished, are echoed in

Isaiah 4:1 with the important distinction that the potential second and subsequent wives will waive any requirement for provision of food and clothing and will only request marital privileges which according to my current understanding would include:

a. THE RIGHT TO CALL HERSELF WIFE AND TO TAKE HIS NAME

This implies that she will receive sexual favour in order to establish and develop the one flesh bond. This is an area where there are potentially significant challenges in terms of marital adjustment for the existing wife and also in terms of working within social standards, etc.

Interestingly, the new South African constitution recognizes all forms of tribal / customary marriages as well as Islamic (polygamous) marriages, etc. Accordingly it is apparently now legally possible for a man to legally take more than one wife supported by the constitution, subject only to the requirement that he has some basis to cite customary precedent or has adopted a particular customary base.

The practical cohabitation arrangements are also challenging but there are a variety of scriptures which give us an indication of the arrangements that existed in Bible times. In particular, each wife had her own tent, etc. There are also models around the world in this generation that have been documented which provide a basis for adapting these scriptures to our time.

Accordingly, this is not an insurmountable problem.

b. FELLOWSHIP, COMPANIONSHIP AND RELATED PRIVILEGES

A woman in such a situation would clearly want to fulfil her role as a home maker, wife and mother. In part, the models referred to in the previous section address this matter, however the issues around a number of women living in close fellowship with one another and their husband presents additional challenges. Note, however, that they become one flesh and that Numbers chapter 5 clearly states that jealousy is the prerogative of a husband if his wife commits adultery NOT of a wife. Accordingly, with appropriate deliverance, spiritual insight, commitment to resolving difficulties and ABOVE ALL love of God and desire to please Him, I have no doubt that these problems can be overcome. There is much that I could write on this subject but, at this time, time does not permit.

The application of these points in practice will, no doubt, be immensely challenging in terms of our current paradigm of marriage but I have no doubt that with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and provided all participants, and particularly the husband, are submitted to Christ and all wives are fully submitted to their husband these challenges will be overcome.

Note also that the Greek word "*gunè*" is variously translated "*woman*", "*wife*", "*women*" and "*wives*". Vines and other reference works indicate clearly that there is only one word for wife, wives, woman and women. The reason for this is that there was no such thing as an unmarried adult woman in Jesus day, only women (married), widows (presumably includes legitimately divorced women) and harlots. Equally, *gunè* does not expressly denote singular or plural in the same way that "*church*" does not denote singular or plural and thus the parallel between marriage and the church, stated so clearly in Ephesians 5:22-33 is exactly completed.

It is interesting to note that the number seven (7) in Isaiah 4:1 is the number of perfection and completion whereas six (6) is the number of man. If the issue of multiple wives in this generation were a carnal issue, as many would suggest, it is reasonable to expect that God would use the number six

in Isaiah 4:1. The fact that He uses seven, the number of perfection and completeness suggests that there is a depth of human relationship in marriage that we cannot begin to comprehend, provided it is accomplished in a Spirit Led, Christ focused manner in which all participants seek to live lives pleasing to God, to lay down their lives for Him and each other, to take up their crosses and to love one another as they would be loved.

Given the strength of the "one-flesh bond", refer my document on "Poverty in the Church of Jesus Christ" for more information, it is possible to imagine that one man and seven women who are one flesh and in perfect unity and harmony would be a formidable spiritual unit on earth, something against which the enemy would truly not be able to stand and undoubtedly a major factor why Satan has so ruthlessly lied about and opposed plural marriage since the days of Justinian in about 600 AD.

It is also important to recognize that in Revelation 1-3 reference is made to seven churches. Apparently Jesus is married to a bride with seven major components, each of which has distinct strengths and weaknesses, each of them He reproves and corrects and to each of them He offers eternal life in victory with particular rewards if they overcome and endure to the end. It seems quite possible that Isaiah 4:1 foreshadows this parallel on earth in an era where men will truly learn to live together in unity and the church will come into unity. It seems to me that many of the lessons which are necessary for a man to live in unity and harmony with seven wives in this generation are probably similar to the lessons that the church must learn to live together in unity. Rick Joyner makes it clear that it is only once the church comes into unity that victory over the enemy is gained. Clearly God did not provide the intimate parallel in Ephesians 5:31-33 for nothing. Marriage is an earthly type of our relationship with Christ. If we cannot live in marriage as He would have us live, we cannot begin to understand how to achieve the fullness of what is possible in our relationship with Him. The harmonious seven wife marriage may turn out to be the single most significant prerequisite to the church operating in "greater works" than Jesus did?

It is also interesting to note that people all exhibit very different giftings, emotional, physical and other responses. It is therefore possible to envisage a situation where a group of women who have been brought to one husband by the Holy Spirit will find that they complement one another in such a wonderful way that the whole is truly greater than sum of it's parts.

8. SOME REMARKS ON INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION

In closing this document at this time, there are a few general remarks which come to mind, some of a spiritual nature and some carnal.

a. IS THIS NOT A CARNAL PLOT?

Having been accused by various parties of expressing interest in this subject as a consequence of lust or carnality, I found myself trying to justify to myself why this was not the case. The analysis of Ruth 3:9, presented in section suddenly eliminated that argument. **The topic has nothing to do with your or my carnality, it has everything to do with the disregard of man for the commandments of God.** As this sank in, I began to see clearly for perhaps the first time the significance of Rick Joyner's comment in "The Final Quest" when he remarks during his account of his judgement experience when he was transported to the third heaven to the effect that he **realized that most of the things he had done right in his life he had done for the wrong reasons and most of the things he had done wrong he had done for the right reasons.**

Men have been hammered for so long to believe that they can only marry one woman that they have been totally blinded to the scriptures which clearly demonstrate that woman require a

covering. Having regard for Isaiah 4:1 it is vital to recognize that God would almost certainly have used the number six in this verse if the subject of this document were carnal!

b. WHAT ABOUT AIDS?

I have been asked about AIDS, etc. Clearly, in the light of Isaiah 3 many of the women who are referred to in Isaiah 4:1 will not be virgins. Some may have been forced into fornication as a result of their spiritual and sexual needs. The need for such unions to come about at the leading of the Holy Spirit is therefore an important consideration. In practice, existing parties to a marriage may want to take the precaution of an AIDS test but, given the dormant nature of the virus this is no substitute for prayer.

c. ONE FLESH, BLOOD LINE AND OTHER FACTORS

Of far more significance than AIDS are the spiritual factors of which AIDS is, in a sense, a physical warning. A woman who has had previous sexual encounters will bring with her existing one flesh bonds, blood line curses and other spiritual roots and forces inherited from every one of her sexual partners. If these are not dealt with, some of them before remarriage, the husband could find himself an adulterer joined to many other men and women, an abomination in the sight of God and an open cheque book for Satan to attack the family and take it apart.

A variety of spiritual hygiene factors will have to be addressed before marriage can take place. In particular, the husband must satisfy himself completely that the woman is free to marry in the SIGHT OF GOD.

We have recently ministered to a woman who was seduced under hypnosis in her late teens by a man who has shadowed her throughout her life and has been a born again believer for decades, he is now in his late fifties. Following an intensive six hours of Holy Spirit led discussion and counselling, the woman was shown that this was the man who had seduced her and the Lord gave us Deuteronomy 22:28-29 which tells us that if a man seduces a virgin without her fathers' consent that man "may not divorce her all his days". In terms of this scripture, this woman had lived most of her life in adultery and God, in His mercy, had brought her true husband back to her to fulfil his husbandly duties after her legal so-called marriage had broken down. Clearly another man marrying her would have also been committing adultery.

Any man planning to marry such a woman must ensure that she is truly a "widow" and that God has broken all one flesh bonds. In my understanding of scripture and practical experience, praying to break one flesh bonds is to no avail if God has not permitted the bond to be broken. If he has not, the couple would be committing adultery and Revelation 21:8 makes it quite clear that they will both experience the second death and burn in hell for eternity. We thus see a counterpoint of two critical spiritual issues of eternal significance - the need of a woman for a Godly husband and covering against the requirement not to commit adultery. The Holy Spirit must be the only source of guidance and the final arbiter in such cases.

d. PSYCHOLOGICAL AND OTHER ISSUES

Almost every person coming into such a relationship will have experienced deep soul hurts and psychological traumas during their life to that point. As much as these factors can destroy a monogamous marriage they will certainly afford the potential to destroy a multiple wife marriage. Appropriate techniques exist for dealing with these issues and they should be addressed without delay at an early stage in the marriage or even before marriage.

Note that delaying marriage beyond a certain point is not desirable since the principal objective is to provide a spiritual covering. Only the Lord can indicate when it is time to consummate the marriage.

e. UNITY

As discussed in the document on Poverty, a man and wife who are in disagreement give Satan fertile ground to attack them financially and possibly in other ways. With several wives the need for unity becomes much more challenging. Again, the Holy Spirit must bring the couple together and the entire marriage unit must submit to Christ.

In this context scriptures such as Proverbs 12:4, 14:1, 18:22, 19:13, 23:27, 25:24, 27:15 and 31:10 are of critical reference. A disgraceful wife is indeed like rottenness in the bones, it is indeed better to dwell on the corner of a roof top than with a contentious, quarrelsome and fault finding wife, etc. But a wife of noble character IS her husband's crown. Every wife has the opportunity to build up her husband and therefore herself since they are one flesh or to break him and herself down.

Again we see the need for God to be the author of the union together with an ongoing need for robust submission to the Word of God. It is probably fair to say that a woman coming into such a relationship who chose to depart from the Word of God on an ongoing basis would be betraying her covenant with her husband, thereby committing "*porneia*" the only basis on which Jesus permitted divorce in Matthew 5 and 19. This should be made an explicit condition to any subsequent wife in order that there is a clear outlet in the event of her failing to honour her commitment to her new husband. Again, only God can determine whether such actions would give rise to a situation in which the husband was entitled to divorce one of his wives and we can take Hebrews 6 and similar passages of scripture as an indication of how such situations should be evaluated.

9. CONCLUSION

In this document I have set out in broad terms my current understanding of Ruth 3:9, Isaiah 4:1 and Exodus 21:10 as a basis for determining the responsibility of Christian men to unmarried Christian women.

The essence of this teaching is that such women are entitled to a covering, that such men have a responsibility to supply that covering but that unless the Holy Spirit brings the woman and man together and the necessary spiritual hygiene and ongoing spiritual submission are practised, such a marriage is potentially fraught with difficulty.

If these issues are addressed, there are strong scriptural reasons to conclude that the parties involved will experience the blessings of unity and harmony in a measure which is exceedingly, abundantly beyond all that we can ask or imagine.

I sincerely pray that those for whom God intends this teaching AT THIS TIME will be blessed by it and that they will find the appropriate situations in which God has ordained to put this into practice in their lives.

God bless you,

JAMES ROBERTSON

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Note: Please refer to the **Caveat on page xii** and the section on **Vocabulary on page xv** for cautions regarding doctrine and word usage in the older eBooks that is inaccurate. Apart from these errors these eBooks contain much valuable information.

eBook 6: Is Polygamy Scriptural - Published in 2000

This eBook presents a response to a TV programme on the subject
that made incorrect assertions
that monogamy was prescribed by the Almighty and the Bible.

SOME IMPORTANT NOTES

This document was originally written in late 1999 and slightly revised in January 2000.

Since writing this document i have come to understand a number of things:

1. At the time of writing i was inclined to a writing style that tended to be confrontational and judgmental. In recent years i have been seeking to change this. Accordingly, insofar as the writing style of this document is confrontational and judgmental i ask you to forgive me and to focus on the essence of the message.
2. I have come to understand a number of things which relate to the way it seems to me certain aspects of the Kingdom of the Almighty can be more accurately described, etc. These things are not reflected in this document and are NOT essential to understanding the essence of the message in this document. Some of these points are listed here for your information, however, in reading what follows i ask you to focus on the essence of the message.

The points which it seems relevant to mention are as follows:

- a. The essential Name of the Almighty is “Yah” which is a transliteration of the Hebrew. This name will be found in certain interlinear bibles and other reference documents. Most frequently the Name of the Almighty is given in the sacred writings as “Yah the eternally self existing” which is mostly transliterated as “Yahweh” or “Yahooeh” or similar. I believe it is much more pleasing to the Almighty to use the Name Yah than any of the popular English forms.

Furthermore, the name “the LORD” is a reasonably accurate translation of “Baal” and it is my understanding that it is not respectful of the Almighty to refer to Him as “the LORD” -- “Yah” or “Yah the eternally self existing” or “the Almighty” are more respectful and more pleasing to the Almighty and therefore recommended.

In addition, the name or title “God” is based on the name of a pagan deity and is therefore also not respectful to the Almighty. The Hebrew word that is most frequently translated “God” would more accurately be translated “mighty one” or “Almighty” or “Yah” depending on the particular verse -- any of these terms is more respectful and more pleasing to the Almighty.

- b. The man commonly referred to as “Jesus” was a Jew and spoke Hebrew or Aramaic. As best i can determine the most accurate transliteration of the Hebrew name is “Yahooshua” or similar which means “Yah is salvation”. This gives an important deeper meaning of what this man came to do and is also more respectful and more pleasing to the Almighty.

Furthermore, “Jesus” is derived from a Greek word that is reported to originate from the name of a pagan deity -- accordingly “Yahooshua” is the recommended English form of this name.

- c. The word translated “Christ” refers to the anointing or infilling of a human being with the Spirit of the Almighty and includes concepts which relate to the man Yahooshua being “the anointed of Yah” {Jesus Christ}. The word “Christ” is also used to present several Greek word forms which include other usages including referring to “the anointing of the Spirit of the Almighty” {Christ but NOT Yahooshua} and also referring to “the anointing of the Spirit of the Almighty which was on Yahooshua” on any human being who is a believer {Christ Jesus}.

Use of these forms is more accurate and supports greater understanding of the sacred writings.

There are many other points which it does not seem appropriate to address here. Should you require further information you are welcome to contact me.

James Robertson
June 2004

SOME THOUGHTS ON "IS POLYGAMY SCRIPTURAL"

To all who call themselves by the name of Christ and truly seek to serve Him with all their hearts, all their souls, all their minds and all their strength.

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,

Recently a Christian TV programme was broadcast on the subject of "Is Polygamy Scriptural" and viewers comments were invited. The following Sunday the same programme broadcast viewers' comments, one of which supported the view that scripture permitted a man to have more than one wife and one opposed it. The commentary on the viewers' comments offered an interpretation to support the view that scripture did not permit a man to have more than one wife.

This document analyses the arguments presented in favour of and against the thesis that scripture prohibits a man from having more than one wife.

1. THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAMME

The following is a summary of the programme and what followed.

a. THE PANEL DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEWS

In the body of the Television programme reference was made to the fact that the new constitution of the Republic of South Africa permits polygamy. Interviews were conducted with two family units, one comprising a man with three wives and another with two wives. Both interviewees

expressed themselves in favour of this lifestyle and stated that one wife would not be able to conduct all the business of the family in support of the husband. Both of these men professed to be Christian and one stated that his conduct was permitted by scripture.

The program included a discussion panel one member of which was a woman Professor who argued in favour of men having more than one wife on the basis that there were more women than men in society. The church representative who argued against a man having more than one wife based his argument on Matthew 19:5-6:

- 5 *"and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?*
- 6 *"So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." (NKJ)*

He stated that since this scripture referred to "two" it could obviously not mean three.

Other than this there was almost no reference to scripture in the program, even though it claimed to be a Christian program.

The programme closed without a definitive conclusion although most viewers probably concluded that the programme had demonstrated that it was a good thing for a man to have more than one wife other than from consideration of the scripture referred to above.

b. THE VIEWER'S COMMENTS

In the viewer's comments part of the programme the following week only two views were broadcast. The first was from a woman objecting to the apparent conclusion that it was acceptable for a man to have more than one wife and the second from a man who presented a number of scriptures and arguments to the effect that he claimed that scripture clearly permitted a man to have more than one wife, that "the doctrine of enforced monogamy" was keeping millions of people out of the kingdom of God and was a stumbling block to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He went on to assert that "enforced monogamy" was a "doctrine of demons" and "heresy of the worst kind".

c. THE COMMENTARY

The commentary on the viewer's contributions offered a number of scriptures and an interpretation based on which it was concluded that those who argued that scripture permitted a man to have more than one wife were clearly mistaken and that their arguments were "difficult to back up".

The conclusion of this commentary was that scripture did NOT permit a man to have more than one wife and that by implication the constitution of the Republic of South Africa was contrary to the Word of God on this issue and that furthermore the people interviewed on the programme the previous week were living in sin. This is a far reaching conclusion which seems worthy of careful consideration before it is accepted.

2. WHY SHOULD WE CONSIDER THIS INTERPRETATION?

You may ask why you should read this discourse and why you should concern yourself with whether scripture permits a man to have more than one wife versus the claims that scripture prohibits a man from having more than one wife.

In the first instance the conclusion reached on the programme effectively passed a judgement on the people interviewed the previous week and on the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. By extension it passed a judgement on a life style common to millions of South Africans and others around the world. If this judgment is correct then millions and possibly billions of people are potentially facing eternal hell fire on the day of judgment and need to be warned. However, if the protagonists of scripture permitting a man to have more than one wife are to be believed there is another group of people who could be facing judgment.

As with previous discussions in this series it is apparent that there can only be one correct interpretation and those who advance the alternative school of thought may potentially face serious consequences on the Day of Judgment.

From a scriptural perspective, this discussion is important for a wide variety of reasons:

- a. **1 John 5:3 states : For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. (NKJ)**

Surely if we love God we will not seek to alter His Word.

- b. **Proverbs 30:5-6 states: 5 Every word of God is pure; he is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. 6 Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar. (NKJ)**

Surely no one would want to add to the word of God and find themselves rebuked on the Day of Judgment?

- c. **Revelation 21:8 states: "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (NKJ)**

If by adding to the word of God one is found a liar (Proverbs 30:6) then one is condemned to a part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone and therefore one should certainly not want to add to the Word of God.

From a different perspective, appendix E, titled "**WOW! So *that's* how Jesus loves me!**", written by John & Helen Gardiner and published in the October 1999 issue of Joy Magazine, recently came to my attention. This article presents a powerful argument in support of marriage being a "prophetic statement" concerning the relationship between the church and the Lord Jesus Christ. It also provides a powerful argument as to why Satan is seeking to destroy marriage. It would appear that this aspect provides another, more positive reason why the analysis presented in this document is important.

3. THE PANEL DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEWS

The following is a verbatim transcript of the programme. In presenting this transcript all names have been removed. The objective is to analyze the content and not the people who were responsible for delivering the content. In this way I hope to avoid a situation in which anyone speaks against THE LORD'S anointed.

Interviewer 1:

"Polygamy, the practice of having two or more wives or husbands at the same time is dismissed by most Christians as unbiblical. The previous South African Government went so far as to outlaw the practice until the constitution was amended in 1994.

"But long before 1994 many African independent churches endorsed polygamy and held and blessed wedding ceremonies of a bigamist or polygamist nature, much to the dismay of Christians who felt that this practice was not in line with the Word of God and despite the fact that these marriages were not legally recognized.

"Constitutional law now makes provision for polygamy on the basis that it is part of customary law.

"But the disagreement amongst Christians is still as strong today as it ever was. In trying to get to grips with the issue of multiple marriage partners we have in the studio two Christian leaders and a theologian with an unconventional view point. Professor 1..... a theology lecturer at the University of has written extensively on the subject of polygamy and maintains that polygamy is a worthwhile alternative to the ever increasing rate of divorce."

Theology Professor:

"Good evening, hello I1....."

Interviewer 1:

"Pastor 1..... of the church is adamant that polygamy is not in line with the teachings of the Bible and therefore cannot be an option for God fearing Christians."

Pastor 1:

"Good evening I1....."

Interviewer 1:

"And we would like to welcome back in the studio, inculturation crusader Reverend 1..... of the Churches who says that there is no scripture that blatantly prohibits polygamy and that as an african traditional practice it should be accepted as part of inculturation in the church. Welcome back."

Reverend 1:

"Good evening I1....."

Interviewer 1:

"Pastor 1..... I would like to start with you. Can you give me your views on polygamy and Christianity?"

Pastor 1:

"I really believe that Polygamy should not be accepted as part of Christian teachings."

Interviewer 1:

"Why is that?"

Pastor 1:

"Well if people are already in a polygamous situation. I mean they should be accepted in the church but they should be told that in the order of creation that's not the ideal."

Interviewer 1:

"Professor, your views are very, very unconventional."

Theology Professor:

"No they are not. We have been talking about polygamy for the past 500 hundred years now ever since the Puritans decided that polygamy should be obligatory because they wanted every woman to house her sexuality in a marriage.

Interviewer 1:

"Reverend 1..... what's your opinion?"

Reverend 1:

"Well I should think that in today's situation the Christian Church is bound really to minister to all people including polygamists."

Interviewer 1:

"But is polygamy not against Christian teachings? Pastor 1....., you say that it is?"

Pastor 1:

"I will still maintain that in the order of creation God created humans male and female He did not create many Eve's for one Adam."

Theology Professor:

"But what then about all the Patriarchs who had more than one wife?"

"Let's look at polygamy from a woman's point of view. The recent debate on polygamy started off with a question. What are we going to do with all the women who are single or divorced and who do not have access to regular relationships. They become mistresses or they become very lonely. What are we going to do with the 200 women to every 70 men we have?"

Interviewer 1:

"Christians in far rural area have less difficulty in accepting polygamy as a normal part of practising Christianity within the context of their own culture. This is mainly because of the strong indigenous cultural heritage and tradition among these communities."

Interviewer 2:

"..... visited the rolling hills of Kwa-Zulu Natal and found that polygamy is alive and well in South Africa

..... the culture in rural Natal is just as rich with Polygamy still as popular today as it was before Christianity was introduced in South Africa.

"Many people who've embraced Christianity here feel that polygamy does not clash with their Christian beliefs.

"I met up with two polygamist families in the Natal South Coast to find out more about their way of life.

"Mr M1.... originally had four wives, one of them died and now he is left with only three. I met him at his home in, Natal to find out how he handles his polygamous marriage.

"I asked him why he married many women.

Mr M1....:

"I married them because I loved them. It was a need I had to marry them. I loved women so much I wanted to have six wives. I was unable to marry six, but I really would have liked to.

"There is a provision that's there in the Bible that a man can marry as many women as he likes. IF he loves them. It's there in the Bible, even though I can't quote it now. But it's there.

Interviewer 2:

"When Mr M1... 's first wife was told that a second wife was coming she was for a while overwhelmed by heartbreak and disappointment but had to learn to accept and live with it."

Mr M1... 's First Wife:

"I was heart broken but that passed when he got married."

"He did say he was going to marry a second wife. And then came the third. Without communicating with me whatsoever. When he just said she will be joining us, and she did. I just kept quiet because there was nothing I could do. I was sad. But there was nothing I could do. I had to live with it."

Interviewer 2:

"Mrs M1.... the second wife feels very happy in her marriage. I asked her why she decided to marry an already married man."

Mr M1... 's Second Wife:

"Well I loved him. With all other unmarried men around I loved HIM."

Interviewer 2:

"I asked her what she thought of Christians who say polygamy is against God's will, that it's unscriptural."

Mr M1... 's Second Wife:

"Well I hear what they say. Indeed it's so. But I married this man before he became a Christian. And I was also just a girl. I went to church but I was not a believer. After he married all three of us, that's when he became a believer. He went to the preachers and asked them. 'What shall I do because I hear the Word of God inside me. But I have many wives.' And the Christians said, 'It's OK. You can bring your wives along with you. Because they are like your children now.'"

Interviewer 2:

"Mrs M1.... the third and youngest wife says their family is as happy and united as any other."

Mr M1... 's Third Wife:

"Here at home it is like we are each others children. Even when we sit together with him we are like his children. I don't know what to liken it to. If you would watch us when we are together we are like children, especially me because I am the youngest. It's like I am their child."

Interviewer 1:

"Reverend 1..... do you not think that polygamy is degrading to women?"

Reverend 1:

"What I think really is degrading to women is monogamy. For an example, earlier we spoke about the divorce rate. If you check statistics does that happen mostly in polygamous union or does it happen in monogamous unions?"

Interviewer 1:

"Professor 1..... I have a feeling you've got a comment on that."

Theology Professor:

"Most men, and by men I refer to Western men. Are polygamous. They are either serial polygamists who say, well I'll marry this woman, divorce her, marry, divorce, marry, divorce. Or they anyway have mistresses."

Interviewer 1:

"Pastor 1..... what are the draw backs of polygamy?"

Pastor 1:

"The very first drawback is that polygamy dehumanizes. It dehumanizes the woman because in a polygamous situation the man is in charge. He says how many women he wants or even declares whoever decides. But in a proper christian marriage the man is there for the vision, the dream, that that woman has of marriage."

Interviewer 1:

"Despite the drawbacks, polygamy is still popular even in today's monogamous climate. Let's go back to Kwa-Zulu Natal and find out why."

Interviewer 2:

"I met Mr M2...., a traditional healer and Zionist minister who's married to two sisters. He says that polygamy is popular in the area because it is convenient for men."

Mr M2....:

"Polygamy is popular in this area because there is a lot of work to do in the homes. And instead of hiring a person, rather get more wives."

Interviewer 2:

"Mr M2....'s first wife says with their husbands healing practice and church duties, two wives are necessary."

Mr M2....'s First Wife:

"Most of the time there is a lot of work here at home. Two wives are needed. If it happens that our husband admits a patient and the patient has to spend the night. Then he might need to be attended to in the middle of the night. It will help the patient. Maybe our husband is busy fixing the remedy in his chemist. Then we are busy helping this patient. Things like that. There is a lot of work here at home. Two wives are needed."

Interviewer 2:

"Mrs M2...., the second wife, who is the older sister to Mr M2....'s first wife says the only form of marriage she has ever known to exist is a polygamous one."

Mr M2....'s Second Wife:

"I am from a polygamous family. My father had four wives. Our mother had five children. Other wives had two or three children each. So I grew up with polygamy that's why I say I don't wish I was his only wife."

Interviewer 1:

"Pastor 1..... why would you say that polygamy is still so popular?"

Pastor 1:

"Well, I beg to differ with that concept. For me, polygamy is dying, is waning. But I should think that those who want to still engage in polygamy they do so because of human weakness and permissiveness. Should I say?"

Theology Professor:

"Is it human weakness and permissiveness?"

Reverend 1:

"Not at all. I don't think really permissiveness could be ascribed to polygamy because in the first place polygamy is not about debauchery. It's not a question of people going head hunting for sex partners."

Interviewer 1:

"What is the reason for it? Really? Can you give me a brief.."

Reverend 1:

"The reason for polygamy is customary. It's from a consensus. And it does not in fact include only male persons it includes also females."

Interviewer 1:

"Genesis chapter 2 verse 24 says 'a man shall leave his mother and father and be united to his wife and they shall become one flesh'. How then do Christian polygamists maintain a strong and healthy union with all their wives?"

Interviewer 2:

"I asked Mr M2..... how he manages to give equal attention to both his wives."

Mr M2....:

"I easily manage because I know which days I spend with who in a week. I spend three nights with one and three nights with the other."

Mr M2....'s Second Wife:

"When he is with my sister I am happy. When he is with me my sister is happy. I don't ever wish I was the only one married to him because I would probably share him with other women anyway."

Mr M1....:

"What happens is that my heart leads. It does not happen that my wives decide. Even I don't just decide. But there is this thing God created called the heart. My heart leads me to whichever of my wives I wish to be with."

Interviewer 1:

"Professor 1....., the Bible says that a man marries his wife and they become one flesh. How then can a polygamist Christian reconcile with that?"

Theology Professor:

"Well becoming one flesh is just a term for sexual intercourse so a man becomes one flesh with his one wife and becomes one flesh with his other wife. We must not underestimate the power of women, or the ability of women, for sisterhood in polygamous marriages."

Pastor 1:

"I really don't believe that a person can really give himself completely over to his wife if there are other women. I mean people are complaining about mistresses at the moment. What about if there is another woman who is sharing the same husband legally with the knowledge of the community."

Interviewer 1:

"Reverend 1..... your comment?"

Reverend 1:

"I believe that polygamy is marriage. It is a marriage of agreement not a marriage of convenience as much as monogamy is. I see absolutely no passage, Biblical scripture that says that polygamy is a sin. It is a problem for me."

Interviewer 1:

"Professor 1.....?"

Theology Professor:

"Well I would just say in conclusion that if we say that marriage is the only adult relationship between people. Then I would say that we should open up marriage so that we can adhere to the dreams of women who say we want to be married we don't want to be promiscuous we want to enter into marriage and therefore give us a chance."

Interviewer 1:

"Thank you all for joining us.

"Ecclesiastes chapter 4 verse 12 says 'though one may be over powered two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken'. In the case of marriage could a cord of four strands be even stronger? Or does it break the balance? What do you think? Please write in and share your views with us on the subject."

4. VIEWERS CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMENTARY ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS

The following Sunday, contributions from viewers were broadcast. The following is a transcript of the programme segment. Again names have been removed.

Interviewer 2:

"V1..... of emailed us with this response to last weeks program on polygamy."

Viewer 1:

"Pardon the criticism but in your efforts to present unbiased and broad minded discussions of subjects your direction as a religious program is lost. Or have I misunderstood your intentions. Of course sociological arguments abound for polygamy but theology, even by a theologian seemed absent.

"Must Christianity embrace everything as acceptable for the sake of multi-culturalism? If not, then where must the line be drawn?"

Interviewer 2:

"V1..... We did our best to present all sides of the story but that does not mean that we at agree with or endorse them. **As far as we are concerned the Bible, God's Word, is the last word on the subject** and if our program got viewers reaching for their Bibles to see what God has to say on the matter then we achieved our goal.

"If it didn't well here are some of the scriptures which we think should be considered very carefully before people start embracing polygamy.

Reader 1 with Matthew 19:4-6 displayed on screen:

"'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?'"

Reader 2 with 1 Corinthians 7:2 displayed on screen:

"But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband."

Reader 3 with 1 Timothy 3:2 displayed on screen:

"Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife."

Interviewer 2:

"V2..... of has some very different interpretations of scripture on the subject of multiple marriage partners. V2..... claims that while scripture permits a man to have more than one wife it does not permit polygamy.

"So what's the difference? You ask. Well the true definition of polygamy is that a man can have more than one wife and that a woman can have more than one husband. V1..... says the scripture does not allow for this. He claims that a man can have more than one wife. But a woman who wants more than one husband - can forget it!"

Viewer 2 recording:

"Does scripture permit a man to have more than one wife?"

"Deuteronomy 21:15 states: 'If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved,'"

"Clearly in this, and dozens of other scriptures, God permits a man to have more than one wife!"

"What are the implications of enforced monogamy?"

"Millions of non-Christians cannot accept monogamy as being from God and reject Christ.

"Monogamy has destroyed the fabric of family life in many nations.

"Millions of men and women fail to live within the yoke of monogamy.

"The crucial scriptural importance of virginity is disregarded and adultery is condoned.

"Many Christian women cannot find husbands; as prophesied in Isaiah 4:1.

"Enforced monogamy is a stumbling block to the Gospel of Jesus Christ that is sending millions of souls to hell!

"1 Timothy 4 prophesies that in these days many will give heed to doctrines of demons and forbid people to marry. Surely this relates to forbidding marriage to more than one wife?

"Clearly, enforced monogamy is heresy of the worst kind!"

Interviewer 2:

"Well, that's quite a strong statement V1..... But we believe that you have made some assumptions which may be a little difficult to back up with scriptural proof. Scriptures simply mentioning polygamy cannot automatically be assumed to justify polygamy.

Genesis 2:24 displayed on screen:

"For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh"

Interviewer 2 while Genesis 2:24 is displayed:

"We must remember that the first union in the Bible between Adam and Eve reveals that the first marriage ordained by God was a monogamous one. Polygamy first appeared in the corrupt line of Cain where Lamech took two wives."

Genesis 4:19 displayed on screen:

"Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah."

Interviewer 2:

"Under the judges and monarchy the rule of man, NOT God, Israel shifted towards a looser form of polygamy but it is clear that the most common form of marriage was monogamy and amongst the commoners no cases of polygamy are found in the books of Samuel or Kings."

The following note displayed on screen:

"EZEKIAL 16:1-63 relates an allegory of Israel as the ONE bride of the ONE true God."

Interviewer 2 while the above note displayed:

"The image of a monogamous marriage was in the minds of the prophets who represented Israel as the one wife chosen by the one God and you can read up about this allegory in Ezekial 16."

Ephesians 5:23 displayed on screen:

"For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body..."

Interviewer 2 while Ephesians 5:23 is displayed:

"This is paralleled in the new testament picture of the church as the one bride of the one Lord Jesus."

Interviewer 2:

"Jewish writings over the time of the Talmudic period show the high regard held for monogamous marriages.

"That's all from me, and God Bless."

5. ANALYSIS OF THE DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEWS

Since we are concerned with what THE LORD'S view on this matter is and this view must be determined strictly from the Holy Scriptures I will analyze the scriptures used in the discussion and interviews first.

The first thing that is striking about the debate is that, while two of the delegates were ordained ministers and one was a Professor of Theology, very few scriptures were cited by either side. In fact, from the discussion one could be forgiven for thinking that scripture was almost entirely silent on what must surely be a key aspect of doctrine. There is an enormous difference between a man being permitted to have more than one wife and his not being so permitted by scripture, particularly when two families have been interviewed who could be living in serious sin if the argument that polygamy is not permitted by scripture is valid.

A number of references, direct and indirect are made to scripture:

A. POLYGAMY IS NOT IN LINE WITH THE TEACHINGS OF THE BIBLE

Interviewer 1:

"Pastor 1..... of the church is adamant that polygamy is not in line with the teachings of the Bible and therefore cannot be an option for God fearing Christians."

This delegate held a clear cut view that scripture only permits monogamy. At this point no scripture was offered to support this view so it is difficult to analyze effectively.

B. THERE IS NO SCRIPTURE WHICH PROHIBITS A MAN TAKING MORE THAN ONE WIFE

Interviewer 1:

"And we would like to welcome back in the studio, inculturation crusader Reverend 1..... of the Churches who says that there is no scripture that blatantly prohibits polygamy and that as an african traditional practice it should be accepted as part of inculturation in the church. Welcome back."

Reverend 1:

"I believe that polygamy is marriage. It is a marriage of agreement not a marriage of convenience as much as monogamy is. I see absolutely no passage, Biblical scripture that says that polygamy is a sin. It is a problem for me."

The more detailed analysis of the scriptures presented in the analysis of the commentary seems to convincingly support this view.

C. MONOGAMY IS THE ORDER OF CREATION

Pastor 1:

"Well if people are already in a polygamous situation. I mean they should be accepted in the church but they should be told that in the order of creation that's not the ideal."

Pastor 1:

"I will still maintain that in the order of creation God created humans male and female He did not create many Eve's for one Adam."

This argument does not explicitly quote a scripture which states that God only intended a man to have one wife it infers this from the story of creation.

This speaker also presented a double standard. Either a man having more than one wife is sin and sin is sin and therefore NO person should have more than one wife OR it is not sin in which case any man can have more than one wife provided he can afford it and he takes care of those wives in the manner which THE LORD intended.

The argument of the "order of creation" argument immediately presents some difficulty. Since THE LORD only created one man and one woman it seems apparent that the first generation of children MUST have intermarried. In other words, brothers had to marry sisters. However, today it is illegal for a man to marry his sister, it is referred to as incest. Furthermore in Leviticus 20:17 this is expressly forbidden:

17 'If a man takes his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it is a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness. He shall bear his guilt. (NKJ)

This scripture leaves us with a number of imponderables regarding other aspects of the "order of creation" argument but it does seem to indicate that what THE LORD permitted at the time of creation changed subsequently. Accordingly, since THE LORD is absolutely explicit about prohibiting a man from marrying or having sex with his sister, thus bringing to an end any dispensation there might have been flowing from creation, the very least we should conclude is that He would do a similar thing if He changed the situation regarding a man having more than one wife. **Deuteronomy 21:15 states:**

15 "If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved," (NKJ)

Exodus 21:10 states :

10 "If he takes another wife, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights." (NKJ)

This seems clear enough. A man is permitted to take another wife subject to certain conditions regarding the provision for the first wife. Appendix D lists further scriptures which support this view. Accordingly, even if THE LORD did initially create man to have only one wife, he subsequently made provision for a man to have more than one wife.

It therefore appears that the "order of creation" argument is overridden by scripture.

D. THE BIBLE PERMITS A MAN TO MARRY AS MANY WOMEN AS HE LIKES

In direct contradiction to the opinion of Pastor 1, Mr M1 states:

Mr M1.....:

"There is a provision that's there in the Bible that a man can marry as many women as he likes. IF he loves them. It's there in the Bible, even though I can't quote it now. But it's there.

This presents a stark contrast. In this brief space of time viewers saw two men who both claimed to serve the same God and read the same Bible make directly contradictory statements about it.

As noted in the previous section there are many scriptures which appear to support the view of Mr M1, some of these are listed in appendix D. At the very least we must conclude from this that Mr M1 has some reasonable basis for his belief, even if, as Pastor 1 states there are other provisions in scripture.

E. GENESIS 2:24 CLEARLY STATES THAT A MAN CAN ONLY HAVE ONE WIFE

In support of the argument against polygamy the first interviewer quoted Genesis 2:24:

Interviewer 1:

"Genesis chapter 2 verse 24 says '*a man shall leave his mother and father and be united to his wife and they shall become one flesh*'. How then do Christian polygamists maintain a strong and healthy union with all their wives?"

Interviewer 1:

"Professor 1....., the Bible says that a man marries his wife and they become one flesh. How then can a polygamist Christian reconcile with that?"

Theology Professor:

"Well becoming one flesh is just a term for sexual intercourse so a man becomes one flesh with his one wife and becomes one flesh with his other wife. We must not underestimate the power of women, or the ability of women, for sisterhood in polygamous marriages."

This debate, however, seemed to revolve around the question "How then do Christian polygamists maintain a strong and healthy union with all their wives?" The implication seems to be that "one flesh" in some manner relates to relationship. However, 1 Corinthians 6:16 seems to support the view of the Theology Professor that "one flesh" relates to sexual intercourse and by implication of 1 Corinthians 6:16 is seems quite clear that a man can become one flesh with more than one woman:

16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." (NKJ)

The interviews with the two families certainly seem to support the view that a man can indeed "maintain a strong and healthy union with all their wives". It does not seem that there is any basis in this scripture, as presented, to argue that a man may only have one wife.

F. ECCLESIASTES 4:12

Interviewer 1:

"Ecclesiastes chapter 4 verse 12 says 'though one may be over powered two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken'. In the case of marriage could a cord of four strands be even stronger? Or does it break the balance? What do you think? Please write in and share your views with us on the subject."

It is unclear what the point of citing Ecclesiastes 4:12 is. It does not immediately appear to say anything about marriage and, if it does, it would seem to suggest that a marriage of three strands, a man plus two wives, is preferable and stronger than a marriage with one wife. By extension the argument that a cord of four strands would be stronger still would appear to be valid.

G. CONCLUSION - SCRIPTURAL ANALYSIS OF DISCUSSION AND INTERVIEWS

From the basic analysis of the discussion and interviews which included very few direct references to scripture and no in depth analysis it is not possible to draw a definitive conclusion. However, it does appear that the scriptures cited in support of monogamy do not stand much scrutiny and that some scriptures which seem to indicate that THE LORD has explicitly provided for a man to have more than one wife have been identified.

Furthermore it seems notable the extent to which those opposed to a man having more than one wife seem to use terms like "permissiveness" which are subjective, judgmental and contrary to the evidence presented in the video footage. Any doctrine of any import should be able to clearly and unambiguously stand on scriptures which do not require explanation and excuses and should not require judgmental labels to back it up.

6. WHAT IS POLYGAMY?

In the viewers responses and the surrounding commentary reference was made to the definition of polygamy. In order to further consider the subject of the Television program systematically it is important that we define the meaning of the word polygamy. From reference to the Oxford dictionary we find:

polygamy : Having more than one wife or (less usually) husband at once;

polyandry : polygamy in which woman has more than one husband

polygyny : polygamy in which man has more than one wife

From scripture it is apparent that God created woman to marry only one man through the creation of the virginity of woman. A woman who has sex with more than one man is variously described in scripture as an adulteress or a harlot.

Deuteronomy 22:22 states:

**22 "If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then both of them shall die-
- the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so you shall put away the evil from Israel.**

This is quite unambiguous, adultery involves a man (any man, marital state unspecified) lying with a very specific woman, a woman married to a husband and the penalty for adultery is death to both guilty parties.

Romans 7:1-3 states:

- 1 *Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?*
- 2 *For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.*
- 3 ***So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. (NKJ)***

Adultery is clearly a woman who marries another man while her husband lives!

Therefore, the generic form of polygamy, or "many either sex" which includes polyandry and general fornication, is an abomination in the sight of God. This is something which it seems that many spiritually sensitive Christian immediately discern and therefore the use of the word polygamy should be avoided when discussing this subject.

The form of marriage which the Television debate effectively revolved around was therefore, in fact, "polygyny" NOT polygamy. Nevertheless, this is a latin term which may have connotations other than the form of marriage ordained in scripture and therefore it is proposed that for the balance of this document the focus will be on defining scriptural marriage rather than on examining words which do not occur in scripture.

7. THE VIEWER'S COMMENTARY

A. THE PROGRAMME LACKED SCRIPTURAL CONTENT AND THEOLOGICAL DEBATE

The first viewer quoted stated:

Viewer 1:

"Pardon the criticism but in your efforts to present unbiased and broad minded discussions of subjects your direction as a religious program is lost. Or have I misunderstood your intentions. Of course sociological arguments abound for polygamy but theology, even by a theologian seemed absent."

From consideration of the analysis presented in section one must agree with this viewer. It does indeed seem remarkable that a TV programme which claims to be presenting a Christian view on such an extremely important subject as marriage presents so little scripture. This was rectified in the commentary that followed.

B. ENFORCED MONOGAMY IS HERESY

The viewer whose commentary was broadcast and is quoted above, concluded by stating:

"Clearly, enforced monogamy is heresy of the worst kind!"

This is a strong statement against "enforced monogamy". Does it have validity?

If it does and millions are indeed being kept from saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and millions of others are in sin then surely there is a responsibility on every person who calls themselves by the name of Christ, to carefully examine the facts.

8. ANALYSIS OF THE COMMENTARY

The commentary on the program and the second viewers' opinion canvassed a number of scriptures.

In addition it was clearly stated that "the Bible, God's Word, is the last word on the subject". The commentary also suggested that the second viewer's opinion was based on "some assumptions which may be a little difficult to back up with scriptural proof" and then proceeded to offer further scriptures.

The scriptures used in the commentary are analyzed below using the same techniques applied in previous documents produced by the author:

A. MATTHEW 19:4-6

Matthew 19:4-6 was quoted:

- 4 *And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'*
 5 *"and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"*
 6 *"So then, **they are no longer two but one flesh**. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." (NKJ)*

It was argued that since this scripture explicitly refers to two it cannot refer to three or more.

This scripture indeed says that the two become one flesh, however, 1 Corinthians 6:16, cited previously, clearly proves that a man can become one flesh with more than one woman:

- 16 *Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." (NKJ)*

If we consider the stated arithmetic of "they are no longer two but one flesh" we find something which, at first glance, is not immediately apparent, that is:

$$1 + 1 = 1$$

this is in stark contrast to conventional arithmetic which states that:

$$1 + 1 = 2 \text{ in other words - THE LORD'S arithmetic is different to ours}$$

if we then apply some basic algebraic notation to the formula of $1 + 1 = 1$ in Matthew 19:5 and 6 we can substitute " $(1 + 1)$ " for 1 and thus we see that:

$$(1 + 1) + 1 = 1$$

in other words, if a man is one flesh with one woman and he joins himself to another woman he and his first woman become one flesh with the second woman. By extension:

$$((((1 + 1) + 1) + 1) + 1) = 1$$

and therefore no matter how many women he joins himself to they are still ONE!

in strict algebraic terms we can state:

$$(1 + 1)^n = 1$$

that is, one man joined to "n" women is still **one** flesh with all of them!

In other words if by adding one to one the answer is one then no matter how many times you add one to one the answer is STILL one!

Clearly Matthew 19:4-6 says nothing about a man NOT having more than one wife, nor do any of the other scriptures which refer to "two become one".

B. 1 CORINTHIANS 7:2

1 Corinthians 7:2 was cited as evidence that a man should have his "own" wife:

2 *Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his **own wife**, and let **each woman** have her own husband. (NKJ)*

The interpretation of this scripture hinges on the words for "own wife" and "each woman".

THE WORD TRANSLATED "OWN" IN "HIS OWN WIFE"

The Greek word translated "his own" is Strong's number 1438 heautou, (heh-ow-too') (including all other cases); for which Strong's definition is:

from a reflexive pronoun otherwise obsolete and the genitive case (dative case or accusative case) of 846; him- (her-, it-, them-, also [in conjunction with the personal pronoun of the other persons] my-, thy-, our-, yourself-) (selves), etc.:

KJV-- alone, her (own, -self), (he) himself, his (own), itself, one (to) another, our (thine) own (-selves), + that she had, their (own, own selves), (of) them (-selves), they, thyself, you, your (own, own conceits, own selves, -selves).

It does not appear that this word provides much guidance on this subject.

THE WORD TRANSLATED "WIFE" IN "HIS OWN WIFE"

The word translated "wife" in the phrase "his own wife" is "guniaka", Strong's number 1135. On closer investigation it transpires that the Greek word for woman, women, wife and wives is always Strong's number 1135 "gune" from which it would appear that "guniaka" is a special case of "gune" and for none of these cases is there any indication of singular or plural.

Strong's Definition of 1135 gune (goo-nay');

probably from the base of 1096; a woman; specially, a wife:

KJV-- wife, woman.

Thayer's Definition of 1135 gune-

1) a woman of any age, whether a virgin, or married, or a widow

2) a wife;

used of a betrothed woman

With regard to the Greek word translated WIFE, WIVES, Vines states:

1. *gune* ^{^1135^} denotes (1) "a woman, married or unmarried" (see WOMAN); (2) "a wife," e. g., <Matt. 1:20; 1 Cor. 7:3,4>; in <1 Tim. 3:11>, RV, "women," the reference may be to the "wives" of deacons, as the KJV takes it.

With regard to the Greek word WOMAN, (there is no separate reference for Women since the same root is translated in both forms) Vines states:

1. *gune* ^{^1135^}, **for which see also WIFE, is used of a "woman" unmarried or married**, e. g., <Matt. 11:11; 14:21; Luke 4:26>, of a "widow"; <Rom. 7:2>; in the vocative case, used in addressing a "woman," it is a term not of reproof or severity, but of endearment or respect,

Appendix A contains more comprehensive analysis of both "gune" (Greek) and the Hebrew word "ishshah" for wife, wives, woman and women from Vine's Expository Dictionary. From consideration of this text you will see that there is absolutely no basis on which to interpret any scripture with either the word "ishshah" or the word "gune" as indicating singular or plural, married or unmarried unless other words in the context clearly make this visible. Appendix B lists many New Testament scriptures containing the Greek word "gune" as an indication of the extent to which the word is translated interchangeably to signify a single woman or many women and to signify a woman or a wife. It seems clear that there is no basis to conclude that any scripture containing the word "gune" can be used to determine if a man is permitted more than one wife unless OTHER words make this explicit.

It therefore appears that the word translated "wife" in 1 Corinthians 7:2 does not provide any basis for the argument presented in the commentary. In fact, it seems quite reasonable to conclude that 1 Corinthians 7:2 could be equally correctly translated as:

*"Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own **WIVES** [Greek gune],"*

This applies to the word wife (singular) in all other verses of scripture. This does not therefore signify monogamy.

THE WORD TRANSLATED "EVERY WOMAN"

The word translated "every woman" in 1 Corinthians 7:2 is the Greek word hekastos-, Strong's number 1538 which Thayer defines as:

each, every

In other words, it appears that the word "woman" has been added by the translators to improve the English readability. In any event, the Greek word for woman, if it were present, as demonstrated above, can also be translated women or wives and therefore this phrase also does not support the argument that scripture prohibits a man from having more than one wife.

C. 1 TIMOTHY 3:2

1 Timothy 3:2 was cited as evidence that church leaders should only have one wife and therefore, seemingly by extension, that what was good for church leaders should also be good for their flock. This verse, together with 1 Timothy 3:12 and Titus 1:6 seem to represent three of the key scriptures

on which the doctrine of enforced monogamy is based and from which it is argued that Jesus changed the law.

1 Timothy 3:1-16 states:

- 1 *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.*
- 2 *A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, temperate, sober-minded, of good behaviour, hospitable, able to teach;*
- 3 *not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;*
- 4 *one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence*
- 5 ***(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);***
- 6 *not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.*
- 7 *Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*
- 8 *Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,*
- 9 *holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.*
- 10 *But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.*
- 11 *Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.*
- 12 *Let deacons be the **husbands of one wife**, ruling their children and their own houses well.*
- 13 *For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*
- 14 *These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;*
- 15 *but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*
- 16 *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory. (NKJ)*

Titus 1:4-11 states:

- 4 *To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.*
- 5 *For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you--*
- 6 *if a man is blameless, the **husband of one wife**, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.*
- 7 *For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,*
- 8 *but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,*
- 9 *holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*
- 10 *For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,*

11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. (NKJ)

Seemingly this is definitive, these passages clearly state that a Bishop (or overseer), a Deacon and an elder must all be the husband of one wife?

However, if we consider the Greek word translated "one" we find that it is the word mia (mee'-ah) number 3391.

Strong Defines 3391 mia (mee'-ah);

irregular feminine of 1520; one or first:

KJV-- a (certain), + agree, first, one, X other.

There is certainly a great difference between "one" and "first". If we apply the latter interpretation does that not mean that the Bishop, Deacon or Elder must be the **"husband of his first wife"**? In other words, he should NOT BE DIVORCED or have put away his wife! Does this not, in turn, suggest that he should have the love of God shed abroad in his heart to the extent that, if necessary, he can love even a difficult wife through times of difficulty and tension and bring her out on the other side? Would such a man not be well suited to dealing with typical tensions and difficulties in the body of Christ?

Can this interpretation be confirmed?

Matthew 28:1:

*1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the **first** day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. (KJV)*

Here mia is applied to the **first** day of the week.

Matthew 26:69:

*69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and **a** damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. (KJV)*

Here we see another interpretation of mia "a" damsel, could we read the passages in Timothy and Titus to say that a Bishop, etc **should be the husband of "a" wife - in other words they must be married?** In other words, if a man does not know how to lead a family with at least one wife, he cannot lead a congregation? If we consider the case of the one interviewee, his wives assisted him in his healing ministry as a traditional healer.

Mark 12:42:

*42 And there came a **certain** poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. (KJV)*

There are several passages where mia is translated "certain". It certainly is not uniformly translated "one".

Luke 24:1:

*1 Now on the **first** day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. (NKJ)*

John 20:1:

1 On the **first** day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. (NKJ)

Acts 4:32:

32 Now the multitude of those who believed were **of one** heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. (NKJ)

In this case one is used to relate to a group of people who were "one". So it would appear that mia can also signify a group of people who are of one heart - presumably this could apply to a man with several wives who are of "one" heart with him?

1 Corinthians 16:2:

2 On the **first** day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. (NKJ)

Titus 3:10:

10 Reject a divisive man after the **first** and second admonition, (NKJ)

Here we see two chapters further on in the SAME book of the Bible the translators have translated mia as "first" not one! **Can it not reasonably be argued that the translators filtered the translation through the doctrine of monogamy that prevailed at the time they translated the scriptures?** A complete set of scriptures containing the word "mia" are contained in Appendix C.

This interpretation of mia is supported by Vines with regard to "FIRST":

mia ^3391^, a grammatically feminine form of *heis*, "one," is translated "first" in certain occurrences of the phrase "on the first day of the week," e. g., <Luke 24:1; 1 Cor. 16:2>; cf. A, and see DAY; also in <Titus 3:10>, of a "first" admonition to a heretical man. See ONE.

D. Noun. (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

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Seemingly these words and these passages of scripture cannot be used to construct a doctrine of enforced monogamy? Not even for pastors!

If we apply the information concerning "gune" to the scriptures concerning "one" wife, we find the following to be possible:

1 Timothy 3:2

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of [**first wives / a wife**] one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behaviour, hospitable, able to teach; (NKJ)

1 Timothy 3:12

12 Let deacons be the husbands of [**first wives / a wife**] one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (NKJ)

Titus 1:6

6 *if a man is blameless, the husband of [first wives / a wife] one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (NKJ)*

It would seem reasonable to apply such an interpretation to a society where it was common place for a man to have more than one wife. A more appropriate translation might then be "**still married to his first wives**", **if indeed the intention is not that a bishop, deacon or elder should be married and have AT LEAST one wife!**

As best I can determine, in Jesus' day there was virtually no such thing as an adult woman who was not married unless she was a widow (seems to include those legitimately divorced) or a harlot. It would appear that a thirty year old virgin was to all intents and purposes unheard of. It seems that girls reached puberty at about twelve years old, at which time they were regarded as "virgins" - women ready for intercourse but not yet married. Subsequently they were betrothed and thereafter married. Since a man was permitted to have more than one wife there was absolutely no statistical reason for her not to marry and since marriages were arranged by the parents there was no emotional reason.

D. GENESIS 2:24

Genesis 2:24 was cited as indicating that THE LORD intended a man to have only one wife at the time of creation before the fall and that therefore the perfect state for marriage is for a man to have only one wife.

This argument has already been addressed to a point in previous sections. However, the Genesis 2:24 argument falls into the same trap as 1 Corinthians 7:2, the word for wife here is the Hebrew "ishshah" which, as in the Greek, signifies one or many and so this verse could also read "joined to his WIVES". I have consulted Jewish scholars on this subject and they assure me that there is no way the original Hebrew prescribes monogamy.

Equally, as with Matthew 19:4-6 above, which cites Genesis 2:24, the 1 + 1 = 1 argument applies to Genesis 2:24. See also the discussion in appendix F on virginity which convincingly demonstrates that THE LORD intended man to be able to have more than one wife from creation and BEFORE the fall.

E. THE "CORRUPT LINE OF CAIN" AND GENESIS 4:19

Reference was made to a man having more than one wife for the first time in "the corrupt line of Cain" in the case of Lamech in Genesis 4:19. It seems that this remark was intended to suggest that in some way Lamech is not a model for good Christians. Perhaps this is so, perhaps not, we are expressly told not to judge others. Matthew 7:1-2 states:

- 1 *"Judge not, that you be not judged.*
- 2 *"For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. (NKJ)*

But, if we take account of the viewers' position it would seem that whether Lamech was righteous or not is not the point. If the viewer is correct and scripture does not prevent a man having more than one wife then there are millions, if not billions of people out there who are not living in accordance with this ideal of one wife, who have more than one wife as depicted on the Television program who it is alleged are living in sin and who the viewer alleges cannot accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ as a result of an allegedly ungodly hurdle.

This would appear to include Moslems and Jews who know that the books of Moses permit a man to have more than one wife and that God never changes. The author has personally encountered a situation in Malawi where the church allows a Moslem convert with four wives to keep all his wives but prevents a Moslem convert with one wife from taking more than one wife -- result, many do not accept Christ! It would seem, based on the analysis thus far, that this activity might be making the Word of God of no effect! If this is correct, it would appear possible that many millions of souls could indeed be burning in hell, as alleged, as a consequence of the doctrine of "enforced monogamy".

F. NO COMMONERS WITH MORE THAN ONE WIFE IN SAMUEL AND KINGS

It was suggested in the commentary that there are no "commoners" in Samuel or Kings who had more than one wife. The implication seemed to be that somehow commoners were more Godly than Royalty and that the fact that Royalty in the books of Samuel and Kings clearly had more than one wife did not in any way signify that THE LORD approved.

However, 1 Samuel 1:1-2 states:

*1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.
2 And he had two wives: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. (NKJ)*

There is nothing to indicate that Elkanah was not a commoner, in fact, at the time of Elkanah there was no such thing as Royalty in Israel. It would seem that this argument is disproved in chapter 1 verse 2 of the first book! Furthermore, Samuel, Kings and Chronicles are ABOUT THE KINGS OF ISRAEL so it would seem reasonable NOT to expect to find many references in those books to commoners!

In this case one could be hard pressed not to question the integrity and / or the scriptural knowledge of the person who made that statement.

On further inspection of the books of Samuel and Kings we find a number of other instances of men with more than one wife. These include David:

1 Samuel 25:43 states:

43 David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and so both of them were his wives. (NKJ)

At this point, before he became king, in fact while a fugitive and therefore presumably a "commoner" by most peoples definition, David had two wives in addition to his first wife.

2 Samuel 5:13 states:

13 And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters were born to David. (NKJ)

This was shortly after his arrival in Jerusalem as King of the united kingdom after he had reigned as king over Judah for seven years in Hebron.

David is repeatedly referred to as **a man after God's own heart** (Acts 13:22, 1 Samuel 13:14, etc). In a case such as this one has to ask how any person who fears God can speak out against a man having more than one wife when David, a man with a significant number of wives and concubines is referred to as a man after God's own heart?

It seems that God has said that it is HIS heart to have more than one wife and yet the person who wrote the commentary speaks against it.

Since Samuel was raised, let us consider also 2 Samuel 12:7-8:

*"Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! **Thus says the LORD God of Israel:** 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. 'I gave you your master's house and **your master's wives** into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!" (NKJ)*

Here we see that God says that HE gave David Saul's WIVES and yet the commentator says God is opposed to a man having more than one wife! Is this not blatant hypocrisy bordering on blasphemy!

Since Kings was also raised, let us consider 1 Kings 15:5:

"because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." (NKJ)

David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD **all** the days of his life EXCEPT IN THE MATTER OF URIAH THE HITTITE. It seems hard to conceive how anyone who reads that verse can ever again speak against a man having more than one wife. Is there not a possibility that if one speaks against a man whom God refers to as a man after His own heart that it may cause one to face the most fearful judgment?

Similarly, Abraham is referred to as the friend of God (James 2:23) and had more than one wife, Moses is referred to as the Man of God (Ezra 3:2, Joshua 14:6, etc) and had more than one wife. It increasingly would seem that no person who fears God can claim that it is against the will of God for a man to have more than one wife.

G. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE MOST COMMON FORM OF MARRIAGE WAS MONOGAMY

It was stated in the commentary:

Interviewer 2:

"Under the judges and monarchy the rule of man, NOT God, Israel shifted towards a looser form of polygamy but it is clear that the most common form of marriage was monogamy and amongst the commoners no cases of polygamy are found in the books of Samuel or Kings."

I have been unable to locate any scripture which indicates that "the most common form of marriage was monogamy". As best I can determine scripture is entirely silent and the commentator seems to be adding to the Word of God.

H. EZEKIAL 16

Reference was made to Ezekial 16:1-63 indicating monogamy as the ideal as seen by the prophets.

On closer inspection we see that this passage refers only to the unfaithfulness of Judah. Ezekial 23 takes the metaphor further and describes God as also being married to Samaria (Israel) AS WELL. In other words, God, Himself, describes Himself as married to two women!

Again one is forced to question the integrity and / or scriptural knowledge of someone who could cause such a statement to be broadcast on National Television.

I. EPHESIANS

Reference was made to EPHESIANS 5:23 as a parallel to the verses in Ezekial as an indication that it is God's will for a man to have only one wife. On closer inspection, however, it turns out that the whole of Ephesians 5:22-33 turns on "gune", in other words these verses could just as well refer to "wives" as wife. Seemingly, Ephesians 5:22-33 could be translated:

22 **Wives**, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

23 For the husband is head of the wife [**wives**], as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the **wives** be to their own husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your **wives**, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

28 So husbands ought to love their own **wives** as their own bodies; he who loves his wife [**wives**] loves himself.

29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife [**wives**], and the two shall become one flesh." (Authors note: take account of the discussion of $1 + 1 = 1$)

32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife [**wives**] as himself, and let the wife [**wives**] see that she [**they**] respects her husband. (NKJ) (Authors note: "she" is a translators addition)

THE BODY OF CHRIST COMPRISES "MANY" BODIES

Furthermore, it seems that the Ephesians 5 argument ignores the parallel that the bride (singular) which is the church comprises many bodies 1 Corinthians 12:12 states:

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. (NKJ)

This is supported by other scriptures - "we who are many are one body", in the same way it would seem that many wives are all one flesh or one body with the husband. Ephesians 5:31-32 seemingly makes this absolutely clear:

31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (NKJ)

It certainly seems clear that there is a direct parallel between the Bride of Christ comprising many bodies and a man being "one flesh" with a number of wives.

Furthermore, Revelation clearly refers to seven churches. It certainly seems that God has provided a perfect pattern of the bride of Christ in marriage between a man and his WIVES. It would seem irrational and illogical to argue that the many people who are the church are one body but that Genesis 2:24 and Ephesians 5:23 dictate monogamy. It would certainly seem possible that this could cause a person who considers themselves to be logical to stumble over any doctrine which states that scripture prevents a man having more than one wife.

J. "MONOGAMY WAS HIGHLY REGARDED DURING THE TALMUDIC PERIOD"

It was stated that "during the Talmudic period monogamy was highly regarded". This is an interesting statement since Jesus condemned the scribes and Pharisees whose Talmudic law made the word of God of no effect (Matthew 23 and many other verses).

In addition, it appears that many Jews know that the Bible permits a man to have more than one wife, for example, The Living Torah, in a footnote to Exodus 21:10 states:

another wife, Polygamy (sic) was permitted by Torah Law. It was only forbidden later by a ban pronounced by all European rabbis under the leadership of Rabbenu Gershom (circa 965-1029).

Apart from the fact that this text uses the term polygamy to describe polygyny (a man having more than one wife) a widespread semantic error referred to in more detail in other section, it makes it quite clear that scriptural marriage in which a man can have more than one wife, was still practised by the Jews until about 1,000 years after the death of Jesus Christ. Maurice Lamm, in his book, "The Jewish Way in Love and Marriage", published by Jonathan David Publishers, Inc, Middle Village, New York 11379 in 1980 reports that this ban was "*renewed for all Jews by Israel's Chief Rabbi when it expired in 1950. Known as the 'Cherem de Rabbenu Gershom,' it is in force regardless of the wishes of the husband or the consent of the wife.*"

From considering other sources regarding the systematic distancing of the Gentile church from the Jewish roots of Christianity as a consequence of Roman influence as early as 300 AD resulting in steadily increasing persecution of Jews, it appears that the Rabbinical decree was as a consequence of increasing persecution by the Roman church seeking to enforce the proclamation by Justinian enforcing monogamy about three hundred years earlier.

From conversations with a few Jews on this matter it appears that the rabbinical decree is widely known as is the fact that monogamy is a Roman heresy instituted by the Christian church. It seems that in at least some Jewish quarters this is taken as a further indication that Jesus Christ could not possibly be the Messiah. This, in turn, must surely be a contributor to the difficulty that most Jews have in accepting conversion to Christianity.

Other documents indicate that monogamy was outlawed in the Christian religion by the emperor Justinian in the sixth century, apparently after he married a reformed prostitute.

Taking account of this information one is obliged to ask why, if the Bible has always prescribed monogamy, it was necessary for the Jews AND the Christians to outlaw it?

Accordingly it would seem that the Talmudic argument also does not provide a basis to establish that scripture prevents a man from having more than one wife nor does it prescribe enforced monogamy.

K. CONCLUSION : THE COMMENTARY

On the basis of the above information it would appear that the arguments presented in the commentary include a number of scripture references which either indicate that the person writing the commentary was either not very knowledgeable of scripture or was being deliberately misleading. Other arguments appear to be irrational and still others seem to reflect an inadequate knowledge of the Greek or Hebrew sources.

Accordingly it seems necessary to conclude that the commentator failed to prove in any material form that scripture prescribes "enforced monogamy" or prohibits a man having more than one wife.

9. THE VIEWER'S OPINION

Let us now consider the opinions expressed by the viewer.

A. SCRIPTURES WHICH EXPLICITLY PERMIT A MAN TO HAVE MORE THAN ONE WIFE

The viewer stated:

"Deuteronomy 21:15 states: "If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved,"

"Clearly in this, and dozens of other scriptures, God permits a man to have more than one wife!"

Is this the case?

Exodus 21:10 states :

**10 "If he takes another wife, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights."
(NKJ)**

This seems clear enough. A man is permitted to take another wife subject to certain conditions. Appendix D lists further scriptures which support this view.

If one is seeking to be even handed in considering both cases one has to ask why the person who prepared the Television commentary did not address these scriptures.

B. MILLIONS REJECT CHRIST BECAUSE OF MONOGAMY

The viewer stated:

"Millions of non-Christians cannot accept monogamy as being from God and reject Christ.

On the face of it this may be rather difficult to prove. However, the author has encountered a situation in Malawi where it was reported that Moslem men who were on the point of making a decision for Christ decided not to accept Jesus Christ as Lord when they realized that they would not be permitted to take further wives if they did. If this is extrapolated across the many parts of the world where men have had more than one wife throughout history it is not difficult to conclude that this statement could be correct.

C. MONOGAMY HAS DESTROYED THE FABRIC OF FAMILY LIFE

The viewer stated:

"Monogamy has destroyed the fabric of family life in many nations.

Again this statement initially appears difficult to prove. However, if we consider the example in Malawi, by implication those men who converted to Christianity without the traditional number of wives would not have taken further wives and this could conceivably have resulted in an imbalance. One of the panel members on the original Television programme asserted that there were more women than men in society and that enforced monogamy forced many women to go without husbands. It is alleged that many of these women then turn to prostitution or have "affairs" with married men breaking up their marriages. There are also reports of missionaries informing new converts that they must get rid of all but their first wife with resultant heartbreak and social dislocation.

If these reports are correct, which I have not been able to validate in any meaningful way, it appears possible that enforced monogamy could indeed be contributing to the break-down of family life. Conceivably this could then be contributing to the spread of AIDS in Africa?

D. MANY CANNOT ACCEPT THE YOKE OF MONOGAMY

The viewer stated:

"Millions of men and women fail to live within the yoke of monogamy.

Casual inspection of the newspapers, television "soap operas", magazines and the like confirms that many men and women have sexual relationships with more than one partner. The furore during 1999 with regard to the sexual relationship of a powerful world leader with one of his female aids also supports this view.

On the face of it there can be little doubt that a large proportion of men have sexual relations with more than one woman during their lives which implies that they have a desire for more than one wife. The high divorce rate inside and outside the church, reportedly in excess of 60% indicates a form of serial polygamy which must also support this conclusion.

E. THE SCRIPTURAL IMPORTANCE OF VIRGINITY IS DISREGARDED AND ADULTERY IS CONDONED

The viewer stated:

"The crucial scriptural importance of virginity is disregarded and adultery is condoned.

In the commentary on the viewer's opinion all that was said ignored the issue of virginity.

Deuteronomy 22:13-21 states:

13 *"If any man takes a wife, **and goes in to her**, and detests her,*

14 *"and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,'*

15 *"then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the **evidence of the young woman's virginity** to the elders of the city at the gate.*

- 16 *"And the young woman's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her;*
- 17 *'now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, "I found your daughter was not a virgin," and yet these are the evidences of my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.*
- 18 *"Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him;*
- 19 *"and they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. **And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.***
- 20 *"But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman,*
- 21 *"then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and **the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house; so you shall put away the evil from among you.***

This passage of scripture clearly identifies that a woman must be a virgin when she gets married. If she is not she is a harlot and is to be put to death. If she is not put to death it does not mean that she will not have a part in the lake of fire and brimstone, as will any other man who has sex with her. Appendix F offers a detailed analysis of this and related scriptures and reveals that the act of a man penetrating a virgin, thereby causing the flow of blood from her hymen, is the actual act of cutting the marriage covenant. A woman can only cut covenant once and therefore she can only marry once.

Virginity is a female attribute and is associated with a physical piece of flesh. It can only be taken once and it can be taken by a man who already has a wife. Once a woman has lost her virginity she cannot marry another man unless she is a widow or divorced for porneia (fornication - both spiritual and physical), scripture is quite clear. Therefore it is quite clear that THE LORD created man and woman from the outset for a man to have more than one wife. This scripture taken on it's own clearly demonstrates that a woman cannot have more than one husband unless the first husband dies or the woman is divorced for scripturally acceptable conditions relating to "porneia" or treachery on the part of the husband as laid down in Matthew 5, Matthew 19 and elsewhere.

It therefore seems clear that virginity is a spiritual safety seal. A man having sex with a virgin marries her and a man having sex with a woman who is not a virgin commits adultery in almost all cases. It also seems apparent that man has no corresponding safety seal and that a man is therefore capable of consummating marriage with many virgins. **Since the woman is no longer free to marry after she has lost her virginity, by extension, God created man to be able to have more than one wife from before the fall of Adam and Eve!**

In considering the subject of adultery, consider 1 Corinthians 6:9:

9 *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, (KJV)*

Surely any doctrine which is causing people to become unwitting adulterers or adulteresses is to be avoided at all costs?

F. CHRISTIAN WOMEN CANNOT FIND HUSBANDS AS PROPHESED IN ISAIAH 4:1

The viewer stated:

"Many Christian women cannot find husbands; as prophesied in Isaiah 4:1.

Isaiah 4:1-3 states:

- 1 *And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach."*
- 2 *In that day the Branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious; and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing for those of Israel who have escaped.*
- 3 *And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy-- everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. (NKJ)*

The "Branch" referred to in the second verse is widely accepted as the Messiah, Jesus Christ and the rest of Isaiah 4 must surely refer to His coming. The use of Jerusalem here, in Revelation and elsewhere is widely regarded as referring to the spiritual church or true church of the Lord Jesus Christ which endures to the end. **The implication of Isaiah 4:1 is therefore that at the end of the age, arguably the present age, there will be seven times more women in the body of Christ than men and those women will be desperate for Godly husbands!**

A casual inspection of most of the Christian congregations around the country will reveal that there are considerably more women than men. In some cases one can count as many as ten women to one man! Many of those women are desperately seeking a mature Christian husband without success, many others are trapped in marriages to unbelieving husbands, some of whom abuse them terribly. Others are trapped in situations where unscrupulous men take advantage of them and then dump them.

It does indeed seem reasonable to conclude that THE LORD desires all those women who have chosen Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour to have Christian husbands. We serve a compassionate God, not a legalistic demonic god who condemns his followers to hell on earth, that is the god of this world NOT the God who is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ!

The reality is that over 60% of the church is divorced AND remarried - that makes them polygamists in the TRUE sense of the word and then the commentator speaks against polygamy and polygyny. Surely that is gross HYPOCRISY?

G. ENFORCED MONOGAMY IS A STUMBLING BLOCK TO THE GOSPEL SENDING MILLIONS TO HELL

The viewer stated:

"Enforced monogamy is a stumbling block to the Gospel of Jesus Christ that is sending millions of souls to hell!

As with a number of the earlier opinions, this is difficult to prove definitively. However, if many people are rejecting the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the grounds of not being able to accept enforced monogamy and if the disregard for virginity which is highlighted above is real, which it is, then it seems reasonable to conclude that there are indeed many souls in hell who might otherwise have been in heaven.

Given that Jesus said in Luke 15:7:

7 *"I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance. (NKJ)*

Consequently, if the doctrine of enforced monogamy is not scriptural, which this analysis seems convincingly to demonstrate AND if it is keeping even one soul out of heaven, then surely any person who loves the Lord Jesus Christ should have no difficulty in accepting that a man may have more than one wife?

H. ENFORCED MONOGAMY IS A DOCTRINE OF DEMONS

The viewer stated:

"1 Timothy 4 prophesies that in these days many will give heed to doctrines of demons and forbid people to marry. Surely this relates to forbidding marriage to more than one wife?"

1 Timothy 4:1-3 states:

- 1 ***Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,***
- 2 ***speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,***
- 3 ***forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. (NKJ)***

Based on the analysis thus far it certainly seems that enforced monogamy is NOT scriptural. It would also appear that the person who prepared the commentary was either extremely ignorant of scripture or was speaking lies in hypocrisy. Certainly they were forbidding people to marry.

It would therefore appear that the viewer's claim regarding this prophesy was confirmed through the commentary.

I. ENFORCED MONOGAMY IS HERESY OF THE WORST KIND

The viewer stated:

"Clearly, enforced monogamy is heresy of the worst kind!"

From consideration of the discussion thus far it certainly seems that the doctrine of enforced monogamy is, indeed, heresy. If it is indeed committing the number of souls to hell that has been suggested, which appears likely to be the case, then it would appear that we must conclude that enforced monogamy IS INDEED heresy of the worst kind!

10. CONCLUSION

A reasonably comprehensive analysis of the scriptural case for and against polygamy and enforced monogamy in contrast to a man being permitted to have more than one wife (polygyny), has been presented.

It is concluded that there is overwhelming scriptural evidence to support the view that it is indeed scriptural and in fact probably God's own heart and plan, that a man should have more than one wife.

It is further concluded that there is considerable evidence to suggest that millions, if not billions, of people are being kept out of the Kingdom of God or at the very least consigned to a part in the lake of fire and brimstone. Consequently it is concluded that the doctrine of enforced monogamy is, indeed, heresy of the worst kind!

At the end of the day, every person has a constitutional right to an informed decision, they also have a scriptural right not to be lied to about something as fundamental as marriage. Equally, those who are deceived and propagate this heresy have a right to be afforded the opportunity to repent before they find themselves before the Judgment Seat of Christ with the eternal damnation of millions of souls charged to their account.

It seems that everyone who reads this document has an awesome responsibility to publish these truths!

May THE LORD bless you and keep you;

THE LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you;

THE LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.

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NOTE: The word "YAHWEH¹" is used in this document to reflect the fact that the correct translation of the Hebrew word generally translated "THE LORD" in the King James Version and many others is, in fact, "YAHWEH". YAHWEH is the proper name for our God and occurs 6,828 times in the Old Testament. Vines states:

"LORD

*The divine name YHWH appears only in the Bible. Its precise meaning is much debated. **God chose it as His personal name by which He related specifically to His chosen or covenant people.**" (from *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, (Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)*

By way of analogy, my proper name is "James" and I have the designation of "husband" to my wife, it would not be indicative of a meaningful marriage relationship if my wife were to constantly refer to me as "husband" rather than "James". In the same way, it is not indicative of a meaningful relationship with our God to refer to Him as "Lord" rather than "YAHWEH" when He has given us His name to use and uses it throughout scripture.

For more information refer to the book "The Sacred Name" published by Qadesh La Yahweh Press, available on the internet at:

<http://www.yahweh.org/publications/pdf1/sacrednm.pdf>

APPENDIX A: TEXT FROM VINE'S EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY REGARDING THE WORDS FOR WIFE / WIVES / WOMAN / WOMEN

Vine's with regard to the Hebrew links to Woman when searching for Wife. There is no separate reference to wives or women as both are translations of the same root word:

WIFE refers to WOMAN, WIVES and WOMEN

'ishshah ^{^802^}, "woman; wife; betrothed one; bride; each." This word has cognates in Akkadian, Ugaritic, Aramaic, Arabic, and Ethiopic. It appears about 781 times in biblical Hebrew and in all periods of the language.

This noun connotes one who is a female human being regardless of her age or virginity. Therefore, it appears in correlation to "man" (ish): "...she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" <Gen. 2:23>. This is its meaning in its first biblical usage: "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man ['adam], made he a woman, and brought her unto the man" <Gen. 2:22>. **The stress here is on identification of womanhood rather than a family role.**

The stress on the family role of a "wife" appears in passages such as <Gen. 8:16>: "Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee."

In one special nuance the word connotes "wife" in the sense of a woman who is under a man's authority and protection; the emphasis is on the family relationship considered as a legal and social entity: "And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered..." <Gen. 12:5>.

In <Lam. 2:20> 'ishshah is a synonym for "mother": "Shall the women eat their [offspring, the little ones who were born healthy]?" In <Gen. 29:21> (cf. <Deut. 22:24>) it appears to connote "bride" or "betrothed one": "And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her." <Eccl. 7:26> uses the word generically of "woman" conceived in general, or womanhood: "And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets..." (cf. <Gen. 31:35>).

This word is used only infrequently of animals: "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female" <Gen. 7:2>.

This word can also be used figuratively describing foreign warriors and or heroes as "women," in other words as weak, unmanly, and cowardly: "In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts..." <Isa. 19:16>.

In a few passages 'ishshah means "each" or "every": "But every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house..." <Exod. 3:22>; cf. <Amos 4:3>. A special use of this nuance occurs in passages such as <Jer. 9:20>, where in conjunction with re`ut ("neighbor") it means "one" (female): "Yet hear the word of the Lord, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbor lamentation."

(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

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With regard to the Greek words WIFE, WIVES, Vines states:

1. *gune* ^{^1135^} denotes (1) **"a woman, married or unmarried"** (see WOMAN); (2) "a wife," e. g., <Matt. 1:20; 1 Cor. 7:3,4>; in <1 Tim. 3:11>, RV, "women," the reference may be to the "wives" of deacons, as the KJV takes it.
2. *gunaikeios* ^{^1134^}, an adjective denoting **"womanly, female,"** is used as a noun in <1 Pet. 3:7>, KJV, "wife," RV, "woman."#

Note: In <John 19:25> the article stands idiomatically for "the wife (of)"; in <Matt. 1:6>, the article is rendered "her that had been the wife (of)."

(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

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With regard to the Greek word WOMAN, (there is no separate reference for Women since the same root is translated in both forms) Vines states:

1. *gune* ^{^1135^}, **for which see also WIFE, is used of a "woman" unmarried or married, e. g.,** <Matt. 11:11; 14:21; Luke 4:26>, of a "widow"; <Rom. 7:2>; in the vocative case, used in addressing a "woman," it is a term not of reproof or severity, but of endearment or respect, <Matt. 15:28; John 2:4>, where the Lord's words to His mother at the wedding in Cana, are neither rebuff nor rebuke. The question is, lit., "What to Me and to thee?" and the word "woman," the term of endearment, follows this. The meaning is "There is no obligation on Me or you, but love will supply the need." She confides in Him, He responds to her faith. There was lovingkindness in both hearts. His next words about "His hour" suit this; they were not unfamiliar to her. Cana is in the path to Calvary; Calvary was not yet, but it made the beginning of signs possible. See also <4:21; 19:26>. In <Gal. 4:4> the phrase "born of a woman" is in accordance with the subject there, viz., the real humanity of the Lord Jesus; this the words attest. They declare the method of His incarnation and "suggest the means whereby that humanity was made free from the taint of sin consequent upon the Fall, viz., that He was not born through the natural process of ordinary generation, but was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit... To have written 'born of a virgin' would have carried the argument in a wrong direction... Since that man is born of woman is a universal fact, the statement would be superfluous if the Lord Jesus were no more than man" (Notes on Galatians, by Hogg and Vine, pp. 184f.).
2. *gunaikeion* ^{^1133^}, a diminutive of No. 1, a "little woman," is used contemptuously in <2 Tim. 3:6>, "a silly woman."#

3. *presbuteros* ^4245^, "elder, older," in the feminine plural, denotes "elder women" in <1 Tim. 5:2>. See *ELDER, A, No. 1*.
4. *presbutis* ^4247^, the feminine of *presbutes*, "aged," is used in the plural and translated "aged women" in <Titus 2:3>.#
5. *theleia* ^2338^, the feminine of the adjective *thelus*, denotes "female," and is used as a noun, <Rom. 1:26,27>. See *FEMALE*.

(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (C) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

**APPENDIX B:
SCRIPTURE REFERENCES
INCLUDING THE GREEK WORD
1135 "GUNE" WIFE / WIVES / WOMAN / WOMEN**

Following are many scriptures all of which contain the Greek word "gune". Readers are encouraged to observe the extent to which gune is variously translated and the English usage is determined by the context. There are a number of instances where the singular can be replaced with the plural. Note also the extent to which woman and wife, women and wives can be interchanged.

Matt 1:20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. (NKJ)

Matt 1:24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, (NKJ)

Matt 5:28 "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (NKJ)

Matt 5:31 "Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' (NKJ)

Matt 5:32 "But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery. (NKJ)

Matt 9:20 And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. (NKJ)

Matt 9:22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour. (NKJ)

Matt 11:11 "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. (NKJ)

Matt 13:33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." (NKJ)

Matt 14:3 For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. (NKJ)

Matt 14:21 Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. (NKJ)

Matt 15:22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." (NKJ)

Matt 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour. (NKJ)

Matt 15:38 Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. (NKJ)

Matt 18:25 "But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. (NKJ)

Matt 19:3 The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?" (NKJ)

Matt 19:5 "and said, `For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? (NKJ)

Matt 19:8 He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. (NKJ)

Matt 19:9 "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." (NKJ)

Matt 19:10 His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry." (NKJ)

Matt 22:24 saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)

Matt 22:25 "Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. (NKJ)

Matt 22:27 "Last of all the woman died also. (NKJ)

Matt 22:28 "Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her." (NKJ)

Matt 26:7 a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. (NKJ)

Matt 26:10 But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. (NKJ)

Matt 27:19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." (NKJ)

Matt 27:55 And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, (NKJ)

Matt 28:5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. (NKJ)

Mark 5:25 Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, (NKJ)

Mark 5:33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. (NKJ)

Mark 6:17 For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. (NKJ)

Mark 6:18 For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." (NKJ)

Mark 7:25 For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. (NKJ)

Mark 7:26 The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. (NKJ)

Mark 10:2 The Pharisees came and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" testing Him. (NKJ)

Mark 10:7 `For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, (NKJ)

Mark 10:11 *So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. (NKJ)*

Mark 12:19 *"Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)*

Mark 12:19 *"Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)*

Mark 12:20 *"Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. (NKJ)*

Mark 12:22 *"So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. (NKJ)*

Mark 12:23 *"Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife." (NKJ)*

Mark 14:3 *And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head. (NKJ)*

Mark 15:40 *There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome, (NKJ)*

Luke 1:5 *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (NKJ)*

Luke 1:13 *But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. (NKJ)*

Luke 1:18 *And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." (NKJ)*

Luke 1:24 *Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, (NKJ)*

Luke 1:42 *Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! (NKJ)*

Luke 3:19 *But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, (NKJ)*

Luke 4:26 *"but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. (NKJ)*

Luke 7:28 *"For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (NKJ)*

Luke 7:37 *And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, (NKJ)*

Luke 7:39 *Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." (NKJ)*

Luke 7:44 *Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. (NKJ)*

Luke 7:44 *Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. (NKJ)*

Luke 7:50 *Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." (NKJ)*

Luke 8:2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities-- Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, (NKJ)

Luke 8:3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance. (NKJ)

Luke 8:43 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, (NKJ)

Luke 8:47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. (NKJ)

Luke 10:38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. (NKJ)

Luke 11:27 And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" (NKJ)

Luke 13:11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. (NKJ)

Luke 13:12 But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." (NKJ)

Luke 13:21 "It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." (NKJ)

Luke 14:20 "Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' (NKJ)

Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. (NKJ)

Luke 15:8 "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? (NKJ)

Luke 16:18 "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery. (NKJ)

Luke 17:32 "Remember Lot's wife. (NKJ)

Luke 18:29 So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, (NKJ)

Luke 20:28 saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)

Luke 20:28 saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. (NKJ)

Luke 20:29 "Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. (NKJ)

Luke 20:32 "Last of all the woman died also. (NKJ)

Luke 20:33 "Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife." (NKJ)

Luke 22:57 But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." (NKJ)

Luke 23:27 And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. (NKJ)

Luke 23:49 But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. (NKJ)

Luke 23:55 And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. (NKJ)

Luke 24:22 "Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. (NKJ)

Luke 24:24 "And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see." (NKJ)

John 2:4 Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." (NKJ)

John 4:7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." (NKJ)

John 4:9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. (NKJ)

John 4:9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. (NKJ)

John 4:11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? (NKJ)

John 4:15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." (NKJ)

John 4:17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' (NKJ)

John 4:19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. (NKJ)

John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. (NKJ)

John 4:25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." (NKJ)

John 4:27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marvelled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" (NKJ)

John 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, (NKJ)

John 4:39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." (NKJ)

John 4:42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." (NKJ)

John 8:3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, (NKJ)

John 8:4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. (NKJ)

John 8:9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (NKJ)

John 8:10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" (NKJ)

John 16:21 "A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. (NKJ)

John 19:26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" (NKJ)

John 20:13 Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." (NKJ)

John 20:15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." (NKJ)

Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. (NKJ)

Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. (NKJ)

Acts 5:2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. (NKJ)

Acts 5:7 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. (NKJ)

Acts 5:14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, (NKJ)

Acts 8:3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. (NKJ)

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. (NKJ)

Acts 9:2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. (NKJ)

Acts 13:50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. (NKJ)

Acts 16:1 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. (NKJ)

Acts 16:1 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. (NKJ)

Acts 16:13 And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. (NKJ)

Acts 16:14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. (NKJ)

Acts 17:4 And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas. (NKJ)

Acts 17:12 Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. (NKJ)

Acts 17:34 However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them. (NKJ)

Acts 18:2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. (NKJ)

Acts 21:5 When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till we were out of the city. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed. (NKJ)

- Acts 22:4 *"I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, (NKJ)*
- Acts 24:24 *And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. (NKJ)*
- Acts 24:24 *And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. (NKJ)*
- Rom 7:2 *For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 5:1 *It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles-- that a man has his father's wife! (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:1 *Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:2 *Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:3 *Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:4 *The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:10 *Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:11 *But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:12 *But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:13 *And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:14 *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:16 *For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife? (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:27 *Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:29 *But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:33 *But he who is married cares about the things of the world-- how he may please his wife. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:34 *There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world-- how she may please her husband. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 7:39 *A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 9:5 *Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? (NKJ)*

- 1 Cor 11:3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:5 But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:6 For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:8 For man is not from woman, but woman from man. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:9 Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:10 For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:11 Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:11 Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:12 For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:13 Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 11:15 But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 14:34 Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 14:35 And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church. (NKJ)*
- Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (NKJ)*
- Col 3:18 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. (NKJ)*

- Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 2:9 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 2:10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 2:11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 2:12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behaviour, hospitable, able to teach; (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 3:11 Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 3:12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 5:9 Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, (NKJ)*
- Titus 1:6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (NKJ)*
- Heb 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. (NKJ)*
- 1 Pet 3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, (NKJ)*
- 1 Pet 3:5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, (NKJ)*
- Rev 2:20 "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. (NKJ)*
- Rev 9:8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. (NKJ)*
- Rev 12:1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. (NKJ)*
- Rev 12:4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. (NKJ)*
- Rev 12:6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. (NKJ)*
- Rev 12:13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. (NKJ)*
- Rev 12:14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. (NKJ)*
- Rev 12:15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. (NKJ)*
- Rev 12:16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. (NKJ)*

Rev 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (NKJ)

Rev 14:4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. (NKJ)

Rev 17:3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. (NKJ)

Rev 17:4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. (NKJ)

Rev 17:6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marvelled with great amazement. (NKJ)

Rev 17:7 But the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. (NKJ)

Rev 17:9 "Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. (NKJ)

Rev 17:18 "And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth." (NKJ)

Rev 19:7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." (NKJ)

Rev 21:9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." (NKJ)

APPENDIX C: ALL SCRIPTURE REFERENCES INCLUDING THE GREEK WORD 3391 "MIA" ONE / FIRST / ETC

The following passages all include the greek word mia, not all of them refer to "one".

Matt 5:18 "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. (NKJ)

Matt 5:19 "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (NKJ)

Matt 5:36 "Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. (NKJ)

Matt 17:4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (NKJ)

Matt 19:5 "and said, `For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? (NKJ)

Matt 19:6 "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." (NKJ)

Matt 20:12 "saying, `These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' (NKJ)

Matt 21:19 And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." And immediately the fig tree withered away. (NKJ)

Matt 24:41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. (NKJ)

Matt 26:40 Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? (NKJ)

Matt 26:69 Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee." (NKJ)

Matt 28:1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. (NKJ)

Mark 9:5 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"-- (NKJ)

Mark 10:8 `and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. (NKJ)

Mark 12:42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. (NKJ)

Mark 14:37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? (NKJ)

Mark 14:66 Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came. (NKJ)

Mark 16:2 *Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. (NKJ)*

Luke 5:12 *And it came to pass, when he was in a **certain** city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. (KJV)*

Luke 5:17 *And it came to pass on a **certain** day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. (KJV)*

Luke 8:22 *Now it came to pass on a **certain** day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. (KJV)*

Luke 9:33 *Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"- - not knowing what he said. (NKJ)*

Luke 13:10 *Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. (NKJ)*

Luke 14:18 *"But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' (NKJ)*

Luke 15:8 *"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? (NKJ)*

Luke 16:17 *"And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail. (NKJ)*

Luke 17:22 *Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. (NKJ)*

Luke 17:34 *"I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. (NKJ)*

Luke 17:35 *"Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. (NKJ)*

Luke 20:1 *Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him (NKJ)*

Luke 22:59 *Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." (NKJ)*

Luke 24:1 *Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. (NKJ)*

John 10:16 *"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. (NKJ)*

John 20:1 *On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. (NKJ)*

John 20:19 *Then, the same day at evening, being the **first** day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." (NKJ)*

Acts 4:32 *Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. (NKJ)*

Acts 12:10 *When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. (NKJ)*

- Acts 19:34 *But when they found out that he was a Jew, all with one voice cried out for about two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" (NKJ)*
- Acts 20:7 *Now on the **first** day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. (NKJ)*
- Acts 21:7 *And when we had finished our voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day. (NKJ)*
- Acts 24:21 *"unless it is for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.'" (NKJ)*
- Acts 28:13 *From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 6:16 *Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 10:8 *Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; (NKJ)*
- 1 Cor 16:2 *On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. (NKJ)*
- 2 Cor 11:24 *From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. (NKJ)*
- Gal 4:24 *which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar-- (NKJ)*
- Eph 4:4 *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; (NKJ)*
- Eph 4:5 *one Lord, one faith, one baptism; (NKJ)*
- Eph 5:31 *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (NKJ)*
- Phil 1:27 *Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 3:2 *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behaviour, hospitable, able to teach; (NKJ)*
- 1 Tim 3:12 *Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (NKJ)*
- Titus 1:6 *if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (NKJ)*
- Titus 3:10 *Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, (NKJ)*
- Heb 10:12 *But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, (NKJ)*
- Heb 10:14 *For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. (NKJ)*
- Heb 12:16 *lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. (NKJ)*
- 2 Pet 3:8 *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (NKJ)*
- 2 Pet 3:8 *But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. (NKJ)*

Rev 6:1 Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." (NKJ)

Rev 9:12 One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things. (NKJ)

Rev 9:13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, (NKJ)

Rev 13:3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marvelled and followed the beast. (NKJ)

Rev 17:12 "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. (NKJ)

Rev 17:13 "These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. (NKJ)

Rev 17:17 "For God has put it into their hearts to fulfil His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. (NKJ)

Rev 18:8 "Therefore her plagues will come in one day-- death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her. (NKJ)

Rev 18:10 "standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' (NKJ)

Rev 18:17 'For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance (NKJ)

Rev 18:19 "They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.' (NKJ)

APPENDIX D: VARIOUS SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO MORE THAN ONE WIFE

In recognition of challenges presented in the commentary concerning scriptures regarding a man having more than one wife not being definitive, this appendix offers additional scriptural support for the fact that God permits a man to have more than one wife.

Above all, not matter how much you may have difficulty in accepting this principle, I urge you to submit to the Word of God as the final authority, NOT the teachings of man.

1. EXPLICIT COMMANDMENTS REGARDING MORE THAN ONE WIFE

DEUTERONOMY 21:15-17 STATES:

- 15 *"If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, both the loved and the unloved, and if the firstborn son is of her who is unloved,*
- 16 *"then it shall be, on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, that he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the true firstborn.*
- 17 *"But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his. (NKJ)*

This scripture explicitly deals with a situation in which a man has two wives. It was recorded by Moses in a portion of scripture (variously named the Pentateuch by Western Christians, the Torah by Jews and the Tawratt by Moslems) where Christians, Jews and Moslems alike agree that the scripture is inspired by God. As best I understand, there are more people in the world who believe that the five books of Moses are inspired by God than any other passage of scripture. This must carry weight in this situation.

2. SCRIPTURES WHICH EXPRESSLY REFER TO MORE THAN ONE WIFE

This section presents a further selection of scriptures with explicit reference to two or more wives. These scriptures are presented over and above those cited in the body of this discourse and are offered simply to assist you to appreciate the weight of scripture which is behind what is presented here.

A. GENESIS 4:19

- 19 *Then Lamech took for himself **two wives**: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. (NKJ)*

This is the first explicit reference to a man having more than one wife and apparently occurs between about 200 and 500 years after the creation of Adam. There is no indication that this was anything special or unusual or that it represented some departure from what occurred prior to that time.

B. GENESIS 17:15-23

- 15 *Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.*
- 16 *"And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her."*
- 17 *Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"*
- 18 *And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"*
- 19 **Then God said:** *"No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.*
- 20 **"And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.**
- 21 *"But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year."*
- 22 *Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.*
- 23 *So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him. (NKJ)*

In this scripture, we see God appearing in manifest form, many believe this was Jesus, and speaking to Abraham face to face. Not only does He not rebuke Abraham for taking Hagar as a concubine, which surely He would have done had the taking of a second wife or concubine have been contrary to God's Word, He does not even caution Abraham that it was not "His best". He even goes on to bless Ishmael and to declare that he will be the father of twelve princes. A statement which probably indicates that Ishmael was likely to take more than one wife!

Surely we must accept from this scripture alone that God is not in the least opposed to a man having more than one wife? Could we not at least gain the impression that God might even favour such an arrangement?

C. GENESIS 22:20-24

- 20 *Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, "Indeed **Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor:***
- 21 *"Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram,*
- 22 *"Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel."*
- 23 *And Bethuel begot Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother.*
- 24 **His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah. (NKJ)**

Here we see that in Abraham's immediate family it was common for a man to have more than one wife. Note that Abraham's father had more than one wife as well, that was why Sarai was his half-sister!

D. GENESIS 25:6

6 *But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of **the concubines which Abraham had**; and while he was still living he sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to the country of the east. (NKJ)*

Here we see that ultimately Abraham had several concubines and yet James 2:23-24 states:

23 *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And **he was called the friend of God**.*

24 *You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. (NKJ)*

So we see that it is possible for a man to have more than one wife or a wife and several concubines and yet be called "the friend of God". Dare we speak evil of Abraham, or call him an adulterer, and not fear the wrath of God against us for speaking against His covenant partner and friend?

Dear reader, please understand, these are not matters to be taken lightly, they are not matters in which we can hide behind uncertainty with regard to the interpretation of scripture. These are Words of God that are yea and amen! We dare not speak against him whom God has called His friend without opening ourselves up to the most awful judgement and granting Satan an enormous foothold in our lives!

E. GENESIS 25:12-17

12 *Now this is the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham.*

13 *And these were the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,*

14 *Mishma, Dumah, Massa,*

15 *Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.*

16 *These were the sons of Ishmael and these were their names, by their towns and their settlements, twelve princes according to their nations.*

17 *These were the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. (NKJ)*

Here we see that God's promise to Abraham with regard to Ishmael having twelve son's is fulfilled, quite possible through several wives.

F. GENESIS 30:1-27

1 *Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"*

2 *And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "**Am I in the place of God**, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"*

3 *So she said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her."*

4 ***Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her.***

5 *And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son.*

6 *Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan.*

7 *And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.*

- 8 Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.
- 9 **When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife.**
- 10 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son.
- 11 Then Leah said, "A troop comes!" So she called his name Gad.
- 12 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son.
- 13 Then Leah said, "I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed." So she called his name Asher.
- 14 Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."
- 15 But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes."
- 16 When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." And he lay with her that night.
- 17 **And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son.**
- 18 **Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar.**
- 19 Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son.
- 20 **And Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun.**
- 21 Afterward she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah.
- 22 **Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb.**
- 23 And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "**God has taken away my reproach.**"
- 24 So she called his name Joseph, and said, "**The LORD shall add to me another son.**"
- 25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my country.
- 26 **"Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you."**
- 27 And Laban said to him, "Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, **for I have learned by experience that the LORD has blessed me for your sake.**" (NKJ)

In this passage, not only do we see the chronology of Jacob taking his two concubines, and also see some of his marital challenges, we see that both of his first two wives voluntarily offered him their maids as concubines. In addition, we see that throughout the passage reference is made to God. In verse 27 we clearly see that "*the Lord has blessed*". Again, how can we dare to presume that God had frowned on Jacob's marriage to Laban's two daughters AND their two hand maids?

G. GENESIS 32:32

- 22 And he [Jacob] arose that night and took his **two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok.**
- 23 He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had.
- 24 **Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.**

- 25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.
- 26 And He said, "**Let Me go, for the day breaks.**" But he said, "**I will not let You go unless You bless me!**"
- 27 So He said to him, "**What is your name?**" And he said, "**Jacob.**"
- 28 And He said, "**Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.**"
- 29 Then Jacob asked, saying, "**Tell me Your name, I pray.**" And He said, "**Why is it that you ask about My name?**" And He blessed him there.
- 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "**For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.**"
- 31 Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip.
- 32 Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank. (NKJ)

Here we seek Jacob wrestling with God face to face, receiving the name Israel (central to the entire balance of scripture) and being blessed by God. How can we presume to suggest that God in any way frowned on Jacob / Israel for having more than one wife? Is that not presumption bordering on blasphemy?

H. 1 SAMUEL 1:1-2

- 1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.
- 2 And **he had two wives**: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. (NKJ)

Here we see that Samuel, one of the great prophets of scripture, was the son of a man who had two wives. Later in this passage we read that God answered Hannah's prayers and granted her a child (Samuel) whom she dedicated to God and whom God spoke to clearly when he was still a child AND throughout his life. Dare we suggest that Samuel was "illegitimate" or a "bastard" - the terms that would be applied to him today?

I. 1 SAMUEL 13:13-14

- 13 And Samuel said to Saul, "**You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you. For now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.**"
- 14 "**But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.**" (NKJ)

In this passage, God, speaking through Samuel, informs Saul that God has rejected him and informs him that God has chosen "a man after His own heart", who we learn later is David. Subsequently, long after David's death, God, speaking through Paul, reported in Acts 13:21-23 says:

- 21 "**And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.**"

22 *"And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'*

23 *"From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior-- Jesus-- (NKJ)*

Here we see that despite all his eleven (?) wives and ten (?) concubines and despite a number of errors of which David was quick to repent, God referred to David as "a man after His own heart" about one thousand years after David's death! Surely it is utter foolishness to suggest that David was an adulterer, as some have done?

I Kings 15:4-5 also records after David's death:

4 *Nevertheless for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem;*

5 *because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. (NKJ)*

How dare we suggest that David was an adulterer or had adultery in his heart from his youth because he had several wives. Few other men in history have received an accolade like this from the Living God!! Has the reverent fear of God and His judgment departed from the church that people think that they can speak against David?

J. 1 SAMUEL 27:3

3 *So David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, each man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's widow. (NKJ)*

K. 1 SAMUEL 30:5-8

5 *And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive.*

6 *Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. **But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.***

7 *Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, "Please bring the ephod here to me." And Abiathar brought the ephod to David.*

8 ***So David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?" And He answered him, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all." (NKJ)***

Here we see that at a relatively early stage of his life David already had two wives. At this time he "inquired of the LORD" and the LORD "answered him". Surely if David were sinning by having two wives God would have taken this opportunity to point this sin out to him? Instead, we read in 1 Samuel 30:18

18 *So David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and **David rescued his two wives.** (NKJ)*

So God not only answered him, but He granted David's petition!

L. 2 SAMUEL 5:13

*13 And **David took more concubines and wives** from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters were born to David. (NKJ)*

At this time, God did not see fit to warn or rebuke David in any way. However, after the incident with Bathsheba, we read in 2 Samuel 12:5-14, after God sent Nathan the prophet to David:

5 So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die!

6 "And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity."

7 Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul.

8 'I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!

9 'Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.

10 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

*11 "Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and **I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun.***

12 'For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'"

13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.

*14 "However, because **by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme**, the child also who is born to you shall surely die." (NKJ)*

God clearly and unambiguously rebukes David, He also states that HE (GOD) GAVE DAVID SAUL'S WIVES! How can we call David an adulterer after this?

God also makes it quite clear to us that David's adultery had given the enemies of the Lord occasion to blaspheme. How much more has the heresy of monogamy and false adultery, giving rise to wholesale fornication, given even those who would serve the Lord occasion to blaspheme. **Indeed what a great burden of judgment awaits those who in this age with access to Bibles in numerous translations insist on perpetuating the heresy of monogamy!**

In addition, God is quite specific about David's sin and about the penalties that David would pay. Can we doubt for a moment that David's plurality of wives was NOT adultery but that his intercourse with another man's wife WAS? In 2 Samuel 16:21 we see God's judgement on David fulfilled through his OWN son!

- 21 *And Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you are abhorred by your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong."*
- 22 *So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and **Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.** (NKJ)*

In 2 Samuel 20:3 we read about David's subsequent actions:

- 3 *Now David came to his house at Jerusalem. And the king took the ten women, his concubines whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in seclusion and supported them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up to the day of their death, living in widowhood. (NKJ)*

It would appear that David had such respect for the commandment of the Lord after his rebuke through Nathan that he set aside his concubines because of their forced adultery through rape rather than again incur the wrath of God! Would that most Christians had this reverence for the Word of God with regard to their treatment of the consequences of casual adultery and "one night stands"!

M. I KINGS 11:1-4

- 1 *But King Solomon **loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh:** women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites--*
- 2 ***from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods."** Solomon clung to these in love.*
- 3 *And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.*
- 4 *For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. (NKJ)*

In this passage it is quite clear that Solomon's error was to marry foreign wives, against the commandment of the Lord. NOT that he had more than one wife. He also multiplied wives (hundreds of them) which is directly contrary to Deuteronomy 17:15-17.

- 15 *"you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.*
- 16 *"But **he shall not multiply horses** for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.'*
- 17 *"**Neither shall he multiply wives** for himself, lest his heart turn away; **nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.** (NKJ)*

However, in the light of other scriptures in this section it does not seem reasonable to conclude that "multiply wives" refers to two wives, it certainly applies to seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines! Surely it would be stretching a point to apply Deuteronomy 17:17 to David, as an example, seeing as there is NO indication of even the slightest rebuke to David?

In addition, we note that Solomon also "multiplied horses" and "multiplied silver and gold for himself" in direct contradiction of this scripture.

In addition, the word "love" in I Kings 11:1 is the word "'ahab", Strong's number 157:

'ahab (aw-hab');

or 'aheb (aw-habe'); a primitive root; to have affection for (sexually or otherwise):

KJV-- (be-) love (-d, -ly, -r), like, friend.

This is far removed from the "agape" love of God described in 1 Corinthians 13 . This must surely be lust not love? Is this not the curse of our age? And is the fact that the root word of this love is "ahab" perhaps more than a coincidence seeing that the indications are that much of the false doctrine of monogamy appears to owe it's source to Jezebel and Ahab?

N. 1 CHRONICLES 4:5

5 *And Ashhur the father of Tekoa **had two wives**, Helah and Naarah. (NKJ)*

Here we see a specific reference to a man with two wives in Chronicles. Careful reading of Chronicles will reveal that the majority of significant personalities in Chronicles had more than one wife. In fact, it is probably correct to say that it was the norm among the majority of Israelite leaders.

O. 2 CHRONICLES 11:21

21 *Now Rehoboam loved Maachah the granddaughter of Absalom more than **all his wives and his concubines; for he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines**, and begot twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. (NKJ)*

Another example of a leader who had more than one wife.

P. ESTHER 2:8-18

8 *So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at Shushan the citadel, under the custody of Hegai, that **Esther** also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women.*

9 *Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best place in the house of the women.*

10 *Esther had not revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal it.*

11 *And every day Mordecai paced in front of the court of the women's quarters, to learn of Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.*

12 ***Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation**, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women.*

14 ***In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who kept the concubines.** She would not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and called for her by name.*

- 15 Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.
- 16 So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.
- 17 **The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.**
- 18 Then the king made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king. (NKJ)

Here we see that Esther must have been at least the 366 th woman to lie with King Ahasuerus, in all probability many more went before her. According to modern doctrine this would make the king a wholesale adulterer and Esther an adulteress. Yet God used Esther to save His people and, in verses 4:7-17 and 5:1-3 we read:

- 7 And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews.
- 8 He also gave him a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people.
- 9 So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai.
- 10 Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai:
- 11 "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days."
- 12 So they told Mordecai Esther's words.
- 13 Then Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews.
- 14 "For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. **Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"**
- 15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai:
- 16 **"Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"**
- 17 So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded him.

CHAPTER 5

- 1 Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.

- 2 ***So it was, when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, that she found favor in his sight, and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther went near and touched the top of the scepter.***
- 3 ***And the king said to her, "What do you wish, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given to you-- up to half the kingdom!" (NKJ)***

Here we see that it appears that God placed Esther in the court as queen, for "such a time as this" in order to save His people. Surely He would not have placed her there in this fashion were it to have required her to commit a sin as serious as adultery?

We also note that He heard her prayers although we know from John 9:31 that God "does not hear sinners":

John 9:30-33 reporting the conversation between the blind man to whom Jesus granted his sight, and the Pharisees, states:

- 30 *The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvellous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!*
- 31 ***"Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshipper of God and does His will, He hears him.***
- 32 *"Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.*
- 33 *"If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." (NKJ)*

Can we not infer from this scripture that Esther was a worshipper of God AND did His will, otherwise God would not have heard her prayer? If this is the case, surely we must draw the same conclusion regarding Abraham, Jacob, David and others? In other words, THEY WERE IN THE WILL OF GOD WHEN THEY TOOK ADDITIONAL WIVES!!!

Q. SONG OF SOLOMON 6:8

- 8 *There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number.*
- 9 *My dove, my perfect one, is the only one, the only one of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her. The daughters saw her and called her blessed, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. (NKJ)*

Song of Solomon is perhaps not a particularly good source of information on this subject given Solomon's apparently flagrant sins of multiplying foreign wives, horses and silver and gold, referred to above. However, it is important to note that Song of Solomon is generally cited in the Christian Church as the authoritative scripture on marriage, love and romance and is quite widely quoted. **Surely it is gross hypocrisy to cite the writings of a man who had numerous wives and concubines and THEN preach against a man having more than one wife? Surely scripture is quite explicit about the fate of hypocrites?**

R. DANIEL 5:2

- 2 *While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. (NKJ)*

From this scripture we gather that Belshazzar had wives AND concubines. In the same passage verse 5:23 we read how Daniel offers Belshazzar the interpretation of the writing of the "finger of God" on the wall in the banquet hall:

23 *"And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your **wives and your concubines**, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. (NKJ)*

Surely God would have added in a rebuke for having more than one wife if that were another major sin?

9. INFERENCE OF MANY WIVES BASED ON NUMBER OF OFFSPRING

A careful reading of scripture will also reveal many instances where, although the number of wives of a man are not explicitly defined, the number of children borne to that man are suggestive of there having been more than one wife. Each of the instances below are from the book of Judges. The judges were ordained by God and were anointed by Him to Judge. Accordingly, since they were required to judge according to the Law of Moses it would seem reasonable to conclude that they were more or less in the will of God most of the time and it is therefore perhaps even more notable that they had the number of children which they did:

A. JUDGES 8:30

30 *Gideon had seventy sons who were his own offspring, **for he had many wives**. (NKJ)*

B. JUDGES 12:8-9

8 *After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel.*

9 *He had **thirty sons**. And he gave away **thirty daughters** in marriage, and brought in thirty daughters from elsewhere for his sons. He (NKJ)*

C. JUDGES 12:13-14

13 *After him, Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel.*

14 *He had **forty sons** and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy young donkeys. He judged Israel eight years. (NKJ)*

APPENDIX E:

WOW! SO THAT'S HOW JESUS LOVES ME!

The following article was published in the October 1999 issue of Joy Magazine, Box 377, Merrivale 3291, South Africa, email: joymag@iafrica.com. The article is titled "**WOW! So *that's* how Jesus loves me!**" and was written by John & Helen Gardiner. This article came to my attention in January 2000 and provides a powerful additional focus to why the subject of this documents is so important. While the author's of this article clearly do not yet share the revelation contained in this document, it is apparent that what is contained in this article and what is contained in this document are, of necessity, complimentary in Yahweh's scheme of things.

"THE Lord began speaking to us recently about marriage - and giving us some understanding of why so many marriages are in a mess or out of order, and even why so few Christian marriages are what they could be.

Daily we seem to hear of people suffering the most terrible abuse and unhappiness and fear within marriages, and hear of more and more Christian marriages ending in the cataclysm of divorce.

Something that God purposed to be one of His greatest sources of joy and blessing to people often ends up as a curse and misery.

The Lord began to reveal that the reason why marriage is under such incredible attack is *because of what He meant it to be.*

You see, God purposed marriage to be a prophetic sign and a wonder.

Yet the enemy so often succeeds in making it a laughing stock instead of a prophetic signpost that points the way to something much deeper.

Ephesians 5:21-33 says: "*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.*"

"Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."

"In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no-one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of his body."

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

Paul says this is a great or profound mystery he's speaking about. The only other great or profound mystery is found in 1 Timothy 3:16 *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."*

Whenever scripture speaks of a mystery, it is something that can only be understood by divine revelation - how much more so a *great* mystery? However, these mysteries are something God wants us to understand - because if we don't, the enemy will run riot in that area of ignorance in our lives.

So Paul is saying, "When I'm talking about marriage, I'm talking about Christ and the church." He is saying that every time you look at a Christian marriage you should be able to say: "A-ha - so *that's* how Jesus loves His church, and that's how we as the church should respond to Him!

Marriage was made by God to be a sign that shows the world how much Jesus loves His church. Yet how many of us can say we've seen even a handful of marriages in our lifetimes that have been this?

Marriages where you look at the way the husband loves his wife, and you can say "Wow! That's how Jesus loves me as part of his church." Or you look at the wife and are able to say "Yes, I see now, I understand now how I as a Christian need to submit to Jesus in love."

Because this man and this woman have painted a prophetic picture for you, you now have a greater understanding of this great mystery!

Now do you begin to see why satan hates marriage - and especially Christian marriages - with such a passion?

Why he will do everything within his power to pervert, make a mockery of, and destroy marriages? Because every time he does that he's not just causing misery in the lives of the people concerned, he is also destroying and pulling down something that God purposed to be a prophetic signpost.

When there are problems in a marriage, you're not just dealing with difficult people, you're dealing with all the hoards of hell trying their utmost to make a mockery of a prophetic statement that God wanted to make.

Those who are in difficult marriage situations, or who have areas of their marriage that are out of order, must wake up to this truth. It's not just that you and your spouse cannot get along with each other - it's also because you have powerful demonic forces working against your marriage becoming a prophetic sign and statement!

You need to start pulling down those demonic strongholds over your relationship. Not just in your spouse! But strongholds in you and *over* your relationship that cause both of you to react and allow friction and division to rush in.

Every area of marriage was purposed to be a prophetic sign. If you want to understand what idolatry does to the heart of God, then look at what sexual infidelity does to a marriage.

If you want to gain a clearer understanding of what it does to God when we have other gods other things that elicit our love and devotion - then look at what adultery does to a marriage. It's a prophetic sign!

You will often find in a marriage the same extremes as you find in the church. Lust in marriage is the same as spiritual licentiousness in the church - the same as just bingeing and going overboard on grace with no boundaries.

Then, at the other end of the scale you get frigidity in marriage - which is the same as legalism and a religious spirit in the church - cold, hard, truth with no love.

You often get these two forces at work in the same marriage, just as you get them at work in the church, and they're both just as destructive. Lust in a marriage and licentiousness in the church are just as destructive as frigidity in marriage and legalism in the church.

You also find rebellion and reaction against God's order and authority are a problem in both marriage and in the church. Just as you also get domination, manipulation and control both in marriage and in the church.

We have got to start waking up to what marriage is meant to be, and why so pitifully few are what they should be!

People get married so lightly without really understanding what they're doing. Few people who go into marriage realise they are entering into something that was meant to be a blood covenant.

This is why virginity is so important.

God's purpose for marriage was that on the wedding night the marriage covenant would be sealed with blood. Again, this is a prophetic picture of Jesus' blood covenant with us. Yet how many marriages are that today?

We want to say to any young people (both male and female!) reading this: Your virginity is one of the most precious gifts God has given you. Don't ever let the devil snatch it away from you.

In biblical times if a man took away a woman's virginity they stoned him to death. Nowadays, they label him a superstud or a loverboy or something like that!

God purposed marriage to be a blood covenant, and it is our firm belief that if you have two people entering into a marriage as virgins, and with an understanding of the awesomeness and sacredness of what they're doing on their wedding night, then God will honour that covenant and protect that marriage supernaturally. If those getting married are not virgins, they at least need to have an understanding of this awesome *covenant* relationship they're entering into.

God cannot fully bless and anoint and rebuke the devourer over many marriages today because they were never established on the foundation of covenant. People went through all the man-made rituals of the wedding ceremony, but never entered into a true covenant with each other.

If you look at the average wedding ceremony today, much of what goes on has its roots in the occult.

The veil was originally believed to ward off evil spirits. Confetti was also originally purposed to chase away evil spirits. Tradition has it that it's bad *luck* for the groom to see the bride before the wedding ceremony, and that it is good *luck* for the bride to wear something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue. Then there's the whole ritual of catching the garter and bouquet and the *lucky* souls who catch them.

The average wedding table is filled with *lucky* horseshoes or wishbones, and then the lucky couple are sent on their way to the strains of "Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye..."

All this "good luck" is just a smokescreen to distract people away from the real meaning of the ceremony - that it was meant by God to be a time of two people cutting covenant with each other before their God.

The average wedding ceremony today is a total mockery of what God intended. You get two people who've been sleeping together for years going through a silly little ritual that has no real binding upon their souls. And then people wonder why the whole thing ends up in the divorce courts two years down the road!

God wants us to begin to understand the sacredness of marriage.

If you look at what marriage entailed in biblical times, you begin to understand just how much points to Jesus - and why Jesus even said some of the things He said.

At marrying age, the young man might be attracted to a young woman, or his parents might have chosen an appropriate bride for him. The procedure could be followed by one of three different parties:

The father making the arrangements for his son, as Samson's father did for him in Judges 14: 1-10.

An agent working on behalf of the father, as Eliezer did on behalf of Abraham in Genesis 24:1-67.

Or it could be done by the young man himself.

For illustration's sake, an example of the last possibility will be used.

A young man went to the home of his potential bride-to-be. He carried three things with him: a large sum of money in order to pay the price for his bride, a betrothal contract called a *Shitre Erusin*, and a skin of wine.

Of course, anyone arriving with these things would immediately arouse the curiosity of the household! The man approached the girl's father and older brothers. The contract was laid out, and the bride-price was discussed.

Finally, a glass of wine was poured. If the father approved, then the young lady was called in. If she also approved, then she would drink the wine. In doing so, she committed herself to this man, agreeing to follow the contract that now was a legal document between the two.

They would be called husband and wife at this time, and their union could only be dissolved by a divorce. However, their status was that of betrothed, rather than that of fully married. This is where

we as the church are today: the contract has been signed, the price has been paid in full. We are betrothed.

After the wine had been drunk, the man made the statement that he would go to his father's house and prepare a place for her. This place was known as the *chadar* (chamber, or a bed with a canopy).

The young Jewish bridegroom would make the following speech as he was leaving: *"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."* Does that sound familiar to you? Our Lord Jesus spoke those same words of us in John 14:2-3!

From the time that the *Shitre Erusin* was ratified, the young woman was consecrated, *kiddushin*, set apart to her husband. That's how we as Christians should be.

She has been bought with a price and her body is no longer her own. 1 Corinthians 6:20 says *"You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body"* and 1 Corinthians 7:23 says *"You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men."*

She must spend her time preparing to live as a wife and mother in Israel. Her days of waiting for her wedding are spent in learning how to please her husband.

Meanwhile, the young man returned to his father's home, and the *chadar* went under construction.

The room is provided with every comfort, as they will retire here for a whole week following their wedding ceremony. We see this seven day period in: Genesis 29:22-28. Laban says - *"Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work."* And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife." And read Judges 14:10-18, too.

The young man, if asked when the day of his wedding would be, replied, *"No man knows except my father."* In Israel the father had to be satisfied that every preparation had been made by his son before he gave him permission to go and get his bride. Jesus spoke these same words of His wedding day.

The groom secured two close friends to assist him in securing his bride and during the actual ceremony. These two are known as *"the friends of the bridegroom."* They functioned as the two witnesses required for a Jewish wedding. One of them was to assist the bride, and to lead her to the ceremony, while the other was stationed with the groom. He performed a special task when the couple retired into the *chadar* after the ceremony.

During the ceremony, known as *Kiddushin*, a second contract was brought forth called a *Ketubah*. This marriage contract was witnessed by the friends of the bridegroom and turned over to the parents of the bride. It contained the promises that the groom pledged to his wife.

As at all weddings, focus was centred on the bride and groom. For this one day they were looked at as king and queen. Every effort was made, and no expense was spared to ensure their joy. On this day, tradition says, their sins were forgiven. They stood pure, without spot or blemish as they were united.

Ephesians 5:25-32, *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, And to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."*

Following the ceremony, the bride and groom entered the *chadar*. Here the groom gave gifts to the bride (Genesis 34:12 & Genesis 24:53).

The couple spent seven days under the *chupah*, or literally in the chamber. The friend of the bridegroom stood at the door. All the guests of the wedding assembled outside, waiting for the friend of the bridegroom to announce the consummation of the marriage covenant, which was related to him by the groom.

John 3:26-30: *"They came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan - the one you testified about - well, He is baptising, and everyone is going to him. 'To this John replied, 'A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, "I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him. "The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less."*

At this signal, great rejoicing broke forth in a week long celebration, until the two emerged from the *chupah* to begin the actual wedding feast.

Revelation 19:4-9: *"The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: 'Amen, Hallelujah!' Then a voice came from the throne, saying: 'Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!'*

"Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: 'Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.' (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) Then the angel said to me, 'Write: "Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, 'These are the true words of God."

Do you begin to understand the enormity of what we're touching here? You need to start looking at marriage through new eyes!

Even as the first trump (shofar) announced the betrothal, so the last trump announced the wedding. Today, when the shofar is blown in churches we are reminded that we are betrothed - and that there's a wedding feast yet to come!

In Psalm 45 we are brought to the biblical portrayal of not only the wedding of the Messiah but also His coronation. The guests are assembled, and gifts are distributed.

Isaiah 61:10 - 62:5 shows the glory of the bride and groom bedecked in all their wedding finery: *"For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow. You will be a crown of splendour in the Lord's hand, a royal diadem in the hand*

of your God. No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married. As a young man marries a maiden, so will your sons marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you."

But we've left the best for last...

Before the wedding the groom required three days to prepare. We know that one day is as a thousand years to the Lord. And just as with working out the three days of the death and resurrection of Jesus, we know that the Jewish method of measuring days is different to ours.

So, we are on the brink of the third millennium, the third day. Yes, the third day is almost upon us. Our bridegroom has been preparing Himself for three days. He is fully prepared and fully expectant, longing to be with His bride. The marriage supper of the lamb could be any day now.

No one knows the exact day except the Father.

The third day is upon us - and the bridegroom is fully prepared.

But are we?

God wants to release us out of much and into much when it comes to our understanding of marriage.

He wants to pull down and smash man-made myths and perceptions of marriage. He wants us throw out all the Mills & Boon and Bold & Beautiful junk, and begin to come into a Biblical understanding of what marriage is all about.

He wants to pull down demonic strongholds over existing and past and future marriages - strongholds of lust and frigidity, strongholds that have been established because the enemy has done everything in his power to make a mockery of God's prophetic purposes.

Some of you are sitting in marriages with things over you, some of you who are divorced are still bound by hurts and bitterness, others are sitting under things that keep you from being released into marriage - because of fear and demonic oppression.

There are some to whom God would say: *"I've kept you from marriage. You've fought and kicked and got angry because you've never got married, but it's been My grace that has kept you and protected you from entering into something that would just be a pale, weak, wishy-washy counterfeit of what I've really purposed for you."*

And as those strongholds come down, you will begin to find marriages restored and unsaved partners coming to the Lord. Good marriages will become even better as they are elevated into the realm of becoming prophetic statements. Becoming a sign and a wonder that people will look at and say, *"So that's how Jesus loves his betrothed, so that's how we as the church should submit and respond to Jesus!"*

Father, in Jesus' name forgive me for taking marriage so lightly, forgive me for my perverted and wrong understandings of what marriage is meant to be. And Father as You forgive me, I pray that you will deliver me from every stronghold that is over my life in the area of marriage. Strongholds that have

come down through the generations, as well as strongholds that I have allowed to become established through my own fears and sin.

"Lord I ask you to give me a revelation in my heart of Your purpose for marriage - so that my marriage (or future marriage) will become the prophetic sign and wonder to the world that You purposed it be. I ask You to do this in the precious and powerful name of Jesus through the power of Your holy Spirit."

With acknowledgements to Greg Killian for his information on Biblical wedding ceremonies.

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APPENDIX F:

HOW DOES SCRIPTURE DEFINE THE MARRIAGE COVENANT? AND HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO VIRGINITY

The following appendix examines what the scriptures say concerning virginity and the marriage covenant in some detail.

1. VIRGINITY : WHAT IS MARRIAGE

In order to define marriage, let us see what the Bible says. Deuteronomy 22:13-21 states:

- 13 *"If any man takes a wife, **and goes in to her**, and detests her,*
14 *"and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings a bad name on her, and says, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her I found she was not a virgin,'*
15 *"then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the **evidence of the young woman's virginity** to the elders of the city at the gate.*
16 *"And the young woman's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as wife, and he detests her;*
17 *'now he has charged her with shameful conduct, saying, "I found your daughter was not a virgin," and yet these are the evidences of my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.*
18 *"Then the elders of that city shall take that man and punish him;*
19 *"and they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel. **And she shall be his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.***
20 *"But if the thing is true, and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman,*
21 *"then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and **the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to play the harlot in her father's house; so you shall put away the evil from among you.***

Deuteronomy 22:14 in Lamsa's translation states:

- 14 *And give an occasion of speech against her, **charging her with adultery**, and bring an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and **when I lay with her**, I found her not a virgin. (LAM)*

This translation clearly equates the lack of virginity with evidence of adultery.

Deuteronomy 22:14 in the New International Version states:

- 14 *and slanders her and gives her a bad name, saying, "I married this woman, but **when I approached her**, I did not find proof of her virginity," (NIV)*

This translation more clearly indicates that the man approached the young woman to consummate the marriage but, presumably on inspection, found her not to be a virgin.

Deuteronomy 22:19 in the King James Version states:

*19 And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; **he may not put her away** all his days. (KJV)*

Consider also Deuteronomy 22:28-29 in the King James version:

28 If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days. (KJV)

Supplementing this scripture, Exodus 22:16-17 states:

16 "If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife.

17 "If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins. (NKJ)

A. VIRGINITY IS A PRE-REQUISITE FOR GODLY MARRIAGE

These scriptures give rise to the following comments:

- i. The evidence of the woman's virginity is without doubt a cloth used to collect the blood shed from the young woman's hymen when she was penetrated in sexual intercourse the first time.
- ii. I do not believe that there is any disagreement that the word "virgin" in the context of a woman refers to a woman who has never had sexual intercourse and, in scriptural terms, whose hymen is intact.
- iii. It is equally clear that the man who accuses his bride of not being a virgin after he "goes into her" or "approaches" her is married to her and this marriage cannot be dissolved if he has brought a false accusation.
- iv. BUT if his accusation is correct then the young woman is defined by the Word of God as a "harlot" and is sentenced to die immediately.
- v. If a man takes a virgin forcibly he is responsible for her for life, he may never put her away or "divorce" her.
- vi. If a man entices a virgin and lies with her, her father may refuse to permit her to marry the man when the father first hears about it, if the father does not refuse to permit her to marry then they are considered to be married. If the father does not permit her to marry it would appear that Deuteronomy 22:13-21 prohibits her from ever remarrying.

B. VIRGINITY IS SACRED

The following interpretation can be derived from this:

- i. Virginity is sacred and Holy, it is not negotiable in the sight of God.
- ii. A woman who is not a virgin is only eligible to marry if she is a widow or divorced on scripturally acceptable grounds (refer Matthew 5:31-32, Matthew 19:3-10, Mark 10:2-12 where Jesus makes it quite clear that there are certain specific conditions under which sexual union with a scripturally divorced woman is not adultery, see also the discussion on divorce in other section.
- iii. A woman who was a harlot or adulteress is only eligible to marry if she has come to salvation and / or she has come to true repentance of her sin and deliverance therefrom. She must be divorced in the sight of God from the man who took her virginity and any man to whom she may have been technically (legally) married in the sight of the world. Such a woman should only be married by a man who is absolutely certain that God has released her for marriage.

C. SOME ASIDES REGARDING VIRGINITY

There are some side issues necessary to fully understand this scripture and therefore to avoid misinterpreting it in the current age:

- i. The virgin referred to in this passage of scripture was typically approximately twelve and a half years old and was on the point of commencing menstruation or had only just commenced. This is confirmed in the Talmud and other sources. The Talmud, Steinsaltz Edition, Volume IX, Tractate Ketubot Part III, published by Random House New York, pages 1 to 13 repeatedly defines a virgin as being a girl between the age of twelve and twelve and a half years corresponding to the point at which a girl allegedly attains sexual maturity and is regarded as an adult woman.

Accordingly, the physical factors which can give rise to perforation of the hymen in older virgins would not have been experienced. Note that so-called "child brides" were still common in the Middle East until recently. I have met a woman of Lebanese descent whose parents' generation frequently married brides in the age group 12 to 15.

I mention this, not with a view to stimulating controversy about the acceptable age of a girl at marriage but to overcome any difficulty that modern readers may have with this scripture based on the tendency for modern, athletically active, young women to damage their hymens before marriage. It is important to understand that it is spiritual folly to marry a woman with a damaged hymen unless one is absolutely certain that God has declared her free to marry. Failing this the man will be committing adultery.

- ii. To the best of my knowledge, the hymen, like the foreskin, serves no known biological purpose of material significance. It only serves as a warning to the bridegroom to the effect that **"if this seal is broken, do not marry"**.

We must therefore ask the question, "Why did God create woman with a hymen?" And surely, the answer can only be "To warn the bridegroom of impending spiritual danger if it is damaged or absent!"

D. THE CRITICAL CONCLUSIONS : SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH A VIRGIN IS MARRIAGE AND WOMAN WAS CREATED FROM THE BEGINNING TO HAVE ONLY ONE HUSBAND

The critical conclusions that can be derived from this scripture are:

- i. ***Since God created woman to lose her virginity only once, she was only intended to marry once and therefore to only marry one man, in other words, biblical marriage IS sexual intercourse with a virgin!***
- ii. Since it is equally clear that once a man has penetrated a virgin and taken her virginity, he is married to her, we must conclude that God permits a man to marry more than one wife since it is perfectly possible for a man to take the virginity of more than one woman.
- iii. God ordained woman to be this way from creation NOT after the fall of Adam and Eve. There is no scripture to indicate that after the fall God re-engineered Eve and added the hymen as an after-thought!
- iv. Therefore, whatever acceptable sexual states God foresaw for woman at creation, as measured by this unique "seal of virginity" must still surely prevail in our fallen state although God did introduce divorce for certain critical cases of spiritual or sexual fornication or treachery.

Appendix D contains many more examples of scriptures which support the fact that THE LORD permits a man to have more than one wife.

E. VIRGINITY : CAVEATS

The above discussion on virginity is intended to highlight the importance of virginity in the sight of God. At the same time, current social practice presents us with a situation in which women typically marry at an age considerably older than twelve and a half years, use tampons and participate in activities which give rise to a greatly increase likelihood of the hymen being innocently perforated before marriage. This introduces some serious complexity in the life of any God-fearing man since it is apparent from scripture that adultery is a very serious sin which leads to the guilty parties having a part in the lake of fire and brimstone if not repented of. **Consequently a man faced with the prospect of consummating a marriage with a woman with a perforated hymen would be well advised to earnestly seek the Lord for absolutely unambiguous confirmation that God will permit him to marry her and that he will not be committing adultery.**

I am also advised that in older women where the hymen is intact it may become tough with the result that great pain is experienced in first intercourse but the hymen does not tear and no blood is shed. However, in such an instance there should be little or no doubt that the woman is a virgin.

2. WHAT IS THE MARRIAGE COVENANT?

I think it is generally accepted within the church that marriage is a covenant relationship, however, there are diverse explanations of the nature and form of this covenant and how it comes into existence. This section seeks to understand the true scriptural marriage covenant.

A. COVENANT REQUIRES THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD

What is the actual sign of the marriage covenant? Hebrews 9:18-20 states:

18 Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood.

- 19 *For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,*
- 20 *saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you." (NKJ)*

Clearly a covenant cannot be dedicated without blood.

B. COVENANT REQUIRES THE CLEAVING / SPLITTING OR CUTTING OF SOME LIVING CREATURE

Referring to Genesis 15:4-21 we read concerning Abram:

- 4 *And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir."*
- 5 *Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."*
- 6 ***And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.***
- 7 *Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."*
- 8 ***And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"***
- 9 *So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."*
- 10 ***Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.***
- 11 *And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.*
- 12 *Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.*
- 13 *Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.*
- 14 *"And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.*
- 15 *"Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.*
- 16 *"But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."*
- 17 *And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that **passed between those pieces.***
- 18 ***On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates--***
- 19 *"the Kenites, the Kenezites, and the Kadmonites,*
- 20 *"the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Rephaim,*
- 21 *"the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." (NKJ)*

This is the passage (verse 6) where Abram believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness as referred to in Galatians 3:6:

just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." (NKJ)

and in Romans 4:9-12 we read:

9 *Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that **faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.***

10 *How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.*

11 *And **he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised,** that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also,*

12 *and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. (NKJ)*

In this passage there appears to be a clear correlation between the covenant under which Christians now walk and the covenant that God cut with Abram in Genesis 15:4-21. There is also a correlation with a subsequent covenant cut between God and Abraham by way of circumcision, as discussed in section, below.

However there is another principle contained in Genesis 15, specifically in verse 10:

Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other;

in verse 17 we read:

*. . . .a smoking oven and a burning torch that **passed between those pieces.***

*The smoking oven and burning torch are widely regarded as being manifestations of the presence of God since verse 18 states that "**On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram,**". So it would appear that God passed between the halves of the animals in making the covenant.*

Is there confirmation of this interpretation in scripture?

Jeremiah 34:18 states:

*'And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of **the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it-- (NKJ)***

It appears clear in this case that the covenant made with God by the Princes of Judah and others referred to in the subsequent verses involved cutting a calf in two and passing between the parts of it. Essentially the same actions that we see in Genesis 15:10 to 18.

However, there is more to it. The Living Torah, a modern Jewish translation by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, published by Maznaim Publishing Corporation, New York and Jerusalem, translates **Genesis 15:10:** *[Abram] brought all these for Him. He **split** them in half, and placed one half opposite the other.*

Here we see the word translated "cut" in the New King James Version, translated split.

The footnote to Genesis 15:10 in the Living Torah states:

"split them . . . This was the way of making a covenant (Rashi). Indeed, the words b'rith (covenant) and bathar (split) appear to be closely related (.....) It symbolized that just as the two halves of the

*animal were really one, so were the two people making the covenant. Moreover, **just as one side cannot live without the other, so the two cannot live without each other** (.....). It was also seen as a malediction; **anyone violating the oath would be torn asunder like the animals** (.....)."*

In this one note we begin to see the deeper meaning embodied in Deuteronomy 22:13-30, cited above, revealed:

- i. The covenant is made by splitting or cutting some living thing and shedding blood.*
- ii. People who make a blood covenant become one and cannot live without one another.*
- iii. A person who breaks covenant is to be put to death.*

This is confirmed by a variety of independent sources who have studied the blood covenant in scripture and also in pagan practice. Refer teachings by Kenneth Copeland on "Covenant Made by Blood : Hased - Agape", ISBN 0-88114-790-7, published by Kenneth Copeland Ministries.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines:

*"split ... Break forcibly, be broken into parts esp. longitudinally or with the grain or **plane of cleavage**; ..."*

Consider also the physical reality of a "meat cleaver" as something that cleaves or cuts into the meat.

C. THE MARRIAGE COVENANT IS CUT WHEN A MAN CLEAVES INTO HIS VIRGIN WIFE

Bringing this together Genesis 2:21-25 in the King James Translation states:

- 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;*
- 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*
- 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*
- 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall **cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.***
- 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (KJV)*

Thus we see the man cleaving or splitting his wife, forcibly breaking apart her hymen on the plane of cleavage, shedding blood. He then proceeds to "walk" or "pass between" the two halves completing the covenant act.

The imagery is vivid and powerful. If we put aside our prudery for a moment and wonder at the physical appearance of the external female sexual organ, we should be even further amazed at the imagery which our God has encapsulated in what superficially is an organ whose structure and design makes no earthly sense. It is not intended to, it faithfully recreates the two halves of the covenant animal, even to the hair covering the animal! Surely we must conclude that God knew the end from the beginning and designed woman to be symbolic of His covenant with Man!

Taking it further, He symbolically recreates the cutting of the covenant every time a wife who truly loves her husband and gives herself totally to him experiences sexual orgasm coupled with a flood of blood into the labia minora!

How can we conclude other than that the sexual act is the most sublimely holy representation of the act of covenant? How can we be other than appalled at how this symbolism has been lost and distorted?

The sexual act is an act of such enormous spiritual significance - is it any wonder that Satan has expended the energy that he has to deceive us for so long?!

How can we for a moment suggest that there is another purpose for virginity?

D. THE FEMALE SEXUAL ORGAN IS THE SYMBOL OF THE MARRIAGE COVENANT

Clearly every time a covenant minded man sees his wife's sexual organ he is instinctively reminded of his covenant with her. Clearly it is an abomination for any other man to have sight of the outward symbol of that covenant, let alone to penetrate it, thus breaking the covenant.

Surely the symbolic portrayal of the female sexual organ, aroused and provocatively displayed in the form of the blood red "heart", used on Valentine's day cards, to say "I love you" and as a seemingly innocuous symbol of love throughout our society represents one of the most effective devices that Satan has used to distract us totally from the true meaning of the love that God intended to exist between man and woman? Do you realise that every time you see a red heart, Satan is tricking you subliminally to contemplate woman's most private AND most Holy part! As one gains an understanding of the "one flesh bond" it becomes apparent that, in a very real sense this is the door to her heart.

Remember that 1 Corinthians 12:23-24 states:

*23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and **our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,***

*24 but our presentable parts have no need. But **God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,** (NKJ)*

E. THE CLOSE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN COVENANT AND THE MARRIAGE COVENANT

BUT WAIT - IT GOES FURTHER!

Ephesians 5:22-33 in the King James Version states:

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

*23 **For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.***

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:*

30 *For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*

31 *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, **and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.***

32 ***This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.***

33 *Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she **reverence** her husband. (KJV)*

Surely here we see one of the most perfect examples of God's infinite attention to detail, His wonder and His majesty. We see the blood covenant between Christ and His bride the church, neatly tied in to the blood covenant between a man and his wife both demonstrated symbolically by the covenant cut by walking between the halves of the animal that has been "cleaved".

If I return for a moment to the three points made earlier:

- i. The covenant is made by splitting or cutting some living thing and shedding blood:
 - 1) Between man and man - an animal.
 - 2) Between man and woman - the hymen of the woman.
 - 3) **Between man and God - the precious Blood of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, shed on the cross at Calvary by the crown of thorns, the lashes, the nails and the spear all of which cleaved into His flesh.**
- ii. People who make a blood covenant become one and cannot live without one another:
 - 1) Between man and man - spiritual curses come into effect, something which our generation is woefully ignorant of, but that is a subject for another discourse.
 - 2) Between man and woman - the one flesh bond, a powerful spiritual bond which literally unites and ties them together "until death do us part".
 - 3) Between man and God - the born again reality, a powerful spiritual force in which the Spirit of Jesus comes to live within the Temple of the Believer who believes in their heart and confesses with their mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord.
- iii. A person who breaks covenant is to be put to death:
 - 1) Between man and man, long since lost. Numbers 30:2 states:

"If a man vows a vow to the LORD, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth. (NKJ)

Today a man's word is seldom his bond. Yet there are still potentially eternal consequences since Revelation 21:8 is quite clear that "ALL liars" will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone.
 - 2) Between man and woman, long since lost in the natural but as I understand it spiritual death still results from unrepented adultery. Today adultery hardly seems to be regarded as serious sin, even in the church. Many preach that it is easily "repented" of. In reality, the covenant bond can only be broken by the death of one spouse unless God, in His mercy and in response to humble

petition in the name of Jesus, cuts the tie. But He will only do this as a consequence of persistent treachery on the part of one spouse.

But the offender who does not repent in this life will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone!

3) Between man and God the penalty REMAINS ETERNAL SEPARATION FROM GOD - REAL DEATH. Nothing has changed even though modern man and the church make light of this. People are breaking covenant with God all the time and turning their backs on Him to go to Hell, they just do not realize it. The deception that it is not serious for people to break their word and for people to commit adultery has given rise to a far worse deception, that it is acceptable to betray and disobey God!!

3. A KEY CONTRAST : THE FORESKIN

In contrast to the verses from Deuteronomy 22:13-30 cited above in the discussion on virginity and the sacredness and scriptural importance of the hymen, consider what Genesis 17:9-14 says about the foreskin of man:

9 *And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.*

10 *"This is **My covenant** which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: **Every male child among you shall be circumcised;***

11 *"and **you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.***

12 *"He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.*

13 *"He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.*

14 *"**And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.**" (NKJ)*

This is just the first of numerous scriptures on the subject of circumcision and the removal of the foreskin.

A. THE FORESKIN SERVES NO USEFUL PURPOSE

In Genesis 17:9-14 cited above, we see certain parallels with the previous passage on virginity. In particular:

- i. Blood is shed by the cutting of flesh - the foreskin in this case versus the hymen in the previous.
- ii. The flesh that is cut off in this case again appears to serve no useful anatomical or biological purpose. It is apparently redundant and can therefore be removed without any long term harm. In fact, males who are not circumcised have, particularly in earlier generations, been prone to infection under the foreskin. It is, to a point a liability and a health hazard if not removed.
- iii. If the man is not circumcised he is cut off from his people. David referred to Goliath as an "uncircumcised Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:26 and 36) signifying that Goliath did not have a

covenant with God and was therefore not entitled to His protection and His promises while David did.

B. THE FORESKIN IS ONLY USEFUL FOR CUTTING COVENANT WITH GOD

The only interpretation that can be placed on the foregoing conclusions is that the foreskin was created for a specific purpose, to signify covenant with God.

C. SOME ASIDES REGARDING THE FORESKIN

- i. It would seem to be intentional on the part of God that He chose to place the sign of His covenant on an organ which man was obliged to take notice of on a daily basis and could therefore be constantly reminded of his covenant with God.
- ii. The presence or absence of a foreskin has no relevance with regard to marriage and virginity. **God did not provide any safety mechanism comparable to the hymen to warn a bride that a man was not a "virgin".**
- iii. Therefore, if God ever intended a man to be restricted to one wife he was grossly unjust in providing a fail safe mechanism to protect men against adultery and providing no such mechanism to protect women!

D. THE CRITICAL CONCLUSION : NOTHING IN CREATION PREVENTS A MAN FROM CONSUMMATING MARRIAGE WITH MORE THAN ONE WOMAN

These two passages regarding virginity and the foreskin bring us directly to what you may regard as a rather shocking conclusion:

- i. **There is nothing in scripture which prevents a man from consummating marriage with more than one woman. Therefore, God created man and woman from the outset for a man to be married to several women at the same time.**
- ii. **Therefore, the current doctrine of the church regarding a man only having one wife is not correct.**

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Note: Please refer to the **Caveat on page xii** and the section on **Vocabulary on page xv** for cautions regarding doctrine and word usage in the older eBooks that is inaccurate. Apart from these errors these eBooks contain much valuable information.

eBook 7:
What is the Origin and Purpose of Man -
Published in 2007

This eBook presents my first comprehensive attempt to prove Creation without relying on the testimony and witness of others.
I have subsequently refined this in later articles.

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF MAN?
Seeking to Define the Essence of the Difference
Between "Evolution" and "Creation"

Most of this document was drafted on or before 14 May 2004.
I resumed work on 27 September 2007 starting with section 20 on page 78 and this version is released on 4 October 2007 with minor modifications to the first part of the book while accepting that my understanding of some issues has evolved in the intervening three and a half years.

ABOUT INTERPRETING THIS DOCUMENT

This document started out with a vague idea of where i was headed in terms of solid evidence in support of the thesis that there is a creator.

As i wrote and researched i gained more insight into what i thought was important.

I have chosen not to edit the overall structure and flow of the document much in order to attempt to preserve the line of thought i followed.

I started writing out with quite a high level of uncertainty about the conclusion and, as things progressed, developed a higher level of certainty.

I have chosen to leave this development in the document in the hope that it will be of assistance to others in tracing my steps in this particular voyage of discovery.

For this reason the document does not always flow and there is some repetition of points as i revisited some issues and reached greater clarity.

I hope that this approach will work for you and that you will gain some value from it no matter what you conclude.

In my research i found many cases where the argument seemed to revolve around the choice of words of a particular person or about the opinions of a particular person rather than focusing on what seemed to me to be fundamental principles.

In reading what follows, i ask you not to focus on my particular choice of words or what "i" say. Rather focus on the concepts and principles that YOU can verify from your OWN personal experience and see where that takes you.

SUMMARY

This ebook sets out to evaluate whether there is solid physical evidence of the existence of a creator and that our world and human kind were created and did not evolve.

A wide diversity of examples are used to evidence something that is referred to as engineered evolutionary creation and to argue against random non-engineered evolution.

It is concluded that for those who are willing to rationally examine all the evidence there is a robust case for the existence of a creator while if someone does not want to believe they will probably find excuses not to accept the evidence that is presented.

It is concluded that in both cases it is a matter of faith -- either one believes in a creator and cannot explain where He came from or one believes in the existence of matter from an origin that we cannot explain.

The critical reason to accept the existence of a creator is that He is reported to have said that those who do believe will be rewarded and may qualify to sit on a high throne in heaven for eternity while those who do not believe will burn in a lake of fire and brimstone for eternity. However, i cannot offer solid evidence of these choices.

The bottom line as i see it is for you to assess that there is a reasonable basis to believe that a Creator exists and then to pray to Him to reveal Himself to you.

Faith is a personal thing that is more about personal experience of the creator than it is about intellectual assent to the probability of His existence, although intellectual assent may be an essential step in the road to true faith.

In writing this eBook i have done my best to be impartial, to the extent that i have failed in this endeavour, please accept my sincere apologies.

To the extent that various items of content may be offensive to various people i apologise, it was not my intention to offend you.

I hope that you will find this book interesting and challenging.

James Robertson
04 October 2007
email: james@etimin.org

1. INTRODUCTION

I have recently (May 2004) become intensely aware of the debate between those who allege that the universe and mankind "evolved" and those who allege that it was "created" by a supernatural creator.

By training, i am an engineer with a doctorate in Civil Engineering. Accordingly, i have a rigorous formal training in physics, chemistry, mathematics, thermodynamics and mechanics amongst other disciplines.

Up to the age of thirty nine, i was convinced of the validity of the theory commonly referred to as "evolution" and was sceptical, cynical and judgmental about people who believed in creation and a creator. I had some level of intellectual knowledge of "Christianity" and a lot of judgments about "The Bible", the "Church", etc.

In 1993, i had a significant experience which convinced me that there was a creator and that he wanted a personal relationship with me. I made certain choices about believing "The Bible" and about seeking a personal relationship with this creator. Since then, i have had many experiences that have reinforced my conviction that this creator, whose essential name i understand to be "Yah", who describes himself as "Yah the eternally self existing", does exist and does want a personal relationship with every person on this planet. In what follows, i will refer to this being as "the Almighty".

I appreciate that this may constitute an obstacle to some who read this article. However, i ask you to grant me the space to use certain terminology that i am familiar with. I will attempt in the remainder of this article to minimise the use of this term and other terms which might be seen as seeking to impose my perspective on what i hope will be a reasonably objective analysis of what seems important from my perspective.

I have also come to believe profoundly that mankind today knows very little about this being who i believe created us and that much of what mankind claims to know about this being and his ways and why he does things is seriously in error. So much so, that a few days ago i was forced to conclude that i was not certain that i could offer a solid, objective, unemotional case to substantiate what i believe.

I also concluded that there was much that was said in support of "evolution" that i could not summarily reject or offer convincing evidence to disprove.

Much of this realisation came about as a consequence of an email dialogue with two proponents of evolution. During this dialogue, particularly with the second person, the channel director of an internationally broadcast specialist television channel on history, i came to see that my attitude had become arrogant, judgmental and positional.

I was writing in a way that suggested that i HAD "all truth" and that those who did not believe what i believed were not walking in integrity or were fools.

This is not consistent with the values and disciplines associated with what i claim to believe, specifically that i should not judge others.

This brought me to the challenging realisation that, having departed from a harsh and judgmental position in support of evolution, i had migrated to a harsh and judgmental position in support of creation.

After much soul searching, i concluded that this was not what i wanted for myself.

I concluded that, while i have profound conviction of the essence of what i believe, there was much that i could not adequately explain in a manner that satisfied my engineering training and that, accordingly, i was not equipped to offer any other person an adequate basis to rationally consider whether they could accept and adopt what i believe.

In evaluating my position, i spent several hours on the internet. I started by looking for some "evidence" that i was convinced existed and would incontrovertibly support my position. I found rapidly that others had very different views of my "evidence".

In particular, i spent several hours on the <http://www.talkorigins.org> - "The Talk Origins Archive" a web site "Exploring the Creation / Evolution Controversy".

This site contains literally hundreds of pages seeking to address many of the pieces of "evidence" that i had held in my earlier discussions to be solid.

This was a challenging experience in that it offered me the opportunity to assess what people who support evolution are saying about the arguments and evidence offered by those who support creation.

I found myself confronted with many statements in support of creation that i could not agree with and also confronted with many statements in support of evolution that i could not agree with. I also found many statements on both sides that i understood to be valid.

These findings presented me with many dilemma's that challenged me considerably. In particular, i found myself challenged to see whether i could objectively, in a manner that was respectful and honouring of my engineering disciplines, present an analysis of the subject that would stand the test of scrutiny. And, if i could not, whether i could objectively own what it was that i could not substantiate in a manner that left space for others to draw their own conclusions.

This document is an attempt to meet this objective.

It is my hope that no matter what your perspective that this article will challenge you to take a fresh look at your perspective on the subject of evolution versus creation.

2. AN IMPORTANT ASSUMPTION AND SOME PAINFUL DEDUCTIONS

In all that follows, i would like to suggest that ultimately there is only one accurate explanation for any piece of evidence or data and that is what actually happened.

Thus, at the simplest level, the universe exists, it came from somewhere.

As far as i can see, whatever evolutionists and creationists want to believe it only happened one way.

It seems clear to me that any answer must take account of all available data and evidence.

One of the problems that i notice is that it seems that most people ATTACH their interpretation to the evidence as though the interpretation is part of the evidence.

Something that seems very clear to me is that there is no human being alive today who was present before the first human being capable of speaking came into existence. Whether they were created or

evolved or came to be as the conclusion of an evolutionary process of creation or whether they came into existence in some other way.

There is also no written record, written at the time, which provides a human eye witness account. There is not even a written record which claims to provide an eye witness account. Specifically, "the Bible" does not claim to provide an eye witness account by a human being of how the first human being came to exist.

Accordingly, there is no human eye witness account of HOW the first man came to exist that is offered by either side in the controversy.

There is an enormous amount of evidence that man does exist, that the universe exists, that animals and plants exist.

However, there is a great deal of dispute about how they got there.

There are allegedly physical remains, rock masses, deposits of material and remains that provide tangible evidence of the prior existence of living creatures that DID exist at some time, as evidenced by their skeletons, etc. This includes alleged evidence of creatures that have the appearance of being "intermediate" between apes and humans. It also includes alleged evidence of giants, artifacts supporting "Bible" stories, etc.

It seems to me that, provided these remains are physically verifiably in existence, it is not helpful to offer explanations that sound like they are ignoring the existence of these specimens.

Here i find what seems to me to be a very substantial dilemma.

I CAN verify that i exist, at least at the level that i can see myself, touch myself, hear myself talk, interact with other people. For the purpose of this article i choose to accept this as definitive evidence of my existence and your existence.

I can also verify at some basic level that the planet earth exists and that the universe exists. There are things that i can see, have seen and experienced. Depending on how much an individual person has physically travelled around the earth they will have more or less tangible evidence in this regard.

For the rest, i realised that i am reliant on what other human beings say.

By way of example, there are archaeological finds that support certain of my religious beliefs that i have seen on video. These finds are reported by a man i have met personally and who i believe to be trustworthy and a man of integrity. Yet i have NOT personally seen any of the evidence. I have not travelled to any of the sites he refers to. I have not spoken personally to any of his sources.

I ONLY have his word for it.

And, given that by his own admission some of what he reports is based on the evidence of other people and that he has not travelled to all the sites and personally inspected all the evidence that he cites, i ONLY have the word of his sources for that information.

In considering this data, i was forced to confront the reality that in the context of my understanding of the moon, the sun, the stars, the universe, in the context of my understanding of the seas, almost

all animals and plants on earth, even my understanding of cities and places i have not visited, i am ENTIRELY dependent on what other human beings write, say, portray on television, etc.

Taking this further, it occurred to me that with regard to the ENTIRE body of evidence that any single human being uses to support their world view of creation, evolution or any other view, most arguments seem to me to be almost entirely dependent on what numerous other human beings have reported or on very narrow technical expertise which is not available to most of us.

I realised that even those human beings who are regarded as "most distinguished", "expert", etc only have personal exposure to a minute fraction of the total data that is available on the earth and, for the rest, they are dependent on the information that they receive from other human beings.

In addition to this, some of those who believe there IS a creator, claim to have had experiences with this creator and some of these claim to have some level of personal relationship with this creator and even claim that he speaks to them and they speak to him.

However, many of those who believe in a creator seem not to believe those who claim that this creator speaks to human beings today and even fewer, as far as i know, believe that it is possible to have a deep personal relationship with this creator today.

In other words, those who do believe in a creator do not seem to agree with one another on many many points. This seems to me to make it very difficult for those who do not believe in a creator to find a basis to reassess what they believe.

In fact, it seems to me that much of what is offered in argument against creation is actually argument against the beliefs of specific groups of people who believe in creation.

In addition, i realised a few days ago, that even though i claim to have a deep personal relationship with the Almighty and claim to hear his voice at some level, i have not heard him personally say anything to me about many of the issues that are addressed in this article. I also realised that what it has seemed important to me to address with him has not generally been associated with the subject of this article.

I therefore concluded that it is probably highly unlikely that there are many, if any, human beings alive today who claim to have a relationship with the creator who they allege exists, who have had any lengthy discussion with this creator with regard to the full scope of what is addressed in the debate with regard to creation versus evolution.

In fact, i concluded that, based on my life experience to date, most of the opinions of people who believe in creation is based on what other human beings have said and recorded, in particular, many of these people place a lot of reliance on "the Bible". And, the present editions of "the Bible" have been produced by human beings based on writings produced by other human beings.

Accordingly, once more, there is very little first hand evidence. It seems to me that whether one subscribes to evolution or to creation or to something else, it behooves us to acknowledge that almost everything we subscribe to is based on the opinions or teachings or ... of some person or persons who, for whatever reason, we personally hold to be relevant and authoritative.

One of the painful conclusions i reached in my deliberations is that the best i can say with regard to many things that i had believed at the time of starting this article pertaining to the debate regarding

evolution versus creation is that i personally DO NOT KNOW - my opinions are based on third party reports and evidence which i have personally NOT touched, felt, seen or experienced.

It seems to me that this conclusion applies to every person on the planet. There are some to whom it applies less, since they have devoted decades of their lives to their particular areas of study. However, in the scheme of the entire picture of knowledge, they too, are largely reliant on what others have reported.

3. SOME IMPORTANT PREPARATORY POINTS

Arising out of the communication referred to in the introduction, particularly the communication with the television channel director, i reached a number of conclusions regarding the manner in which the subject of creation versus evolution is debated that it seems important to me to share at this point.

These are as follows:

A. JUDGMENTAL LANGUAGE

I realised that i had used language in my emails that was judgmental and imputed intentional negative motive to people who consider evolution to be valid.

I also realised that people who subscribe to creation seem to be particularly prone to this. This is despite the fact that the religious disciplines to which many of these people claim to subscribe specifically forbid judging others.

At the same time, in my research, i observed that those who subscribe to evolution seem to be prone to other language which, when closely analyzed, seems to me also to be judgmental and dismissive.

I concluded that the use of judgmental language, name calling, insinuation, etc is a barrier to another person receiving a message, whatever that message may be.

Accordingly, it seems to me that an important step in resolving the debate with regard to evolution versus creation is that people who sincerely are seeking the truth choose to avoid such language.

This seems to me to be particularly important if one is willing to accept that in the final analysis there can only be one comprehensive explanation for any specific event or development.

In other words, it seems clear to me that whether one subscribes to evolution, creation or something else, it would be helpful to admit that there is only one correct answer.

This does NOT mean that i am suggesting that either "evolution" is correct or "creation" is correct. I am suggesting that there is a correct answer which may lie between these two themes.

I am also suggesting that "evolution" and "creation" are very broad and very loose terms that are understood differently by different people and, as such, they are not necessarily particularly useful descriptors.

I am also suggesting that the truth may lie somewhere between what a simplistic interpretation of "creation" or "evolution" suggests.

In fact, it seems to me that some of what evolution says is probably more or less accurate and some of what creation says is more or less accurate.

It therefore seems to me that between these two labels exists the possibility of a reality which could include what has been referred to previously as "an evolutionary process of creation".

Accordingly, what i am motivating in this point is that both sides stop judging the other and start considering whether it is possible that some of what others have to say has validity.

I am also suggesting that this entire subject is too complex to call ANY specific interpretation "correct" or "incorrect". It seems clear to me that in interpreting almost any piece of evidence there is a continuum on a scale of zero to ten between complete error and complete truth. In other words, it seems to me that there are many interpretations that may be partially accurate at some level and partially inaccurate at some level.

As i see it, the challenge thus becomes to determine what portion of any specific interpretation or opinion is valid or invalid rather than to attach total accuracy or total inaccuracy as the only possible "judgments".

B. CONSPIRACY IMPUTED

I also realised that in the correspondence referred to, my choice of words at least at some level, imputed that there is a conspiracy to deny creation and support evolution.

From personal experience i conclude that some or other form of "conspiracy theory" is quite common amongst those who subscribe to creation. I do not have significant evidence to support a view that this possibly happens amongst those who subscribe to evolution.

In the light of the previous point, i concluded that any form of "conspiracy" theory is a form of judgment and therefore not compatible with the values and disciplines that i claim to subscribe to.

In response to this i examined what i believe regarding "conspiracy" in some detail and concluded that i do NOT believe that there is any form of conspiracy.

I DO believe that people who support evolution do so sincerely on the basis of the data they have at their disposal and on the basis of their confidence and trust in others who support evolution.

I cannot find any possible reason why people would actively champion something that they know to be in error.

I do NOT think that people make errors deliberately nor do i think that people hold views and opinions that they consciously know are in error.

I hold that this applies just as much to those who support evolution as it applies to those who support creation.

It seems clear to me that none of these people are consciously in error.

This does not say that people do not have "blind spots" things that we are unable to see for whatever reason. In my personal life i have regularly found things life that i could not recognise i was doing but which i eventually came to "own".

By my own life evidence, i drastically changed what i believe relative to evolution versus creation in 1993 and, since then, i have drastically changed what i believe on any number of matters pertaining to religion and life generally.

It seems clear to me that the opportunity is there for every human being to make such shifts and to discover that what they have held to be true is not true.

It also seems clear to me that everyone of us filters what we see and hear through social, religious and other filters in terms of which we SUBCONSCIOUSLY hold to be true or not true.

Thus, it seems to me, that if one has a strongly held belief that the entire universe and all forms of plant and animal life including human kind were literally created in six periods of twenty four hours, one is going to find it difficult to comprehend the view point of someone who holds that this process took hundreds of millions or even billions of years.

The paradigms are so extremely opposed that reconciliation SEEMS impossible and labels that impute lack of integrity or lack of intellect or conspiracy or other negative therefore appear to me to be very widely applied.

This does not seem to me to be helpful in the context of mankind establishing what is true about these things. Whatever that truth may be.

C. ABSOLUTE POSITIONING

In reviewing the emails referred to earlier, i also noticed that the manner in which i presented my view was consistently in absolute terms.

In other words, i took a position that what i wrote was absolutely correct and left no space for disagreement or discussion.

In the introspection that this observation occasioned, i came to acknowledge that:

- 1) I do NOT have ALL truth.
- 2) That i do hold many of my opinions firmly and with deep conviction.
- 3) That there ARE opinions that i have changed at various times in my life and it is therefore possible that others have data that i lack which could cause me to change my opinions further.

Accordingly, i concluded that this form of positioning was NOT helpful and apologised accordingly.

This point is, in a sense, an extension of the previous point.

On reflecting on these findings i have also concluded that my training as an engineer at least at some level encouraged me to seek to come to a place of absolute certainty with regard to opinions regarding data that i had validated.

I have also concluded that the tendency for society to encourage us to move to absolute positions is widespread.

"I don't know" and "i am not sure" are not phrases that i read frequently in any form of publication or hear in any form of communication.

I read the articles on the web site referred to previously as consistently presenting statements which i experienced as absolute and positional.

I realised that this did not leave much margin for discussion.

It seems to me that taking an absolute position inherently creates a situation where there is almost no room for another party with a different viewpoint to do anything but respond in a manner that is judgmental and confrontational or, at least, will be experienced this way.

In the days after i made this observation and apologised to the person who had received my emails, i have given much thought to this subject. I have concluded that positioning is something i have done through most of my life and that it is something that i have experienced from others throughout of my life. I have also concluded that it seems to be endemic and that it is not serving me particularly well, nor, it seems to me, is this serving humankind particularly well.

I offer this for your consideration.

It seems to me that, in the context of evolution versus creation, that if significant players on both sides were to depart from absolute positions, the possibility of finding a middle ground which accommodates what is really true about both positions would be a possibility.

I have also found in the last few days that "i don't know", applied to many things that i had previous held that i "did know" has been an interesting and freeing experience.

The truth is that in many areas of my life, including my religious beliefs and beliefs regarding creation and evolution, i simply do NOT know. I have deep convictions and strongly held beliefs, but MOST of them are based on what other people have said or written and which i cannot verify at all or can only verify at enormous cost in time and finances.

I have also realised that there are many conclusions that i have drawn from my own experiences that it now seems to me are not nearly as absolute as i thought they were.

In fact, notwithstanding an honours degree in Civil Engineering with distinction, a PhD in Civil Engineering, listing in "Who's Who in the World" and various other international accolades, presentations at technical and business conferences internationally and publishing a professional book on "The Critical Factors For Information Technology Investment Success", there is MUCH that i don't know, much that i think i know and not a lot that i can demonstrably prove absolutely to be true!

It seems to me that this conclusion applies to every person on the planet if we are willing to confront such an unsettling reality.

It seems to me that if we are able to depart from absolute positioning we will find a basis for resolving "creation" versus "evolution" and also a basis for resolving conflict on earth.

This may be idealistic, i still think it is worth raising for consideration.

D. DEBATES ABOUT WORDS

In much of my research into this subject, it seemed to me that the debate was often about the meaning of words used by others rather than about the substance or essence of the subject.

There also seemed to be a lot of debate that was directed at refuting some other person's point rather than addressing what seemed to me to be the fundamental principles behind the other person's point of view.

I don't see how proving another person wrong really moves this debate forward. It is easy to do at some debating level, i think it is more challenging and more productive to try and see what IS true about what another person says and then to try and integrate this into one's own thinking.

I have tried to do this in this document. I am not sure that i have succeeded particularly well.

To the extent that i have not accomplished this i ask you to do what you can to focus on the essence of what i am trying to communicate rather on the details where i may be in error.

4. USE OF STATISTICS FROM GOOGLE.COM

In various parts of this article i have made use of statistics from the "Google" internet search engine at <http://www.google.com>.

I have chosen to do this as a simple statistical data gathering approach which can be verified by any reader with access to the internet.

In June 2000 Google was indexing approximately one billion internet web pages. At the beginning of May 2004 Google was searching over four billion web pages (help@google.com).

Entering the same words or phrases in the Google search engine that are used in this document will return the statistics that apply at that point in time. The number of pages will change as new web pages are created and old web pages are edited or removed. The statistics in this article were gathered during the second half of April 2004 and the first half of May 2004.

It is my expectation that if you undertake a search at any time in the next few years you will obtain numbers that are more or less in line with the numbers presented here. As such, this seems to me to represent simple, verifiable data that is potentially available to many who might read this article.

My rationale in using these statistics is to give some indication of the level of interest in the world in specific subjects. It may also give some indication of the level of specialisation in a specific subject.

Insofar as, in my experience, it takes anything from a few minutes to several days to create the content for a single web page and populate the page, the number of pages gives some indication of the extent to which people somewhere are investing time creating pages which mention the particular word or phrase or combination of words in question.

At some level, on the assumption that people create web pages in the hope that somebody else will read them, it seems to me that the number of web pages is also an indication of some level of expectation regarding the number of people who might look for web pages that refer to that subject.

Accordingly, I see these statistics as a basic first approximation sampling technique which gives some indication of level of interest and, by implication, some indication in some level of "belief" that such things exist and are relevant.

Thus, the existence of approximately 21,200,000 million web pages which contain the word "creation" one or more times indicates to me that there is a reasonably high level of interest in subjects that at least at some level refer to this concept and, by implication, a significant number of people who believe in such a concept at least at some level.

The existence of 18,100,000 web pages which contain the word "evolution" one or more times to me indicates a similar level of interest.

I personally do not think that any conclusion can be drawn from the three million web page difference in the count for creation versus the count for evolution. Both words can be used in contexts other than the context used in this document.

The form of reference used in this document to report Google search statistics is mostly of the form "word or phrase" (nnn,nnn) where "word or phrase" is either a single word in quotation marks, or a phrase in quotation marks or several words each in quotation marks or a phrase NOT in quotation marks. Where a phrase was searched with part or all of the search text NOT in quotation marks it is reported with a hyphen before and after the phrase such as -is there a god-. The hyphens were NOT used in the search.

In the case of a single word, this is the word that was searched in the Google search engine by entering the word into the search box and starting the search. For example "creation".

In the case of a phrase in quotes, the phrase was entered in the search box with the entire phrase in quotes, as it appears in this document. For example "argument from incredulity".

In the case of multiple discrete words or phrases, each word or phrase was entered as indicated in this document with quotation marks around phrases and other words standing alone in the search box. Such composite search text is shown between hyphens, for example -"is there a god" who is a creator- in this case "is there a god" is searched for an exact match and the words -who is a creator- are searched anywhere on the same page.

Phrases without quotes can give rise to very diverse responses many of which are unlikely to relate to the sense of the phrase, the occurrence of the major words in the phrase on the same page may give some indication of the level to which those words are associated. This is not a very significant indicator unless there are a number of keywords in the phrase which are relatively uncommon in general use.

These counts are approximate for many reasons. Some will be more approximate than others.

Some words such as "fear" have been appropriated for other uses, included in names of pop groups, etc. Statistics will include all of these instances.

Some words such as "bar" have multiple meanings as in a "bar of music" and in a place where alcohol is sold and a form of metal formed into a "bar", etc. In such cases, a search on the individual word will not deliver a statistic of any relevance.

I have endeavoured to exclude the more extreme cases where i have been conscious that they exist but it is likely that there are other examples where i may have overlooked alternative uses of the word that may be obvious to you. In such cases, please disregard that particular statistic.

The thesis of this document is not fundamentally founded on these counts, they are offered as an indication of some widely available data that i think collectively points to some things which at some level seem relevant to me in building the overall case of this document. It is up to you whether you attach any significance to any of these numbers.

Where statistics have been offered for different forms of the same word, such as "fear" and "fearful" it is possible that there will likely be considerable overlap between different forms of the same word on the same web pages. Where the statistics are similar i do not think that they have much relevance. Where there are significant differences between counts then it may indicate some finer detail. I have searched on multiple word forms because i did not have any particular basis to select a specific word form and therefore offer the results of my research for your information.

I have not defined the words on which the searches were conducted unless it seems to me to be a relatively unknown term. I assume that most readers will be familiar with most of the words at some level. If there is a word that is cited and you are not familiar with it i suggest that you go to Google (enter <http://www.google.com> in an internet browser) and search on the word. On the bar near the top where the search result is reported the word "definition" appears towards the right. Click on (definition) and a definition of the word will be displayed.

In the format that the search results are presented, as set out above, (nnn,nnn) represents the number of web site pages that were found by the Google search engine when it searched it's database of information contained on the internet.

The nnn,nnn can range from a small number, such as "argument from incredulity" (578) that is 578 web pages to very large numbers such as "love" with 122,000,000 (122 million pages). Counts are to three significant digits.

5. ARGUMENT FROM INCRECULITY

In reviewing the "Talk Origins" web site referred to above i repeatedly found reference to something called "argument from incredulity".

The explanation of this is as follows:

"Claim CA100:

It is inconceivable that ____ (fill in the blank) could have originated naturally. Therefore, it must have been created.

This argument, also known as the argument from ignorance or "god of the gaps," is implicit in very many different creationist arguments. In particular, it is behind all arguments against abiogenesis and any and all claims of intelligent design.

Response:

Really, the claim is "I can't conceive that. . ." Others might be able to find a natural explanation; in many cases, they already have. Nobody knows everything, so it is unreasonable to conclude that something is impossible just because you don't know it.

The peril of negative arguments is that they may rest on our lack of knowledge, rather than on positive results. [Behe 2003]

The argument from incredulity creates a God of the Gaps. Gods were responsible for lightning until we determined natural causes for lightning; for infectious diseases until we found bacteria and viruses; for mental illness until we found biochemical causes for them. God is confined only to those parts of the universe we don't know about, and that keeps shrinking."
(<http://www.talkorigins.org/indexcc/CA/CA100.html>)

I encountered the response that something was an "argument from incredulity" in many locations on the Talk Origins web site. A search on Google identified approximately 578 web sites containing the exact phrase "argument from incredulity". Brief visits to a few of these indicated similar definitions to that above.

I find myself severely challenged by the concept of "argument from incredulity" on two fronts.

Firstly, "Argument from incredulity" is used to directly refute a number of aspects of what i believe about life that i hold to be fundamentally and verifiably true. Some of these points i hold to reinforce my belief in a creator although the fundamental basis of my belief in creator is based on a series of experiences that are intensely personal and not provable or verifiable.

Thus, in the context of a commitment that i made in one of my emails to provide "solid provable evidence" of creation, i found my thesis seemingly largely and possibly entirely neutralised.

Secondly, I experience "argument from incredulity" to be in direct conflict with the principle of "reductio ad absurdum". This is a mathematical problem solving technique that i learned, i think in my second year in high school, and which i have applied repeatedly and effectively in solving problems in the physical realm in engineering and in many other areas of my life.

A search on "Google" for the exact phrase "reductio ad absurdum" identified approximately 41,000 web sites dealing with this subject.

A brief visit to "The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy" at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/r/reductio.htm> gave the following definition "*Reductio ad absurdum is a mode of argumentation that seeks to establish a contention by deriving an absurdity from its denial, thus arguing that a thesis must be accepted because its rejection would be untenable. It is a style of reasoning that has been employed throughout the history of mathematics and philosophy from classical antiquity onwards.*"

The first part of this definition is basically what i recall from school.

This same web page makes reference to "Per Impossible Reasoning" and indicates that "reductio" style argument or analysis is important in many areas beyond mathematics, including in classical philosophy and in law.

Thus, i find myself confronted with "argument from incredulity" which seems to me to be directly in opposition to and contradictory to "reductio ad absurdum".

Previously i would probably have resolved this contradiction on the basis of citing that there are 41,000 web sites referring to "reductio" and "only" 578 referring to "incredulity" and used some language that would have been positional and judgmental.

Having realised that this approach probably does not work much of the time and that i have concluded that it is not particularly constructive, i now find myself with a challenge.

Since much of what i would previously have argued in support of creation based on "reductio ad absurdum" is, in the opinion of some, neutralised by "argument from incredulity", what do i do?

I would like to demonstrate my dilemma by reference to a few examples that i personally hold to be fundamentally verifiably true.

My life experience is as an engineer, designer, problem solver, analyst and consultant. I have been designing and making things since the age of five. I have at various times spent considerable time designing things and creating things. At times the things that i have designed have worked exceptionally well. At other times they have not worked at all or have not worked nearly as well as i thought they would.

I hold that this entire experience tells me that even relatively simple structures, mechanisms, computer software, etc require the input of a well trained and knowledgeable person in order to succeed.

I hold that i find no evidence anywhere to suggest that if i take a pile of timber of various shapes and sizes together with a diversity of appropriate fasteners and tools and place this material and equipment in a pile in my garden that i will return at some time to find some sort of practical and usable structure. I have never heard of such a case. All my experience tells me that to create even a very basic dog kennel requires at least a basic set of knowledge and experience and some tools. I hold it to be "absurd" that material can assemble itself into anything significant without external assistance.

My whole life experience tells me that if i leave the above mentioned material and equipment in my garden for years or decades the wood will rot and the fasteners and tools will corrode and deteriorate to a point where, in time, they will become increasingly unusable. If i live in a dry desert area these items may survive for decades while if i live on a tropical beach they may all but disappear within a decade. Another outcome would be theft of some or all of the items by humans or even some types of animal. I have no information that there is any possibility of a constructive outcome unless there is some human intervention.

Accordingly, i hold that this example proves that since i hold that man is much more complex than any structure or system that i have ever been exposed to directly or through television or books, that there IS a creator.

However, i find that "argument from incredulity" says that just because i cannot "conceive" that this is possible does not prove it is not possible.

I can follow the same argument with regard to the development of motor cars and aircraft.

I can argue that dwellings around the world differ and therefore that there is no evidence that a single form will become dominant across isolated continents with no communication and that this disproves non-intelligent evolution.

I can argue that all my experience tells me that to create a human being, in two genders, who have reproductive organs that fit together perfectly and which give rise to sensation that most people find pleasurable, cannot happen by accident. I hold that it is my understanding that virtually any man on

the planet can join himself sexually to virtually any woman on the planet and, if they do it by choice, they can have a pleasurable sexual experience, to be only possible if there is a highly sophisticated engineer who designed this system.

I hold that the sun is consuming energy and that all my experience and education tells me that all things decay from a state of higher order to a state of lower order. I hold that i can verify that my motor car deteriorates, my house deteriorates, human beings deteriorate, etc and that this proves the existence of a higher power that created all these things.

I hold that the very existence of matter and the universe proves the existence of a creator.

"Argument from incredulity" neutralizes all these things and many others that i hold to be fundamentally true and it requires that i either have a head-on argument or that i see if i can find another way to prove my thesis that there is a creator.

I could also resort to arguing that arguments that there cannot be a creator are also an "argument from incredulity". It seems that way to me.

One conclusion that i drew during my research was that in very simplistic terms:

- It seems to me that in essence those who subscribe to creation believe something like "i am here, the universe is here and therefore there must be a creator, however i cannot explain where the creator came from and i choose not to think about this".

- It seems to me that in essence those who subscribe to evolution believe something like "i am here, the universe is here and i believe there was a big bang and i cannot explain where the material in the 'big bang' came from and i believe one day i will figure it out".

To me it seems that it requires as much faith to believe in a creator as it takes to believe that someday there will be an explanation for how uncountable billions of tons of matter came into existence from nowhere.

This causes me to wonder if there really is much of a gap at all between those who subscribe to creation and those who subscribe to evolution. It seems to me that at some level both subscribe to something that can be neutralized by "argument from incredulity".

However, since i have chosen to seek to do the best i can to avoid positioning myself and to avoid passing judgment, i choose to explore whether there is a way to prove my thesis without confronting whether "argument from incredulity" is valid or not.

I hope to do this in the remainder of this article.

6. PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT VERSUS INSTANTANEOUS CREATION

Having expressed some opinions in the previous section that indicate that i have strong resistance to certain aspects of what i have encountered being argued against creation, it seems important to indicate that i have other objections to some of what is argued against evolution.

Most specifically, i am personally familiar with a school of thought with regard to creation that indicates that creation took place in a series of twenty four hour periods based on certain passages in the book commonly known as "the Bible". It seems to me that on the basis that twenty four hours is

an extremely small period of time in the context of thousands, millions or billions of years, this can reasonably accurately be referred to as "instantaneous creation".

Using the examples of motor vehicles and aircraft, as an engineer i have at times read and listened with great interest to reports about the progressive development of these reasonably complex machines which it seems to me are not nearly as complex as human beings.

I have been personally directly involved in the progressive development and application of computers in business since the early seventies. I have even recently published a book on the effective application of computer systems in business. I have personally experienced a hard and very challenging learning curve about what works with computers and what does not. I have invested hundreds of hours and even thousands of hours in projects that have failed totally. I have also had outcomes that i hold to be "successful".

In considering these examples, all the evidence at my disposal indicates that all these technologies have become more sophisticated and more reliable through a process that could be called "progressive development". This process could, as far as i understand the term, also be referred to as "evolution".

Accordingly, applying "reductio ad absurdum" i can draw a conclusion that complex systems do not happen instantly. From this i can begin to infer that it is unlikely that creation took place in six consecutive twenty four hour periods.

From the same data, i hold that i can conclude that complex systems do not evolve of their own accord.

I also hold that the evolution of aircraft and motor vehicles proves "survival of the fittest" at least at some level, although it also seems to prove to me that the technologically most "fit" machine frequently does NOT survive. Frequently survival in these industries has been determined at least as much by marketing and management as it has been determined by any intrinsic property of a specific machine itself. The VHS and Betamax video technologies are a frequently cited example of the principle that inferior technology well marketed will succeed above exceptional technology poorly marketed.

It seems to me that there is much more that can be drawn from these examples, both in support of certain cases offered by those supporting creation and other aspects in support of those supporting evolution.

From my personal knowledge and experience of plants and animals it seems clear to me that there is a progression in development which is consistent with a concept of evolutionary creation. There does not seem to me to be any reason why the creator could not have created the universe, the earth, plants and animals one step at a time over thousands, millions or billions of years.

Taking the above points a step further.

We have at times considered purchasing a fish tank for sea water fish. We have consistently been told that it takes about six months to progressively establish stable ecological conditions in such a tank before sea water fish have any hope of surviving. Based on other knowledge and experience i hold that this information is probably more or less accurate.

Extrapolating this information to consideration of the requirements for the establishment of a planet like earth with the biodiversity that exists i conclude that it is highly improbable that the earth was created and populated in six consecutive twenty four hour periods. I also find that believing in a creator does not require this to be so.

Accordingly, i must conclude that if there are people with solid evidence that the development of life on earth took millions or billions of years, i personally cannot offer any "solid provable" evidence to counter this and i cannot subscribe to a view that it took twenty four hours or some small multiple thereof.

At the same time, it seems to me that acceptance that animals COULD have evolved over millions of years as a principle for the development of the points in this document does not mean that i believe that humans in their present form necessarily came into existence a long time ago.

As i see it, humankind could have come into existence relatively recently, for example, say, six thousand years ago, but it might have taken millions of years of prototyping to reach this point. Other plants and animals might have been created and stabilized thousands or millions of years or more before this.

On another front, the basic complexity of the universe is to a limited extent visible from earth. There are clearly many stars. I therefore hold that at the very least the basic observations about the scope, complexity, geometry, etc of the universe is at some level accurate.

On a broader level, the introspection referred to previously brought me to a further conclusion in this regard. I hold that my life experience and engineering experience have practically verified many of the laws of physics, chemistry, mathematics, mechanics, thermodynamics, statistics, etc that i have been taught.

On reflection, i cannot reconcile what i know about the universe, the solar system and the planet earth with creation in a series of consecutive twenty four hour periods. It seems to me that to mechanically place every planet, sun, etc in it's place, impart precise trajectory and, in some cases rotation, to it and manage the complex interaction of gravitational fields, all within the first "twenty four hours of creation" violates a significant number of physical laws and would result in all sorts of dynamic instabilities and variable forces and would generally not be conducive to creating a stable sustainable universe.

Given that i understand the creator to have existed for eternity, i am not personally able to come up with any explanation for why He would force things to happen in such a short time when He had eternity to do it.

I have therefore concluded that i cannot offer any evidence to support creation in such a short space of time. Furthermore, on superficially examining the Hebrew of the first book in the "Bible" commonly known as "Genesis" and referring to the first chapter, which as far as i know, is the primary text used in support of Bible based instantaneous creation arguments, i find that the word translated "day" does not have the specific meaning of a twenty four hour period, it can also have many other meanings including a "space of time".

Strong's dictionary, as provided in the "P C Study Bible" software version 2.1 G, published by Biblesoft, allocates this word the reference number 3117 and defines it as "*from an unused root meaning to be*

hot; a day (as the warm hours), whether literal (from sunrise to sunset, or from one sunset to the next), or figurative (a space of time defined by an associated term), [often used adverb]:"

This word is listed as having been translated in the King James Bible into all the following English words "age, + always, + chronicals, continually (-ance), daily, ([[birth-], each, to) day, (now a, two) days (agone), + elder, X end, + evening, + (for) ever (-lasting, -more), X full, life, as (so) long as (... live), (even) now, + old, + outlived, + perpetually, presently, + remaineth, X required, season, X since, space, then, (process of) time, + as at other times, + in trouble, weather, (as) when, (a, the, within a) while (that), X whole (+age), (full) year (-ly), + younger."

Accordingly, there does not appear to be any basis to allege that Genesis chapter one is referring to twenty four hour periods and it seems quite possible that creation took place during a series of discrete "spaces of time" during which various components of creation "evolved".

There are other aspects of the Bible which relate to seven days for creation which could be seen to offer greater challenges, however, i have come to the conclusion that these are matters of interpretation, not verifiable fact. This raises the question of the reliability of the Bible as a source, which is discussed in a later section and will therefore not be addressed here.

In light of the above, it seems clear to me that whether one believes in a literal seven day creation or in evolutionary creation over hundreds of millions or billions of years is a matter of personal choice, not a matter of evidence in support of "creation" or "evolution". I have come to hold that requiring belief in a literal seven day creation as evidence of the existence of a creator is not helpful. It also does not seem to be fundamental in any way, unless one chooses to make it so.

In line with what is written in previous sections, i have chosen to do my best not to get positioned on this particular issue and to seek to discover if there are some things which are more fundamental and more provable to support the existence of a creator.

7. OTHER RELIGIONS AND SPIRITS

At a superficial level, it seems to me that from my recent research and from my recollections of the debate from both sides during my life, the discussion of evolution versus creation seems to focus on what might be termed a "European" view.

It seems to be a debate between people whose recent origin seems to be primarily European. It seems to me that these people are divided into people who support creation from a primarily "Christian" perspective and people who support evolution from primarily a "Western scientific" perspective.

Specifically, the information at my disposal indicates to me that Muslims believe in a creator and creation. That same information indicates to me that it appears that Muslims have fundamental disagreements with Christians and Jews regarding some and possibly many aspects of what Christians have to say about the Bible and creation.

I am also under the impression that other groups in Asia, Africa and elsewhere have views on the subject of creation that are not in accordance with what i understand to be the Christian view and which also are not in accordance with what i understand to be the evolution view.

It seems to me that there is material cultural and religious positioning in what i know of the debate that it seems to me does not honour billions of people on this planet. I wonder if by taking more account of these other beliefs one might find a greater richness and complexity in the puzzle.

Furthermore, as best i can determine, billions of these people believe in spirits in one or other form. It is my understanding that there are a diversity of groups of people who believe in and claim to interact in some way with ancestor spirits, spirits of animals, spirits of trees, even spirits of rocks.

From personal experience, various Christian and allied groups hold various views including that the creator is a spirit, that men have spirits, that there are spirits called "messengers" or "angels" that have the ability to manifest with human form and that there are "demons". Different groups disagree on whether some or all of these exist or not.

My own reality is that i have had numerous spiritual experiences and that i am personally persuaded that the creator is a spirit, that human beings have spirits, that there are messengers and there are demons. I cannot prove any of this.

As best i can determine, the existence of spirits cannot be proved with any of the rules of scientific observation, etc that i have seen laid down by those who support evolution.

I also did not find any indication that the existence of spirits has been argued much, if at all, by those who support creation. As best i understand it, many, maybe even most of those who support creation do not believe there are spirits in the way that i understand billions of others to believe.

Insofar as i am personally very certain, based on numerous personal experiences, that spirits are real, i see this as presenting a challenge for evolution. Even if one can explain the evolution of animals, plants and man without a creator, i have great difficulty in understanding how spirits, which have no substance, could have evolved without a creator.

Here the "argument from incredulity" is really challenging. Those who don't believe that spirits exist would seem to be arguing from incredulity. Those who do, can be labelled with any number of labels because they cannot offer any scientific evidence. It would seem that, viewed from the perspective of people who do not believe spirits exist, all evidence of "out of body experiences" and other spiritual experiences must automatically have some negative label applied to them on the basis of the incredulity of those who lack evidence.

Once more i find myself neutralized by "argument from incredulity" from using evidence that i hold to be valid and verifiable based on my own experience BUT it seems to me that the other viewpoint is similarly neutralized.

I choose to continue to seek a way to present solid evidence in support of creation.

8. SOME OTHER ISSUES WITH CERTAIN RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF CREATION

As i was considering the points raised in earlier sections, i was also confronted with the reality that in addition to not accepting a six literal day creation, there were a number of other arguments raised in support of creation which seem to me to be major and which i do not agree with.

A. THE BIBLE CONTAINS ERRORS AND IS NOT THE "WORD OF GOD" / "WORD OF THE ALMIGHTY"

For many years i discounted the Bible completely. In my teens i found that what the church was teaching in a number of areas did not in any way correspond with what was in the Bible. For example, many denominations in the Christian the church teach that monogamy is ordained "by God" / "the Almighty" and that more than one wife is sin and yet the Bible contains reports of men with close relationships with the creator who had more than one wife.

As far as i am aware there is no dispute that the basic book called the bible contains manuscripts that are at least about 1,700 years old. There seems to be a reasonably large body of opinion that much of the "old testament" is at least 2,500 years old. There are some opinions that some of the "old testament", particularly the first five books are about 3,500 years old.

Even if the entire book is only 1,700 years old, it still seems to me that this is a reasonably ancient source of information and therefore should be taken into account as a source of historical information.

When i found the monogamy versus polygyny (many wives) conundrum with regard to the Bible as well as other examples, i put the Bible back on the shelf and did not look at it again for about twenty years.

Then, following a series of intense personal experiences i came to discover experientially that the creator was real.

At that time i was greatly impacted by a certain Christian church and chose to align myself with what they were teaching. Since my experience had been so intense, i assumed that everything these people taught was true.

In particular, although i could not intellectually accept it, i chose to believe that the Bible was the "inerrant Word of God [the Almighty]". "The Bible says it, that settles it" was a fairly common statement which i accepted.

In the years that followed, i read the texts commonly referred to as "The Old Testament" about ten times in many different translations. I read the texts commonly referred to as "The New Testament" about thirty five times. Also in many translations.

I became aware that there were different versions of the Bible that contained different texts. I also became aware that different versions of the Bible associated with the "Protestant" wing of the church were based on different manuscripts and that there were disputes as to which manuscripts were authoritative. I found that there were people in these disputes who were positioned behind certain sources. I experienced the debate as highly judgmental, was offended by it and chose to ignore it.

Through reading diverse translations it was also apparent that the English translations differed widely. Thus, i could not find any basis to claim that any particular English version was without error.

In time, i increasingly found that those who claimed that the Bible was the "word of God" [the Almighty] and without error did not agree amongst themselves and i also found that there were many passages that were ignored or explained away. Amongst other things, i found that i was not able to have a discussion with regard to passages relating to a man having more than one wife without having judgmental labels applied to me.

It increasingly seems to me that such inconsistencies must cause any person who does not believe in a creator and who finds the Bible attached to proving the existence of a creator a serious problem.

Some years ago, i found that i could no longer ignore the reality that there were different passages in the Bible that actually contradicted each other. The texts commonly referred to as "Matthew" and "Luke" present different genealogies for the man widely known as "Jesus Christ", "Matthew" and "Acts" present different accounts of how the man widely known as "Judas Iscariot" died. "Exodus" and

"Deuteronomy" do not agree exactly on what the creator allegedly said when he spoke to the Israelites from the mountain in the wilderness.

I also found that there were people who were using something that amounted to an "argument from incredulity" to answer these concerns. I experienced this as being something like "because you cannot reconcile the genealogies does not mean they cannot be reconciled". I have encountered writings in support of evolution which seem to hold that such an argument is absurd - which seems rather ironic to me considering that these same writers make use of "argument from incredulity" to counter creationists who argue that some aspects of evolution theory are absurd.

I also concluded that i could not find a single body of text in the Bible where the writer made any claim whatsoever that all that they had written was the "Word of God" / "Word of the Almighty", i could find no declaration that any passage was without error and i could find no declaration by the people who had copied the manuscripts that they had made the copies without error. I could not even find a Bible where the compilers or any other person made a declaration that the entire compilation was "the Word of God [the Almighty]" or that it was without error.

Eventually, i conceded that as far as i can determine the Bible is actually a body of text written by men, it contains visible errors and it may therefore contain other errors. In some respects i reach this conclusion by applying "reductio ad absurdum" - since i can find one error i can find no basis to claim that it is without error.

To argue otherwise i experience as "argument from incredulity" which i have difficulty with, no matter which side uses it.

Accordingly, i choose NOT to believe the Bible is the "inerrant Word of God / the Almighty".

Eventually, i concluded that believing the Bible is the "inerrant Word of God / the Almighty" does not even accord with what the book contains in terms of the commandment not to worship anything except the creator. Believing that a book written, collated, translated and printed by men is "inerrant" does not seem to me to fit this commandment.

Since my belief in a creator was originally based on a personal experience and not on the Bible, accepting that it contains error and is not the "Word of God" [the Almighty] does not present me with any problem regarding believing in a creator.

Since i hold that the Bible does not prove the existence of a creator, it does not seem to me that this conclusion presents any obstacle to me in proving creation, other than further reducing the options open to me.

Notwithstanding the above, i hold that the writings contained in the book widely labelled "The Bible" do contain:

- 1) Statements that are attributed to the Almighty that include direct commandments and instructions.
- 2) Passages of text inspired by the Almighty.
- 3) Historical accounts of events involving the interaction of the Almighty with human beings.
- 4) Accounts of visions and other communications between the Almighty and human beings.

5) Diverse other information including information about things said and done by people that were not inspired by the Almighty in any way.

In other words, based on personal experience i hold that many and possibly most of the writings in this book are relevant and basically accurate in terms of guiding humankind towards better understanding of the Almighty.

Whether this is so or not does not seem to me to be relevant to the essential thesis of this article although it does support certain of the points that are made in this document. It is my intention that if you choose to disregard those points in this document that you consider to be based in any way on the Bible the rest of this document will stand on its own.

I also hold that there are many other writings, both recent and ancient, that compliment what is recorded in the writings in the Bible.

In reaching the above conclusions, i have also confronted something else that it seems to me does not work if one believes that the Bible is the "inerrant Word of God / the Almighty". It seems to me that such belief requires that every word and every action of every person reported in the entire book was actively directed by the Almighty. In other words, it seems to me that this belief requires that when a person lied, they were caused to lie by the Almighty, that when a person committed adultery or murder, they were caused to do this by the Almighty, etc.

In the light of the introspection referred to previously, i have concluded that this is not what i believe and that it does not accord with my own experience. I have also concluded that such interpretation, based on belief in the "inerrant Word of God" [the Almighty] is very likely to cause many people to reject belief in the creator outright. It seems to me that believing in the "inerrant Word of God" [the Almighty] requires one to believe in a creator who is manipulative and controlling and who sets people up to "sin" and then punishes them for this. I do not believe this.

Accordingly, i conclude that, for me, debating anything about the Bible is not helpful in resolving a debate about creation versus evolution.

B. OTHER ASPECTS OF RELIGION

I have also come to understand that there are many aspects of those religions that specifically claim to believe in a creator and a creation -- Christianity, Islam and Judaism -- that are not congruent within a particular religion.

There are major differences between groups / sects / denominations, etc and they argue and fight among themselves. This is particularly so in the case of "Christianity". There are even greater differences between these three religions.

To me it seems that this is likely to cause those who notice this to call into question more abstract aspects of what these religions and groups believe.

For example, if Christians cannot agree amongst themselves about physical issues like whether "baptism" is immersion of a consenting adult or sprinkling drops of "holy water" on a newly born infant, it seems to me that many people are going to have difficulty accepting their views on something as abstract as a universal creator and other such matters?

Accordingly, i have to admit that it seems to me that there is much that people who subscribe to creation believe that is not consistent, congruent or provable, even within the parameters that they themselves define for interpreting evidence.

I acknowledge that this must present major obstacles to any person who objectively wants to consider the case for creation.

This further limits the basis on which i can support my belief in creation.

In the sections that follow i will continue to endeavour to provide such evidence.

9. WHAT NEXT?

In the interests of preparing the way for the next point, it seems useful to sum-up where i find myself at this point in this document:

- 1) I have faith in the existence of a creator based on personal experience but, at this point, i cannot present solid, provable evidence of this.
- 2) I do not agree with "argument from incredulity" but i recognise it is an argument that is used and i choose not to dispute it at this point.
- 3) I find myself able to agree with an evolutionary model for creation.
- 4) I have great difficulty in accepting a model of evolution that does not include a creator although "argument from incredulity" neutralizes this as a basis for any case.
- 5) I have, over a number of years, as one who claims significant faith in a creator and claims some level of experience of the creator, come to accept that many things that people who support creation claim as being attached to believing in creation, are not so attached.

In the sections that follow, i will seek to explore other aspects of the debate between creation and evolution.

10. THE "I AM RIGHT" "YOU ARE WRONG" PARADOX

Recently i have been doing some work around the dynamics of the breakdown of marital relationships.

In particular, i have recently been seeking to address situations in which a husband and wife have fundamentally opposite views.

One of the observations i made was that in situations of real tension, i have encountered cases where the situation presents more or less as follows:

- 1) The husband states that he loves his wife BUT on the particular point in dispute she is entirely at fault and in error.
- 2) The wife states that she loves her husband BUT on the particular point in dispute he is entirely at fault and in error.

In other words, she believes he is 100% in error and he believes she is 100% in error.

Recently i found myself confronting what i hold to be the reality that it is not possible for them both to be 100% correct or 100% in error. It seems to me that there is a reasonable basis to assume, as a first approximation or simplifying assumption, that they are each approximately 50% in error and 50% correct.

Applying this in practice in a particular situation produced what seem to me to be significant results in terms of shifting a specific situation thereby validating the assumption at a very basic level.

I am not suggesting that this is a universal principle although it does seem to me that it is probably valid in many and possibly most cases. Not only in terms of marital dispute but in terms of dispute generally.

What i also concluded from this example is that if the wife is firmly attached to the extreme value of her position and the husband is firmly attached to the extreme value of his position the probability of a close to 100% breakdown in communication seems to me to be almost inevitable.

The above conclusions were reached during the same period that i was engaged in the personal introspection about my beliefs that has been mentioned previously and which has occasioned this article.

In studying the web site referred to previously, i was struck by my perspective that there were statements in support of evolution that it seemed to me that i could not reject and there were statements in support of creation that i was also not willing to reject. There were other statements in support of both positions which, as set out above, i was not able to accept.

As a simplifying assumption, i would therefore like to suggest the possibility that, on the assumption that neither side is deliberately in error, both sides are probably approximately 50% in error.

In other words, it seems to me that there is a distinct possibility that about half of what those supporting creation have to say is true, even if their interpretation may be coloured by other beliefs, judgmental language, etc. It also seems quite possible that the same applies to those who support evolution, half of what they say is true.

I cannot prove this 50:50 split since my perception of "correct" and "incorrect" is based on my current position which i cannot prove is accurate and cannot prove is objective. Nevertheless, i do think the principle is useful in this context.

In other words, i am suggesting that "evolutionary creation" is possible and may be the factual answer. I am also suggesting that many of the apparent differences relating to evidence that can be physically viewed and many times even touched are in fact differences of interpretation NOT differences of data.

It seems to me that there are many cases where someone on either side has a piece of physical evidence that they interpret as having a particular meaning and, because of the interpretation, the other side rejects the evidence. It seems to me that in cases like this both sides resort to positioning, the use of judgmental language, conspiracy theory, etc. It does not seem to me that summarily rejecting another persons evidence is in the interests of peaceful coexistence of a supposedly advanced species (if one subscribes to evolution) or of a being supposedly created in the image of the Almighty (if one subscribes to creation).

I would like to suggest that it would help if both sides chose to be more open about the other side's evidence and chose to be open minded about seeing whether some aspect of their interpretation could be meshed with some aspect of the other side's interpretation.

Please will you consider whether you are willing to examine and consider such a view.

11. DOES THIS MEAN DEADLOCK?

As i deliberated on my findings and the conclusions presented above, i came to some further conclusions which seem to me to be important.

One of these conclusions was that there appeared to me to be a very considerable amount of discussion around points which, as far as i could see, did not actually address what seemed to me to be the essence of the evolution versus creation debate. It seemed to me that perhaps eighty percent or more of the time and effort on both sides was being devoted to points that i think cannot prove creation or evolution.

The debate about the Bible and Bible based evidence seems to me to be such an example.

Since much of what i do in my work as a management and strategy consultant and in information technology relates to identifying the critical issues, the few key points that are central to any particular strategic objective, i found myself moving to this point of view without difficulty.

Since much of my experience over the past few decades supports my opinion that much of the time human beings spend their time discussing the things that are easy to get a "hold on" rather than the things that are challenging and more abstract, this conclusion was probably inevitable. Notwithstanding this, please consider putting aside any objections you may have and following through what follows.

A conclusion that i reached was that it increasingly seemed to me that in some respects "creation" and "evolution" are not on the same playing field. It seems to me that the essence of "creation" is the question of whether there is a creator or not. It seems to me that the essence of "evolution" is the process and steps whereby the current state of the universe and the planet earth and its inhabitants was achieved.

As stated before, it seems increasingly to me that believing in "evolution" does not require any particular belief about "creation". It seems to me that believing in the mechanism of evolution DOES require such a position. In other words, the essence of the dispute seems to be whether a creator created all these things (as i see it, in an evolutionary way) or whether they "happened" in some way that can be postulated but, as far as i can determine, not conclusively proved.

What i mean by "conclusively proved" is that i am not aware of any reproducible evidence that suggests that an explosion such as a "big bang" (2,370,000) can give rise to a state of order. I am not aware of any evidence that a mass of chemicals in a vacuum can develop an atmosphere and eventually life and thereafter human beings.

I hold that this is particularly the case when the core of the pile of chemicals is a molten mass that has supposedly cooled in a way that water and an atmosphere were able to form on the surface in a complete vacuum while other masses from the same source have turned into "suns" which have been burning for millions or billions of years.

For me, offering "argument from incredulity" in response to my objections does not help me to accept that there is NOT a creator. My reality is that i have practical evidence of the existence of a creator, rejecting this on the basis that i cannot demonstrate it or prove it seems to me to also be an "argument from incredulity".

This seems to leave me with a no win situation.

It seems that both sides can use "argument from incredulity" and both sides can use "reductio ad absurdum" in some way. As i experience both of these statements, they both indicate a judgment on the other side that is not pleasant and i don't experience as constructive.

12. A DIFFERENT APPROACH?

After giving the matter quite a lot of thought and discussing the subject at some length with my wife, i concluded that it seemed to me that there were some critical questions about the question of creation versus evolution.

I offer these here together with my thoughts in the hope that it will assist both sides to see the debate in a different light.

A. ARE THERE SPIRIT'S?

Insofar as it is my understanding that a very large proportion of the population of the world believe that there are spirit's, it seems to me that this is an important question to resolve.

Since i understand that the basis of these beliefs, like my own, is experiential and not theoretical, it seems to me that any theory that supports a view that human kind have evolved without the influence of a creator should acknowledge this aspect and address it constructively in a way that can satisfy those who have experiential belief in spirit's.

It seems to me that to argue that spirit's do not exist because there is no scientific evidence is an argument from incredulity. Based on my interpretation of how the term argument from incredulity is applied in the context of the origination of the matter which makes up the universe, it seems to me that applying argument from incredulity to the statement "spirit's do not exist because it is not possible to prove they exist" indicates that it is entirely possible for spirit's to exist.

My reality is that i have personally met dozens of people who claim to have personally experienced the existence of spirits. I have encountered numerous reports that indicate that millions and possibly billions of people believe spirit's exist and many claim to have had experiences of spirit's.

Searching in Google i find the following occurrences of words that i understand to relate to spirits:- spirit (26,200,000), demon (6,560,000), demons (2,420,000), fairy (4,820,000),

fairy's (45,200), elf (4,640,000), elves (1,150,000), tokolosh (name of spirits in Africa) (907), tokoloshes (109), ghosts (2,950,000), ghost (10,100,000), poltergeist (261,000), poltergeists (36,100).

Collectively these statistics indicate that words relating at least at some level to what i perceive to be the spirit realm occur widely on the internet. Casual inquiry indicates that at least some of these pages relate to people who consider spirits to exist and who claim to have had personal experience of them. It is my impression that such people constitute a statistically significant proportion of the above statistics.

Applying reductio ad absurdum to this information, it seems to me that this provides a basis to claim that spirit's exist.

It seems to me that this conclusion is entirely consistent with applying argument from incredulity to the statement that spirit's do not exist. Accordingly, this seems to me to provide a basis to conclude that spirit's do exist.

Certain evolutionists argue in favour of things called "memes" which relate to thoughts and ideas. I don't think that it will be any more difficult to prove that there are memes than to prove that there are spirits. Both concepts are intangible and relate to things that cannot be seen and seemingly have no substance themselves in terms of generally accepted definitions of substance. It seems to me that if people who subscribe to evolution can consider the possibility of "memes", certainly as i have read about them, then it would be helpful to extend the same level of credulity to spirits.

If one does not believe in spirits, it is probably very difficult to prove they exist and if one does believe in spirits it is probably relatively easy to prove they exist. Insofar as my information is that a very large number, possibly billions, of people believe that spirits exist and many claim personal experience, i have difficulty in seeing how this can be discounted. It seems to me that any theory of evolution should clearly define how spirits come into existence.

What one chooses to believe about this is a matter of personal choice relative to what one does with available information in finding what one considers to be substantive evidence.

B. DO HUMAN'S HAVE SPIRIT'S?

This is a more specific aspect of the previous question.

If the answer is "yes", which it is my understanding that many people who do not necessarily believe in creation hold to be the case, then, it seems to me that any theory with regard to the way in which human kind came to exist should address this aspect.

A Google search indicates "human spirit" (421,000), "out of body experience" (79,100), reincarnation (656,000), reincarnated (149,000), resurrect (280,000), resurrected (530,000), resurrection (2,880,000).

As i understand it, all of these terms relate at some level to a belief in the existence of a human spirit. It seems to me that evolution should not summarily discount this but should seek to offer a constructive explanation. If we can have "memes" why can we not have spirits?

Applying argument from incredulity to a statement that it is not possible to prove that human beings have spirit's seems to me to indicate that the statement is an argument from incredulity. Therefore, since there is much information that indicates that millions and possibly billions of people believe that human beings do have a spirit, reductio ad absurdum indicates to me that they do exist. I understand argument from incredulity to admit this possibility.

As with the previous point this is a personal choice unless evidence that you consider substantive can be produced.

C. IS THERE A CREATOR?

It seems to me that this is the essence of the question and all the other questions ultimately point to this question.

I have put this question third since it seems to me that there are more people on earth who have experience of spirit's than have experience of the creator and that there are more people who have had experience of human spirit's than have experience of the creator.

Searching in Google returns:- creator (9,430,000) and God (60,200,000). In my experience, the word "God" is not necessarily the same as saying there is a creator. God IS synonymous with "creator" for many people but not for all people. Nevertheless there are indications that a substantial number of people have belief in such a being. It seems to me that there are many more who believe in a creator than believe in evolution.

As mentioned early on in this article so far i cannot offer any "scientifically provable" evidence. Furthermore, it seems to me that all the evidence that i have been able to offer so far is neutralized by "argument from incredulity". I can only offer personal experience and i accept that this is not of real value to anyone else.

I have also concluded, since starting this article, that my own experience and my knowledge of the experience of others indicates that asking the creator to reveal himself through a supernatural sign of some sort is also not particularly helpful to those who do not believe. If one has no experience of the creator, how does one experience something that one believes is not possible?

I don't have an answer!

I can only suggest that you check out for yourself whether, in practice, "argument from incredulity" really works to discount the examples that i used above that motor cars, aircraft, buildings, etc do not evolve themselves and do not create themselves, i ask you to consider that all of these cases, without an exception that i know of, require the intervention of man, that is a creator, in order to take place. Hence, i suggest that the existence of man is dependent on the existence of a higher being, a creator.

I still cannot prove it with "solid provable evidence".

As with the previous two points, it seems to me that there is plenty of evidence that millions and possibly billions of people believe in a creator. I understand reductio ad absurdum applied to this information to indicate the existence of a creator. I also understand argument from incredulity applied to a statement that there is no creator because it cannot be proved that a creator exists creates space to admit the possibility of there being a creator.

Once more, there is the possibility of other perspectives and it is a matter of personal choice how one interprets this information unless one can obtain what one considers to be substantive evidence.

D. WHERE DID WE COME FROM?

As far as i can determine there is no dispute that we exist, that the planet exists or that the universe exists.

It seems that all can agree on that.

It seems to me that there is no real difficulty in agreeing that we arrived at where we are today through a process of progressive development that i find no difficulty terming "evolution".

The mechanism of how this progressive development happened, is inherent in other questions, so i would like to leave it out of this point.

As i see it, this point is essentially about whether there is a creator or whether there is some other explanation.

One writer says *"How the universe originated is unknown, but to claim therefore that it must have been supernatural is the argument from incredulity. There are other possibilities. For example, anti-energy could have been **created** simultaneously to satisfy conservation laws. Or perhaps the laws of thermodynamics evolved after the first moments of the universe."*
<http://www.talkorigins.org/indexcc/CF/CF101.html>

This example suggests that *"anti-energy could have been **created** simultaneously to satisfy conservation laws"* in an argument to prove there is no creator. I have great difficulty in comprehending how what is stated here could happen if the universe evolved without a creator. I am unable to understand how is it possible for anti-energy to be "created simultaneously" if there is no creator. Yet, i find myself neutralized by "incredulity".

Personally, i cannot see how the above quote can be taken as anything other than a statement of faith that is at least equivalent in my mind to believing in a creator.

I also do not understand why, if one looks at the origin of everything, it is so difficult to believe that there is a creator. The problem is that i DO believe and i am not sure that i will be able to offer any physical evidence that will overcome an argument such as that offered above. As i see it, the problem of physical evidence lies not with the evidence but with the interpretation of the evidence - the "how" and "why" as opposed to the "what".

As with the previous three points, millions and possibly billions believe the universe, the planet and man were created. Reductio ad absurdum therefore indicates that this conclusion is admissible. I understand that arguing that it cannot be proved is an argument from incredulity which therefore admits the possibility that these things have been created.

Once more, there is the possibility of other perspectives and it is a matter of personal choice how one interprets this information unless one can find what you consider to be a substantive answer.

E. WHY ARE WE HERE?

The conclusions one draws with respect to the previous four questions may point towards a particular conclusion here.

However, it seems to me that this is not necessarily so.

As i currently understand the position of what it seems to me might be termed "non-creation evolution", "we are here because we are here". It seems to me that people who support this form of evolution are basically stating that the universe, the planet and humankind are all here and that is sufficient reason to explain why we are here.

It seems to me that this is more or less equivalent to saying "i do not understand why i am here but i am here and i do not need to understand why i am here because i am here". IF this is more or less what those who support evolution are saying in response to this question, then it seems to me that this looks like faith in another form.

As i understand the point of view of those who support creation, it occurs to me that i have not encountered a clear explanation that is uniformly accepted by those who support creation.

I would like to try and sum up in a short statement why i believe we are here.

My personal belief is that the Almighty chose to create very advanced spiritual beings who could **choose** to be in close relationship with him. I believe this took place within a clearly defined framework of commandments or laws which carried with them clearly defined penalties for transgression, including banishment to a place which today is widely called "hell". It is my impression that this took place within a clearly defined time frame.

I personally think that it would be reasonable to postulate that the creator was lonely and He created us so that He would have people to talk to and share His vision of the future with and who would participate in His vision and that He desired creatures to love and who would love Him out of free choice.

It is my understanding that we are here in order to make personal choices about whether we want a relationship with the Almighty or not, whether we want to avail ourselves of the benefits of such a relationship and whether we want to spend eternity in close relationship with Him at a level that includes sitting on a throne for eternity with many other options.

It is my understanding that we are free to chose any other option, including being free to chose to spend eternity in a place referred to in some writings as "the lake of fire and brimstone" or "lake of fire". This is frequently referred to as "hell" although my understanding is that hell and the lake of fire are not the same.

A Google search returns:- "Day of Judgment" (112,000), hell (17,000,000), heaven (15,600,000), "lake of fire and brimstone" (7,830), "lake of fire" (77,400). I think there is a song about the lake of fire and probably various facetious and other uses of these words and phrases.

Nevertheless, they are terms that are quite widely used thereby indicating a reasonably high level of acceptance of these concepts.

It seems to me that the concept of a "Day of Judgment" is the logical end point of "survival of the fittest". The alleged contest between humankind and the being referred to as "Satan" also appears to be a form of "survival of the fittest".

It seems strange to me that those who support evolution are willing to accept that in some way every prototype or intermediate form or "missing link" has died out within the concept of "survival of the fittest" and then seem to be offended at the idea that they, too, could be participating in an evolutionary "survival of the fittest" experience where the stakes are higher but the basic concept is the same.

By way of example, if we have just "evolved" spontaneously, why is death so disturbing and so fearful for so many people? Surely death is part of evolving?

It seems to me that belief in the existence of a creator is the entry level requirement for a more complex survival of the fittest process. I have it that belief in a creator does not qualify one for heaven, it simply opens the door for one to begin to gain the knowledge and experience and relationship that makes entry into heaven possible.

In summary, i believe we are here in order to give us the opportunity to voluntarily seek a deep personal relationship with the Almighty and qualify to be "fit" to enter heaven.

I cannot prove this, but i have deep personal conviction of the validity of at least the essence of what i have written in the preceding paragraphs. So much so that i have written a detailed article on the subject of some aspects of what i understand to be required in order to spend eternity in heaven. This article is available on request.

As with the previous points, it is my understanding that there are certainly millions and possibly billions who have some view that at least partially coincides with the above. For example, the Quran, the principal Muslim text, repeatedly makes reference to the choice between heaven and hell. Once more, it seems to me that *reductio ad absurdum* indicates the validity of the basic premise and argument from incredulity applied to a statement that the above interpretation cannot be proved provides the opportunity to suggest that it can be admitted.

The big challenge that i see with this particular point is that if those who believe in a creator and a day of judgment are correct, then those who do not believe in a creator have a serious problem for eternity. If those who believe there is no creator are mistaken then they will not even be disappointed when they die, they won't know they were wrong.

Accordingly, as i see it, from the point of view of a "fail safe" opinion, believing in a creator has merit.

Once more it is a matter of personal choice how one interprets this information in the absence of what any particular person may regard as substantive evidence.

F. WHERE ARE WE GOING?

I see this as an extension of the previous point.

It seems to me that the view of those who support non-creational evolution is that we are going wherever we are going and we are going to continue going there for as long as we are around. I have read and seen all sorts of views on what this could look like in thousands or millions of years.

Since this view is based on the opinion that there is no creator, it seems to me to necessitate an opinion that we have no way of determining where we are going. It seems to me that this view assumes that a long series of events determined by our environment and survival of the fittest, etc brought us to this point and that events determined by our environment and survival of the fittest will continue to determine our path.

It is my view that inspection of the diversity of motor vehicles, houses, home decoration, etc indicates that there is no indication of a collective, common and universal view on the part of humankind of what constitutes an ideal state. This seems to me to indicate that there is no indication that humankind can collectively in any significant manner direct our course into the future.

I have it that since we cannot agree on whether there is a creator or not it is unlikely that we will agree on the future direction of the human race. It therefore seems to me that this world view indicates that we will end up where we end up.

To me this seems to make life rather pointless - i understand this view to say that i am going to live and do whatever i find to do and then i am going to die. End of story. Once more, argument from incredulity seems to neutralize my view.

Those who believe in creation seem, at some level, to agree that we are going towards a "Day of Judgment". However, in my experience there are differing views. Based on personal observation, it is my information that many Christians believe that "Jesus is coming soon and i'm going to heaven and the rest of them are going to be judged".

This is not my belief.

I believe that we will ALL be judged, whatever we have believed. In other words, Christians will also be judged.

As i understand it, the basis of judgment is abstract, complex and little understood today. Refer the document mentioned earlier on "*Where will YOU spend eternity?*".

I DO believe that all the information at my disposal indicates that if one does not have a personal knowledge and relationship with the Almighty one will end up in a very unpleasant situation, a location commonly referred to as "hell".

I do believe that we all originated from a single man and woman and were perpetuated through a man and his three sons and their four wives who survived a global catastrophe widely referred to as "the flood". Accordingly, i do believe that at the outset humankind had access to the data necessary to equip them to live a life that would enable them to spend eternity in a close personal relationship with the Almighty in a place that is beautiful beyond description, frequently termed "heaven".

I cannot prove it.

In summary, i believe that we are "going" towards a Day of Judgment.

Based on my information, there are millions and probably billions, who at some level, mostly not on a very informed basis, believe that this is so. As with the previous questions, it seems to me that reductio ad absurdum indicates that this is confirmed and that applying argument from incredulity to a statement that "i cannot believe there is a judgment" and / or "i cannot believe there is a hell" indicates that it is possible to admit that there is a judgment and that there is a place that corresponds to "hell".

Once more it is a matter of personal choice how one interprets this information and, since we are referring to future events, no way that this can be "substantively" proved.

G. WHAT ACTION CAN I TAKE?

Depending on the conclusions drawn from answering the previous questions, there seem to me to be a number of courses of action.

It seems to me that if, having considered the previous points and answered the questions, one is still committed to non-creationary evolution, then one simply gets on with one's life until one dies and does the best one can to accomplish whatever one has set oneself to accomplish.

As i understand an outcome that concludes that there is a creator, that we are on earth in order to form a close personal relationship with Him and there is a Day of Judgment, this indicates that it is desirable to do whatever one finds to do in order to form a close relationship with the creator and prepare for coming judgment.

There are a large number of permutations of answers to the previous six questions, accordingly, it seems to me that there are a wide range of possible courses of action.

I am not sure how to interpret many of the possible outcomes and, accordingly, chose not to.

My answers to the previous questions are that:

- 1) There are spirit's.
- 2) Human beings have spirit's.
- 3) There is a creator.
- 4) We were created.
- 5) We are here to develop a close relationship with the creator.
- 6) There will be a day on which all of humankind will be judged. There is a heaven and a hell. We each have the right to chose how we live our lives and the outcome of the judgment will be determined by the choices we make. We can make choices that will result in a "high throne" for eternity and we can make choices that will result in "the lake of fire and brimstone" for eternity.

I would like to offer some comments on my understanding of what one might do if one agrees to the above six statements, particularly 3, 5 and 6.

It seems to me that there are numerous avenues by which one might have reached such a position. Again, i chose not to explore all of them.

If, having read as much of this document as you chose to, you have decided to shift position on the fundamental point of the existence of a creator, my experience indicates that there are a few important action points to be aware of:

- 1) Pray to the Almighty in whatever way you chose with an essential message that you now acknowledge His existence, that you desire to serve him, that you apologise (repent) for not believing in Him previously and that you ask Him to forgive you and help you to serve Him, draw close to Him and form a close personal relationship with Him.
- 2) I only know one way to do this and that is through prayer in the name of "Yahooshua the anointed of Yah of Natsareth" -- widely translated as "Jesus Christ of Nazareth".

3) Immerse oneself in water, praying in the name of Yahooohua for the forgiveness and cleansing of sins.

4) Do whatever you can find to do in order to draw closer to the Almighty. You are welcome to contact me at james@etimin.org

5) There is much else that could be written but this document is not intended to address this subject.

If you have previously believed in a creator and have concluded from reading this far that there are adjustments to be made, i assume that you have some basis of dealing with these choices. Alternatively, you are welcome to contact me at james@etimin.org

Once more, i cannot offer any proof of the above, i draw these conclusions based on my personal experience.

There are also many who hold to a broadly similar view of the above course of action but with widely differing details particularly between Christianity and Islam. Accordingly i chose to try not to be prescriptive. Ultimately, it is for each individual to find their own way and ask the Almighty to lead them to whoever He chooses who can assist them on their journey at whatever stage they may be.

Once more it is a matter of personal choice how one interprets this information and views the consequences of believing that there is a creator or not.

13. SOME ISSUES THAT ARISE FROM THE ABOVE QUESTIONS

The discussion of the questions presented above suggests to me some other issues that it seems appropriate to discuss at this point.

A. WHAT IF WE WERE CREATED?

As previously stated, it is my belief that we were created. In terms of this belief i would like to offer my understanding of the broad implications of this belief. This is set out in below.

In broad terms, i believe that:

1) The First Human Beings

The first human beings were created with great intelligence, great knowledge of the ways of the Almighty, great spiritual gifting and power and great physical capacity and capability.

There are various individuals who have produced books, videos and other material presenting physical evidence and rationale to support this view. While i do not agree with everything that these individuals say, it is my belief that, in essence, they accurately report genuine information which clearly supports a view that the first human beings created had the attributes mentioned above.

2) Early Choices

Most early human beings made choices which resulted in them breaking the commandments of the Almighty that had been clearly spelt out to them at the outset. I understand this to have resulted in a judgment which resulted in a global flood which destroyed all life except for certain individuals who were preserved in a large boat.

I believe that all of humankind today has descended from these individuals.

3) Further Choices

In the years that followed, humankind again progressively departed from relationship with the Almighty and from compliance with His commandments.

4) Progressive Deterioration

This resulted in spiritual, intellectual, moral and physical deterioration of humankind to a point where today, in the third millennium AD, i believe that the current generation is spiritually and morally the weakest generation that has ever lived. I am not certain as to the extent to which humankind has regained some physical and intellectual capability in recent centuries. I am aware that there are reports of physical and intellectual advancement in recent generations.

I have a broad impression that the deterioration of humankind in spiritual and moral terms and to a significant extent in the intellectual and physical context.

I cannot prove this.

While i have reason to believe that this process has taken place over a period of approximately six thousand years, it does not seem important to me in this document to assert that this is so. Whether this process has taken six thousand years or many millions of years does not seem to me to detract from the essential thesis.

It seems to me as an engineer that this decay curve is entirely consistent with the manner in which all structures and systems created by human beings deteriorate over time. Initially the rate of decay is small. Without regular maintenance, servicing, repair, etc the rate of decay gradually accelerates until eventual collapse. I hold that this applies to motor cars, to houses, to roads, to aircraft and to any other thing that humankind has created.

It therefore seems to me to be probable that if humankind is a created entity, that we will also deteriorate over time unless regularly maintained. I understand this maintenance to require an intimate relationship with the Almighty and it is my belief that there are no human beings on earth today who have such a close relationship with the Almighty that they have in a material way been able to change their position on this decay curve.

It seems to me that this view is diametrically opposed to a view of progressive environmentally determined evolution without a creator over millions or billions of years.

I say this in the sense that my understanding of the non-creation view of evolution is that those who subscribe to evolution without a creator hold that the present generation is the most advanced and most evolved version of humankind that has ever existed.

If the perspectives discussed above are approximate indications of the broad view of how humankind has reached their present state, then this represents a very substantial non-conformity in which one of the models must be invalid.

To me, taken in context with my comments about "why are we here" and "where are we going", this seems to be important information.

It seems to me that these different curves highlight the importance of considering all available information, including information that one has possibly previously rejected, and choosing which point of view one is going to hold in the future.

Again, i cannot prove this and leave it to individual readers to evaluate.

B. WHAT IF THERE IS A JUDGMENT?

From a personal point of view, it seems to me that the most important question that this entire document raises is the issue of a "Day of Judgment" and a "lake of fire".

If those who advocate evolution without a creator are correct, then it seems to me that we have nothing to fear. I am under the impression that those who advocate this view hold that human beings will each grow old and eventually die and that will be the end of it.

I understand the implication of this position to be that one should do the "best" one can with one's life on the basis of what one concludes is "best" and there is no "wrong" answer and no negative consequence of making a "mistake".

For many years i lived my life more or less in line with this belief until, one day, i had an experience that showed me clearly that there WAS a creator and that there WAS a judgment. I have concluded over the years that where i have experiences like this, others cannot share in my experience and cannot accept what i say based on my experience. Accordingly, it does not seem necessary to me to share the experience.

I do not think that many people will choose to believe in a creator on the basis of someone else's experience.

If those who believe in a creator AND a Day of Judgment are correct, then i believe that this has serious consequences for every human being. There are those, including myself, whose understanding of the situation is that all those who do not believe there is a creator will spend eternity in the lake of fire.

One can argue against this on the basis that it is "unjust", "wrong", "i don't believe it", etc. I experience that as an argument from incredulity. Because one cannot believe there is a Judgment and lake of fire does not mean they do not exist.

From my perspective the possibility of a day of judgment is the most significant reason that i can give why anyone should seriously consider the possibility of the existence of a creator and therefore consider the remainder of this article which seeks to demonstrate the existence of a creator using data that is available to most human beings.

I think there is also merit in seeking the truth from a point of view of the intellectual satisfaction of finding a robust answer to an abstract question. On this basis i ask you to continue reading whatever your response is to the previous paragraph.

C. WHERE FROM VERSUS WHERE GOING -- REAR VIEW MIRROR VISION

It seems to me that one of the fundamental differences between "evolution" and "creation" thinking is that evolution is primarily concerned with "where have we come from" and "creation" is more about "where are we going".

I do not think that this distinction is made clear by most people who hold creation to be true, however, i think that they do have this in mind in most of what they think and say.

I think it might be useful to make this distinction much more evident than it is at present.

As a strategist and consultant to large organizations on the formulation and implementation of strategy, one of the important principles is the requirement for a clear view or vision of where the organization is going and what it will look like when it gets there.

Many speakers on effective management warn executives NOT to manage by "looking in the rear view mirror".

It seems to me that many who subscribe to evolution devote a considerable amount of time to looking at the past.

It seems to me that many who argue in favour of creation also do this.

I would like to suggest that while the past may be of interest, the future is where we will spend the rest of our lives, irrespective of whether there is life after death or not.

Accordingly, it seems to me that any model of creation or evolution should offer a basis for formulating a clear view of where human kind is going and that if one model appears to offer more clarity this might be a basis for giving that model more detailed scrutiny.

I submit that belief in a creator and a day of judgment offers such an opportunity.

In considering the subject of this article, i find that i have it that there is a large amount of recorded information about a creator and His alleged interactions with humankind. This includes the Bible but i understand it to include diverse other writings as well.

As far as i know there is not a comparable body of ancient writing about spontaneous evolution.

Insofar as i hold the above to be valid, i do not understand why some people seem to have such a need to seemingly totally discount the collective beliefs and experience of millions and possibly billions of people?

It seems trite to simply dismiss these beliefs as "superstition" or use some more dismissive, and insulting, language to justify a solution that ignores these beliefs as not being "scientific" or similar. I do not understand why it is "scientific" to be "incredulous" of the beliefs of millions AND "scientific" to use "argument from incredulity" to dismiss the objections of these same people to non-creative evolution.

It seems to me that either argument from incredulity IS scientific, in which case i submit that it applies to both sides OR it does not apply to either.

There are many other points which seem to me to flow from this point. I choose not to go further with this in this section.

D. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR THE END OF LIFE

Whether one has a view of coming judgment and eternal life and eternal damnation or whether one holds that at the end of this life one will cease to exist, it seems to me that most people would have some view of how they would like to live their lives.

I would like to offer the outcome of an exercise that my wife and i recently undertook, as a means of highlighting some things that i think may be applicable to many people on earth today.

I would like to suggest that irrespective of what believes, one must, at least subconsciously, have some view of what one would like to accomplish by the time one lies on one's death bed. These are not necessarily conscious measures, they are quite likely to be "gut feel" about what one considers really important.

My wife and i undertook such an exercise recently and found that we were in close agreement about the factors that seemed important to us.

I offer them for your consideration with limited explanation:

1) Service to the Almighty

Found to be a "good and faithful servant", close relationship with the Almighty, obedience and submission to Him, qualify to sit on a high throne for eternity, impacts all the points that follow and impacted by them.

2) Make a Difference in the World

Impact many lives for the Kingdom of the Almighty.

3) Achieve my Potential

Achieve my potential as a man or woman in every area of my life - family, business, profession / occupation, community, nation, etc.

4) Marriage and Sex

Rich and fulfilling marriage including passionate and fulfilling sexual relationships within marriage lived in partnership, harmony, love, empathy, caring, unity, etc.

5) Children

Children grow up the way i would like them to be - serving the Almighty and living their lives with similar critical success factors to these.

6) Experience the World

Experience the richness of creation, travel, nature, cultures, food, etc.

7) Enjoy Life and Things

Enjoy the fullness of what exists - material things, finances, house, cars, furniture, etc.

It seems to me that, barring the first item, the remaining six are likely to apply whether one believes in a creator or not. They seem to me to be fairly fundamental.

The interpretation of the points may differ significantly.

For example, if one does not believe there is a day of judgment, the fourth point might look more like "rich and varied sexual relationships".

It seems to me that the relative importance is also likely to differ significantly.

At the time i did the above exercise i concluded that the relative importance of each of these seven points to me (the percentage that each factor contributes to my life view) was 67%; 8%; 7%; 6%; 5%; 4% and 3% respectively. All the points ARE important to me, however, if i do not make significant progress on the first point it seems to me that, based on what i believe, on the day i die the other points will be largely irrelevant.

I think that at least some who believe in a creator will assign the first point a relatively high weight.

It seems to me that if one does not believe in a creator then the first point would be cancelled, it would not exist, thereby leaving SIX points. Alternatively, there might be another seventh point that i have not thought of which would apply in such a case. Possibly "money" or "financial success" might be separated out of the seventh point above.

If i look at the world around me, it seems that if one does not believe in a creator and one does not believe in a day of judgment, then the 67% that i have allocated to the first point might be distributed over the remaining points with a lot of emphasis on the material world, things and finance. I seem to recall that this was the way i saw things a decade or two ago.

I would like to suggest that you might find it an interesting exercise to determine what the six or seven factors are that you will use to rate your life on your death bed based on what you believe about creation versus evolution.

14. SCIENCE - ENGINEERING - RELIGION

Since writing the outline of section approximately a week has elapsed.

In this time i spent several hours on the internet researching further information, i corresponded with the television channel director mentioned previously and obtained more information from him and i spent considerable time thinking and observing the world around me.

In all of this i was seeking to obtain data with a view to improving my understanding of the situation, understanding other view points and seeing if i could agree with them and seeking to validate or invalidate what i believe based on my life experience and my living environment.

In particular, i was seeking to find "solid provable evidence" of creation.

I was also seeking to better understand my interpretation of the world in which i live and which i have PERSONALLY experienced.

I was also looking for data that would be readily available to as many people as possible and which, as far as possible, would be personally experientially verifiable to as many people as possible.

I was trying to look "close to home" and not rely on any data from third parties but rather to rely on my own personal living environment and life experience with particular emphasis on those components that it seems to me that most people on the planet will be able to relate to at some level.

Each person's environment and life experience is different, however, it increasingly seems to me that there are components that are common to the majority of human beings at some level.

In the sections that follow, i hope to present the evidence that i have found in the hope that you will be able to relate to and personally verify at least some of it.

In doing the above research, analysis and thinking, i became increasingly focused on applying lessons that i have learned as an engineer and scientist.

At the time of writing, i am fifty years old. For about forty five years i have been designing and building things. In my childhood i built things with Meccano (metal components for building models) and built electrical circuits. I graduated to building aviaries (large bird cages) and doing household maintenance and alterations. I have been involved in a "hands on" way with building major extensions to houses, rebuilding motor car engines, rebuilding a boat, building a twenty story office block, a major highway, road cuttings, blasting, major open pit mines, a diversity of computer software, strategic designs for large organizations and many other things.

I have a four year engineering science honours degree in Civil Engineering with distinction and a PhD in materials for construction of large dams for which i received a national award. My basic engineering degree required me to study mathematics, chemistry, physics, statistics, thermodynamics, geology and computer science as scientific disciplines.

I am a registered professional engineer, which means that i have undergone an "apprenticeship" and qualified to take lead responsibility for engineering projects within my domain of knowledge and experience and i accept my responsibility to call in other professionals when required.

I have also been involved in the military as a military engineer and have commanded a regiment of over five hundred men. I have been trained in the tactical and strategic analysis, planning and conduct of military operations up to the scope of thousands of men and all associated land and air combat machines and supporting logistics.

I have also had a lifelong interest in plants and animals and in my youth owned aviaries and bred birds, owned a collection of exotic plants and collected and classified insects as well as collecting rock and mineral samples. Accordingly, i have a hands-on working knowledge of botany, zoology and geology.

I studied Biology at school and excelled, coming first in a national youth science exam and thus have a reasonably solid grounding in zoology, botany, anatomy, taxonomy, etc.

At the time of writing, i have spent the last fifteen years working as a management consultant designing business computer software solutions, advising clients on the implementation and optimization of such solutions and assisting clients with strategy development and implementation.

In the process i have learned much about the psychology of change, what is required to bring about sustainable corporate improvement and about psychology generally.

I have received international recognition for my work on why seventy percent of all business information technology investments fail totally and another twenty percent fail to meet the original business requirement. This recognition includes listing in "Who's Who in the World" for four consecutive years and three other international accolades, refer <http://www.jar-a.com> for details.

I have recently published a book on "*The Critical Factors for Information Technology Investment Success*" which seeks to explain why the failure rate is so high and sets out an approach to designing failure out of the solution.

In summary, i have forty five years of extremely diverse experience in the design, construction / creation, implementation and operation of numerous engineering and other systems as well as experience of life and nature.

In this time, i have found that the rigorous approach that i was trained to use at University and my first years in practice as an engineer have been vital to solving complex problems and designing systems that work.

I have also experienced a number of traumatic events in my life, including an extramarital affair, divorce and the loss of access to my children. I have learned much about what it means to be a human being, much about love and grief and other intensely human experiences. I have come to understand that human beings are extremely complex and not amenable to simplistic engineering solutions.

At the same time, i have come to understand that a rigorous engineering approach, appropriately applied, CAN enable one to better understand the "human condition" and spiritual matters and better explain the complex physical, psychological and spiritual organism that i have experienced myself and other human beings to be.

Accordingly, in thinking about this analysis, i have increasingly come to conclude that, as far as i can see, there are three major disciplines that have a bearing on this discussion.

In the interests of making my point, i would like to offer three simplified definitions that seem to be helpful to categorise my thinking. These definitions are not intended to be definitive but are intended to demonstrate a point that seems important to me at this time.

I would like to define three specific disciplines of human endeavour, that is science, engineering and religion. My reality is that, in practice, there is significant overlap in interpretation of some of these terms, however, it seems useful to adopt a simplifying definition for the balance of this document.

A. SCIENCE

Defining "science" and therefore "scientific" seems important since i have encountered a number of statements regarding proof of evolution versus creation that make use of the word "scientific". For example, it has been suggested to me that the arguments used by "creationists" to counter the arguments of a particular proponent of evolution have "major flaws in their scientific reasoning".

I read this to indicate a clear and specific definition of the term "scientific". In other words, i read this particular statement to indicate that "scientific reasoning" is a recognizable discipline that any person debating creation versus evolution should be able and willing to apply.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary includes in it's definition of "science" the statement "Systematic and formulated knowledge".

This seems to me to conform to my perception of what is "scientific". I understand science to relate to systematically gathering data, verifying it and documenting it on the basis of "scientifically" reproducible experiments or other approaches.

To me science is very much about documenting what "is" - things that are verifiable and reproducible.

I am aware that the term "science" is applied much more widely than what i have suggested above, such as in "social science" where, in my experience, one is dealing with relatively abstract interpretations and explanations which are not necessarily always reproducible. There seems to me to be a tendency in such areas for the interpretations and explanations to shift and change.

Once this happens, it seems to me that one is dealing more with the personal opinion of a specific individual or group of individuals rather than with verifiable "scientifically" reproducible fact.

It seems to me that there is a significant difference between stating that one has found a fossil and that it "appears" to be an intermediate form between apes and man and stating that it "is" an intermediate form.

Having said this, it also seems to me that there is a considerable body of evidence to support the view that such fossils do provide evidence of intermediate forms.

The term "missing link" (731,000) is widely used to describe intermediate forms between apes and humankind which are a necessary requirement for evolution without a creator. I am aware of much debate about whether these "links" exist, whether the fossils that have been found are such links, whether there are "sufficient" intermediate forms to explain evolution from ape to man, etc.

While i can accept that there is evidence that appears to indicate the existence of intermediate forms or missing links i have much greater difficulty with statements which i interpret to indicate that this intermediate form (missing link) progressively transformed itself into the form of human being that exists on the planet today in some manner of evolutionary mutation without external intelligent influence.

Since i am absolutely certain that no human being on earth today was present at the time this transformation took place i do not understand how this can possibly be stated with absolute certainty and then be called "scientific".

As i see it, this is a "theory" and the existence of fossil evidence of apparent intermediate forms does not prove or disprove the existence of a creator. It seems to me that until a group of ape's have been isolated in a closed environment for however long it takes for them to change into humans i cannot see how it can be held to be "scientific" that this is possible. If such an experiment requires millions of years then that is how long it will take to prove or disprove evolution without a creator.

It also seems to me that if one is willing to apply the term "science" to "social science" and theories of evolution, that it would be helpful to apply the term science to the study of spiritual matters. It seems to me that if one is willing to call an unreproducible theory about something that allegedly takes millions of years "science" then it would be equitable to be willing to apply that term to matters relating to spirits which millions of people hold to be experientially valid and, at some level, reproducible.

I understand that argument from incredulity neutralizes much of what is written above and i choose not to debate whether this is scientific or not in this section. I consider that this is a personal choice for each reader.

As a graduate scientist, i would like to appeal to anyone who reads this and who holds that evolution without a creator is scientifically verifiable to check out for themselves whether they can really say that the theory of evolution without a creator really is science and whether they are willing to consider other ways of arriving at a conclusion.

B. ENGINEERING (AND ARCHITECTURE)

In considering the information that i have at my disposal regarding evolution and creation, i have concluded that both approaches are dealing with the coming into existence of a new state that did not exist before.

As a graduate engineer, i hold that the knowledge and experience associated with bringing new physical states into existence that have not existed previously is primarily a form of engineering.

There is also a role for the "architect" as someone who conceptualizes the overall aesthetics, appearance and, in some cases, broad function of a particular design. This applies particularly in the case of buildings and in certain other design situations.

In the balance of this document i will refer to engineering and not mention the role of the architect in order to reduce complexity. Having said this, i DO consider that there IS an architectural role in creation as i perceive it relating to the overall aesthetics of plants and animals including form, flowers, etc. This seems to me to be further evidence of a creator.

I understand "engineering" to be the analysis, design, construction, implementation and operation of systems, structures, etc which did not exist previously. This includes buildings, vehicles, aircraft and nearly every material item that human beings have brought into existence on this planet. This includes formal and informal engineering.

Engineering as i have experienced it throughout my life is founded on verifiable and reproducible laws and principles of mechanics, physics, chemistry, mathematics, thermodynamics, etc. Engineering is coupled with a large body of knowledge and experience about how to design and build systems that work, whether buildings, machines or any other type of engineering output.

This is supported by "Codes of Practice", standards, professional societies, regulatory bodies and legislation. An engineer who designs or builds a system that fails in a way that suggests negligence or bad practice faces disciplinary hearings and potentially criminal or other legal charges. This can result in an engineer being debarred from practice temporarily or permanently and also result in the engineer and their employer being held personally financially accountable for the damage.

An engineer who publishes a formal technical white paper or book which contains verifiably false or unprovable information that causes loss to others could also face disciplinary measures or at least peer approbation.

Since i perceive the essence of the debate regarding evolution versus creation relates to the manner in which a wide diversity of complex systems came into existence, it seems to me that the application of engineering principles and disciplines is an appropriate approach to seeking to resolve the debate.

Accordingly, i have chosen in that which follows to place considerable reliance on my engineering knowledge and experience and to seek, as best i can, to offer information based on this approach.

I recognize that since we are dealing with abstract and intangible issues arguments can be offered against what i have to say. Again this is a matter of personal choice which i ask you to evaluate.

It seems to me, from my perspective, as one who believes in a creator, a Day of Judgment and a lake of fire, that engineering discipline indicates a requirement for anyone who publishes on this subject. Specifically, it seems to me that someone who alleges that they can prove that there is no creator and speaks about it or publishes about it, to place on record their willingness to accept responsibility if they are in error.

In other words, a statement like *"i ... do solemnly take oath and swear that there is no creator, no day of judgment and no lake of fire and declare that if i am in error and there is a creator, a judgment and a lake of fire i will take the place in the lake of fire of everyone who trusts my opinion and acts on it"*. It seems to me that anyone who tells people that there is no lake of fire should be willing to go there on behalf of those who believe them in the event that they are mistaken.

I consider such a declaration to be comparable to the statutory responsibility that a registered professional engineer or medical doctor carries.

It is not my intention to debate this point. I leave it open to each reader to consider.

One of the things that i am increasingly finding extremely challenging with regard to researching and writing this document is to reconcile the concept of there being a dispute between evolution and creation. This is discussed in more detail below in section .

In essence, it seems to me that both creation and evolution are speaking about creation. One is speaking about creation by an external intelligent "engineer" and the other is speaking about creation without a creator, that is, without an engineer.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines create as "bring into existence, give rise to; originate".

It seems to me that what i understand the theory of evolution to offer is a theory about how the universe, the earth and all animals, plants, etc on the earth "originated". I understand this to be the same as saying that the theory of evolution is a theory of creation without a creator. This seems to me to be a contradiction from an engineering sense at least.

In the light of the above, it seems to me that the debate about evolution versus creation is first and foremost a debate about engineering and NOT about science.

It seems to me that at some level all engineers are scientists but most scientists are not engineers. Accordingly, i think that the creator, if there is one, must be an architect and an engineer as well as a scientist.

In making this point, i would like to stress that i, together with many other engineers, regard engineering as an art as well as a science. The phrase "the art of engineering" occurs 2,570 times when searched on Google. Pages with the words -the art of engineering- occur 5,710,000 times. The phrase "the art and science of engineering" occurs 341 times and pages with the words -the art and science of engineering- occur 3,690,000 times.

Based on the points in this section, the remainder of this document makes reference to a number of aspects of widely available data that seem particularly important to me from an engineering point of

view. In other words, points that are important in the context of the practical issues which in my experience are really important in designing and building complex systems that work reliably and sustainably in practice.

15. RELIGION

Continuing with my objective of offering simple definitions, it seems to me that religion is essentially about explaining those things that science and engineering cannot explain, that is primarily the non-physical, spiritual, ethical, moral and related realms.

Searches on Google return the following numbers: religion (31,500,000), worship (8,980,000), praise (has connotations other than religion) (6,440,000). It seems to me that a broad concept of religion is a significant part of the thinking of many people.

As a "religious" person, i hold that my religion offers an explanation for the existence of the universe, the existence of the earth and the existence of all that is on the earth with particular emphasis on an explanation for the existence of humankind. Why humankind is here, where humankind came from and where humankind is going.

Given what i have written above about science and engineering it seems to me that the "theory of evolution" or any other theory about where humankind came from cannot be verified by standards that i personally hold to be "scientific" nor can i find a way to verify it by methods that i hold to conform to "engineering" disciplines.

This leaves me to conclude that the theory of evolution is just as much a religion as belief in a creator is a religion.

It seems to me that the word "faith" could be substituted for "religion" and lead to the same conclusion.

Personally, i keep coming back to "creation" being faith in a creator whose origin cannot be explained and "evolution" is faith in a creative event that brought uncountable billions of tons of physical matter into existence whose origin cannot be explained. I think it requires less faith to believe in a creator than it takes to believe in something that i experience as *"we will figure it out some day"*.

I cannot prove this and leave it for your consideration.

16. SUGGESTED PRINCIPLES FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

At this point, i would like to revisit certain points addressed previously and make some further suggestions with regard to an approach to analyzing available data with a view to drawing a conclusion about the existence or non-existence of a creator which is as substantive as possible.

A. ARGUMENT FROM INCREDULITY IS NEUTRAL - OR SELF CANCELLING

In the analysis that i undertook in the week mentioned above, i found myself constantly confronted with "argument from incredulity".

I also found myself constantly confronted with my own mind saying "i cannot understand". In other words, i cannot understand how anyone can believe that a system as complex as a human being could ever come into existence without an external engineering creative agency. That is neutralized by argument from incredulity.

However, i experience statements that people cannot believe in a creator because i cannot give them "solid provable evidence" as also being an argument from incredulity. This also applies to demands for proof that spirit's exist, that there will be a judgment, that there is a lake of fire, that there is a heaven, that there is life after death, that human beings have spirit's, etc.

Accordingly, i have concluded that "argument from incredulity" is neutral, results in deadlock and is self cancelling. It seems to me that people can use argument from incredulity to neutralize the arguments of those who oppose creation just as effectively as it can be used in the opposite direction.

Accordingly, i have chosen not to address argument from incredulity further in this document.

I recognize that in most and possibly everything that follows it will be possible to use incredulity to nullify the points that are offered. I appeal to you not to do this and, if you disagree with what i write, please find another basis to reject it.

At some level it seems to me that the end result of argument from incredulity is that each individual is confronted with having to make a choice on the basis of there being one essential point that each side cannot answer:

- It seems to me that those who do not believe there is a creator cannot prove where the matter from which the universe is constructed came from and do not have a verifiable and reproducible answer.

- As one who believes in a creator, i admit that i do not have any explanation for where the creator came from. He says that he is "eternally self existent" and i choose to believe this. I personally cannot begin to comprehend where He came from and i choose not to concern myself with this. I have ample evidence that He exists and i choose to consider this to be more important than seeking to understand something that i hold to be incomprehensible.

I really cannot see very much difference between these two positions. It really does seem that both require similar levels of faith in something - either a creator who is eternal or in matter that self created in an absolute vacuum. I really keep coming back to the latter looking like a belief in creation.

Ultimately it is a matter of personal choice.

B. REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM

As indicated previously, "reductio ad absurdum" is a principle that i was taught at school and which the web site referenced previously indicates is widely applied.

I hold that this principle is an intrinsic part of a significant part of science and is valid and reliable as a deductive analytical process.

It seems to me that "reductio ad absurdum" and "argument from incredulity" are, on a macro level, mutually exclusive. Accordingly, i have decided to choose reductio ad absurdum as my preferred tool. Having said this, i submit that close consideration of what follows will indicate that this decision is not central to the argument that is presented.

C. ENTITIES ARE NOT TO BE MULTIPLIED BEYOND NECESSITY

A principle that was advanced to me in the context of the discussions referred to above is the principle of "non sunt multiplicanda entia praeter necessitatem" (614) which means "entities are not to be multiplied beyond necessity" and is apparently referred to as "Ockham's Razor".

This principle seems to me to be intuitively sound although i have no recollection of encountering it previously.

This principle was advanced on the basis that it was suggested that since evolution theory could explain the existence of the Universe and man without a creator there was no need for a creator.

I think that IF it can be shown that the universe and man could have come into existence without a creator, then this IS a valid thesis.

In the sections that follow, i present evidence which i believe indicates that the universe and man could NOT have come into existence without a creator.

D. PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS

It is my understanding that "probability and statistics" (413,000) are regarded as a science.

The application of probability and statistics have certainly been central to my engineering training and career.

I therefore hold that the appropriate application of statistics and probabilistic techniques is a valid tool in understanding complex problems. Accordingly, in the sections that follow some reference is made to the application of these principles although the arguments that are presented do not rely on any significant knowledge of this field.

E. STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The concept of "statistical significance" (299,000) is a specific aspect of statistics

The web site <http://www.surveysystem.com/signif.htm> defines "Statistical Significance" as *"In normal English, "significant" means important, while in Statistics "significant" means probably true (not due to chance). A research finding may be true without being important. When statisticians say a result is "highly significant" they mean it is very probably true. They do not (necessarily) mean it is highly important."*

The word significant, as applied in the sections that follow, is in terms of this definition. In other words, there are individual observations which i hold to be statistically significant in terms of supporting certain conclusions, this does not necessarily mean that any particular conclusion is "highly important". In some cases this may be so but i will then endeavour to make this clear in the text.

Statistical significance in rigorous terms is determined using "significance tests" (29,700) which are specific mathematical and statistical calculations. I have not undertaken formal significance test computations on any of the examples given below, however, based on nearly thirty years experience i am personally satisfied that the examples to which the term significance are applied would more than adequately satisfy the requirements for a high level of statistical significance.

This does not mean that the individual examples are absolute but that there is substantial evidence to indicate that they are true to such an extent that there is a substantial basis from which to argue for or against spontaneous evolution.

F. ARGUMENT FROM SPECIFIC TO GENERAL

In considering many of the arguments with regard to the debate of evolution versus creation, it seemed that in many cases people on both sides were arguing from the specific to the general with very small sample sizes relative to other potential sampling areas.

My professional training indicates that argument from specific to general is not a valid deductive technique. In other words, using an experiment in a test tube does not, in terms of my training, provide a basis to argue substantively for or against evolution.

I will endeavour in the sections that follow to argue from general principles to specific or to use specific examples which i hold to be indicative of observably general principles.

17. "PLANNED (ENGINEERED) CREATIVE EVOLUTION" VERSUS "UNPLANNED (UNENGINEERED) SPONTANEOUS EVOLUTION"

In a previous section it has been suggested that both evolution and creation are forms of creation.

I would now like to propose that they are also both forms of evolution.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary includes the following in the definition of evolution "*... appearance in due succession ... development (of organism, human society, the universe, design, argument, etc); origination of species by development from earlier forms, not by special creation ...*".

In seeking to converge the analysis in this document towards something that i think i can offer as "solid" and "provable" it increasingly seemed important to more closely define what i perceive to be the principal attributes of the two arguments.

Following are my suggestions.

A. INSTANTANEOUS CREATION

I have indicated in a previous section that i do not believe that creation took place in six consecutive twenty four hour periods. By extension i do not believe that creation of all that exists today took place instantaneously, that is in periods of less than twenty four hours.

For the sake of this point i would like to define such concepts as "instantaneous creation".

I do not believe that instantaneous creation is a necessary pre-requisite for the existence of a creator. I see no reason why a creator who says He is eternal would need to resort to instantaneous creation, even if He IS capable of it.

As far as i can see, the time frame of creation is not relevant to establishing whether there is a creator or not. The time period since the completion of the creation of man may be more relevant but even then i do not see that disputing the time period will can have any impact on whether there is a creator or not.

Accordingly, i appeal to those who believe there IS a creator NOT to attach issues of timing to any argument that they advance in support of a creator.

I appeal to those who do NOT believe there is a creator also to find another basis to present an argument to prove there is no creator.

I will not address this scenario further in this document and in the remainder of this section will focus my attention on two definitions that seem to me to be important.

B. PLANNED (ENGINEERED) CREATIVE EVOLUTION

Having accepted that belief in creation of the universe and humankind in six consecutive periods of twenty four hours is not a precondition for belief in a creator and that creation may have taken millions or billions of years, opens up some other possibilities. Specifically that it seems to me that it is quite possible for creation, by an eternally self existing creator, to have taken place in an evolutionary manner.

A fundamental engineering principle in designing complex systems is that one builds one or more prototypes, operates them, identifies opportunities for improvement and then builds production units. As one gains experience with the operation of production units one identifies areas for further improvement and these are incorporated into subsequent versions of production units which may also go through one or more prototype stages.

If one is seeking to create something that has never existed before, such as a heavier than air flying machine, one may create numerous prototypes before one even begins to function in the manner envisaged. It can take many iterations even after a functioning prototype has been created before one can achieve the level of performance, functionality, reliability, etc that one envisages when one first embarks on the project.

In the case of heavier than air flying machines, it took centuries before a machine that flew for any distance was created and many decades further before the levels of performance, functionality, reliability, safety and affordability that we are accustomed to today were achieved. Today, engineers continue to make improvements to flying machines in order to improve their operating attributes.

The need for prototypes is NOT an indication of lack of intelligence or other deficiency, it is simply evidence that when creating a complex system that has never been created before it is to be expected that the first design will offer opportunity for improvement as one gains experience with the design, construction and operation of the particular system.

In my experience, these principles apply whether it is a twelve year old trying to build a simple kennel for their dog or an international space agency cooperative programme designing a "space station".

If one has never designed, built and operated something before, it is necessary to gain experience with the design, construction and operation of that something before one can build a "something" that is reasonably optimized. Alternatively one can learn from others who have done the same or similar things previously, this is the basis of engineering education.

This being so in terms of my life experience, i hold it to be so in all areas of development that i have ever read about or heard of.

At a more personal level, it is my observation that if someone designs and builds a house for themselves, when they take occupation they will always find opportunity for improvement unless they employed a really skilled architect who really understood their requirements extremely well and the person briefing the architect was very clear about the requirements and had considerable experience.

I would like to suggest that if you have ever designed and built anything you have personal experience that indicates that it is not trivial to accomplish the outcome you desired at the start and you may also have experience that indicates that if you undertook the same project again you would do it differently with the expectation of an improved outcome.

It is my belief that the Almighty has created a universe like ours only once.

Accordingly, it seems to me that it is certain that creation was undertaken on an incremental basis similar to that described above.

In the hope of demonstrating what i am suggesting, i would like to suggest the following scenario as one possible view for consideration:

1) A limited amount of matter was created in order to develop the periodic table of the elements. This may have taken any number of prototypes (or experiments).

2) Some or all of the amount of matter that exists in the universe today was created. This could have been created as a single mass and distributed through some form of "big bang" or it could have been created a step at a time, each sun, planet, etc in it's place and motion.

The term "big bang" is defined at <http://dictionary.reference.com> as "*big bang n. The cosmic explosion that marked the origin of the universe according to the big bang theory*".

3) Any number of prototype "solar systems" could have been created in order to obtain a particular desired set of conditions. This would have eventually resulted in the construction of our solar system.

4) As the design was unfolding, different components of the universe could have been given different trajectories, orbits, rotations, etc. This could also have taken place on a step by step experimental / prototype basis.

5) Any number of prototype "earths" could have been created in these solar systems in order to obtain the desired levels of temperature, ecological conditions, etc. This allows for the possibility of any number of other habitable or near habitable planets to exist in the universe.

6) Once the present planet was stabilized there might have been any number of iterations of refinement of the atmosphere, biosphere, etc. Such iterations may also have occurred on other prototype earth planets before being implemented here.

7) As the environment on earth stabilized there could have been a progressive implementation or development of increasingly sophisticated life forms and organisms, starting with any number of the one cell organisms which i understand to be an essential part of evolution theory.

8) Over time this progressive evolution of life may have resulted in any number of prototypes that did not fully conform to the original design objectives and these forms may have been formally extinguished or else allowed to die out. Either way, this represents a form of "survival of the fittest".

9) As the plant life on the planet stabilized this would have created the environment for increasingly complex animals until eventually the full range of land mammals was in existence. At each stage of development there could have been multiple prototypes and the successful prototypes could then have become basic patterns for different groupings of animals such as horses, cats, dogs, cattle, antelope, apes, rodents, etc. Prototyping at each stage seems quite possible to me.

10) In the process of developing these life forms, at some stage animal spirits may have been introduced. There are many who believe that animals have spirits. It is my impression that the spirits commonly referred to as angels or messengers may have been created before any physical matter was created. It is my understanding that they were active agents in the creation process. This is not a necessary condition to the validity of this scenario.

11) Once the animal ecology was well established (it may have been continuing to develop) initial prototypes of human kind may have been developed. There may have been many prototype iterations, thus accounting for the range of intermediate forms that are reported to have been found.

12) Eventually, once a final design had been arrived at, human kind would have been put "into production". While there are other reasons why a decision as to whether this took place thousands of years ago or millions of years ago seems to me to be significant, it does not seem to me to be important for the current point.

13) One could argue that the earth has continued to evolve from the time of creation of man or one can argue that it has been deteriorating since then. I hold the latter view and hold that there is evidence of this. However, this is not relevant to this point.

It also seems possible that in the above scenario many types of animal could have further evolved since the completion of a formal development process. It seems to me that there could be ongoing evolution / mutation / of present forms with or without the intervention of a creator and / or with or without the intervention of other spiritual beings. Thus all dogs may have evolved from one created pair, all cats may have evolved from one created pair, all butterflies, all human beings, etc may have evolved from one created pair.

In the event of evolution without a creator it is my understanding that it is taken as given that all dogs must have evolved from one successful pair and that the same applies to the other examples given above. In sections that follow i will seek to demonstrate that this is a necessary requirement for evolution without a creator to happen.

It seems to me that progressive development of dogs and other animals does not indicate the existence of a creator or not. At some level i accept that it can be taken as indicating that evolution without a creator IS possible within the constraints of a particular form, such as dogs.

In other words, there can be spontaneity of development at a level of some complexity without it proving spontaneity at a macro or universal level.

The essence of my point above is that i can see no reason why creation by a creator could not have taken place in a manner that it seems to me is entirely congruent with possibly all of the verifiable data that i have encountered offered in support of evolution without a creator.

In other words, it seems to me that there is no available physical evidence that i am aware of that proves that there is not a creator.

I am willing to accept that there is much evidence that proves that what some people who believe in a creator have said was not accurate. This does not prove that there is not a creator, it simply proves that some people made mistakes. I hold that all human beings make mistakes and that the fact that some people and even most or all people who have believed in creation up to the present have made mistakes does not prove anything other than that they are human and make mistakes.

Insofar as this document is likely to contain mistakes, this does not prove anything about the existence of a creator, it simply proves that at some level i made mistakes and therefore i deduce that i am human.

I hope that this helps to present a point of view on creation that may help some to look at the available data differently.

In the interests of more narrowly defining the above concept, i have elected to call the above "Planned (Engineered) Creative Evolution".

- "Evolution" because i am convinced that what exists today evolved and was not instantaneously or near instantaneously created but developed one increment or prototype at a time.

- "Creative" because i am convinced that this process of evolution required an external agency to happen. More evidence in support of this is offered in subsequent sections.

- "Planned" because i am convinced there was a clear objective of creating an environment in which human kind could be brought into existence and because all the evidence that i see around me about the universe, the planet, plants and animals, etc tells me, as an engineer, that this could not have come into existence without a clear plan.

- "Engineered" because i am convinced that the creative process took place in a systematic manner that embodied the disciplines of engineering, prototyping, progressive development, etc.

As i see it, "planned" and "engineered" are redundant in terms of my understanding of the word "create", it seems to me that others do not all see things this way.

I would therefore like to offer the term "Planned (Engineered) Creative Evolution" as a more detailed definition of "creation" for your consideration.

I leave it to you to decide whether this works for you at some level or not at all. Whether it works for you or not, i ask you to please consider what follows.

C. "UNPLANNED (UNENGINEERED) SPONTANEOUS EVOLUTION"

In contrast to planned (engineered) creative evolution, i have concluded that my understanding of "evolution" is currently best summed up by the term "Unplanned (Unengineered) Spontaneous Evolution".

- "Evolution" because i am convinced that there was evolution and it fits.

- "Spontaneous" because i understand "evolution" to be about a process which was not initiated by an external agency and which took place in response to environmental and other stimuli which resulted in progressive, incremental mutation / adaptation of life forms, etc.

- "Unplanned" for the same reason as the previous point. I understand "evolution" to hold that there was no external agency and therefore, i understand this to indicate that there was no plan to evolve to any particular intermediate or end state, it "just happened".

- "Unengineered" (which i understand is not necessarily "good" English, but i cannot think of another term) for the same reason as the previous point. I understand engineering to require an experienced and knowledgeable being to bring to bear their intellect, knowledge, experience, etc to conceptualise, specify, analyze, design, build, commission, implement and sometimes operate anything that has any complexity.

I accept that the definition offered above is redundant in some respects. I have chosen to accept this redundancy in order to comparatively align the two points of view as i currently think i have understood them. I would like to think that these two definitions more specifically home in on the essence of the point of whether there is a creator or not in a way that you will find at least to some degree useful.

I leave it to you to decide and ask you please to persevere with me even if you do not agree.

18. IS THERE EVIDENCE OF A CREATOR?

At this point, i would like to submit that the dispute is NOT between "evolution" and "creation" it is "is there a creator or not" and if there is, what evidence is there to prove that a creator exists.

Thus far i have offered various points that i hold to be experientially true for me, none of which are particularly amenable to third party verification. As much as i may be passionately convinced of the veracity of these points as a consequence of personal experiences that i hold to be profound, my experiences and my faith are of no relevance to a third party seeking to make an informed decision that conforms to fundamental scientific and engineering principles.

At this stage i would like to explore some evidence that seems to me to be directly accessible to almost any person in the world and of which i think you are likely to have at least some personal experience that you can relate to.

I will do this first by considering the environment in which most human beings live, their dwelling, transport, furnishings, etc and secondly by considering some specific attributes of being a human being.

In doing this i will seek to focus on those items that i have some level of personal knowledge and experience of although at times i will also refer to items that i have had a significant number of independent confirmations of and therefore consider reasonably likely to be valid.

In each case i offer a number of points which each seem to me to offer robust empirical evidence of a creator which, individually, may not carry much weight but which i like to think collectively do offer robust evidence.

At all times, on each point and on the entire thesis, it is a matter of personal choice. It is my hope to persuade you but it is not necessary for me to do this.

19. EVIDENCE IN THE IMMEDIATE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

After much thought about the subject of this document, i eventually identified a number of factors which seemed to me to be relevant in terms of my own personal experience in my daily life and which it seems to me could be relevant to most people on the planet. This may not apply fully to every example but i hope that at least some of them will be relevant to you.

As with the rest of this document, my intention is not to present a comprehensive case for any single point but to raise some broad principles that seem important to me in the hope that the collective case will provide a basis for an informed decision, which ever way that decision may go.

I hope that each example will demonstrate in some way the probability of planned (engineered) creative evolution and therefore the existence of a creator as an intelligent external agency with a clear objective who managed and directed the entire process of development.

A. LAND BASED MAMMALS WITHOUT WINGS

For this example i would like to largely exclude marine mammals like whales and dolphins and winged mammals, specifically bats. I would like to focus on the land based mammals that most human beings have had some contact with, ranging from cats, dogs and rats through to elephant, antelope, sheep, cattle, apes, etc.

On reflecting on the subject of this article, it seemed noteworthy to me that the majority of land mammals in the categories i have chosen to focus on have basically similar structure and design:

- 1) Four legs
- 2) Two ears on the side of the head toward the top
- 3) Two eyes towards the top of the head and in front
- 4) A nose or breathing apparatus (trunk in the case of elephants) below the eyes and central to the head.
- 5) A mouth below the nose
- 6) The head is on a neck which connects at the base of the skull to the end of the body above the front limbs
- 7) Where there is a tail it is at the rear end of the body between and above the rear limbs
- 8) The anus is between the rear limbs, forward of the tail and behind the genitals
- 9) The genitals are between the rear limbs
- 10) The male genitals have essentially the same external structure - a penis with the capacity to become erect and two testicles
- 11) The female genitals are, as far as i know, essentially similar
- 12) The body is symmetrical in the form of a mirror image of the left and right sides - the left ear is a mirror of the right ear, the left forelimb of the right forelimb, etc

There are also more detailed aspects such as structure of the skeleton, design of the eyes, design of the internal organs, reproductive system, etc which, as far as i know, are broadly similar. I do not have detailed knowledge of this aspect and such knowledge is not readily available to the majority of people so i chose not to go into further detail.

The human body conforms largely to the same pattern with the exception of greater differentiation in certain respects from the other animals referred to in this category.

Apes seem visibly closer to humans than other mammals thereby supporting a view that apes were created as a more specialised form of land mammal and that the basic design for apes was then used as the starting point for development of humans, possibly using a progressive prototyping approach as outlined in a previous section.

I say this in recognition of my understanding that it is the view of those who favour evolution that man evolved from apes without an external creative agency, planner, designer or engineer.

It seems to me that there is remarkable consistency within this group of animals. It is my impression that this consistency becomes even more apparent if one considers skeletal structure, blood system, nervous system, eye structure, reproductive system, etc.

My engineering experience suggests to me that this level of consistency requires external management of the evolution process. All the variations of design within this group seem to me to be harmonious with an overall theme.

This suggests to me that at the very least all these animals originated from a single prototype pair and that there was only one pair of this prototype on the entire planet. It further suggests to me that all other less successful prototypes died out.

If one accepts a concept of unplanned, unengineered, spontaneous evolution, it seems to me to be impossible for two pairs with exactly the same design to originate spontaneously and simultaneously AND in such a way that they could interbreed and carry the same genetic structure in matching male and female forms. I simply do not have the capacity to visualise such duplication and therefore it seems clear to me that there must have been a single pair to start with.

I can only support this from a perspective of my own experience that it is very difficult to design and build two duplicate complex systems without careful planning and design and careful manufacturing quality control. It seems to me that anyone who has tried to make several identical copies of one item, whether a knitting pattern, a dog kennel or anything more complex will have experience that it requires time and effort. It also seems to me that anyone who has attempted such duplication will have experience that without high attention to detail the resulting products will be different at a noticeable and significant level.

I am not saying that this cannot happen with spontaneous evolution, i am saying that it seems to me to represent a very precarious point in the evolutionary process - only one pair that has no knowledge of other variants elsewhere on the planet somehow manages to survive and all other derivatives vanish.

It seems to me that in a process of spontaneous evolution it would be inevitable that evolution would proceed at different rates at different locations in the world. Accordingly it seems inevitable to me

that there would be multiple variants and that at least some of these variants would persist indefinitely. At the very least it seems to me that there would be significant occurrences of such variants in the fossil record. I do not recall ever having read or heard of the level of fossil variation that it seems to me would result.

In order to try and make my point clearer, i would like to briefly address the number of legs. All these animals have four limbs. As i understand it, even bats and whales have four limbs. Insects have six legs, arthropods have eight legs, other invertebrates have ten or more legs.

If all animals evolved spontaneously without any coordinating influence i don't understand why are there no mammals with six, eight or ten legs. Or even animals with one, three, five, seven or nine legs.

In a review of a book by a professor who it has been suggested to me is authoritative in the field of evolution, i encountered the following quote: *"to a first approximation, all animals fly ... because ... to a first approximation, all species are insects"*. Since the quote is off a web site that is opposed to what this professor has written i accept that it might be inaccurate. In the hope that this is not so i have chosen to cite the reference as it seems to support my point.

If all animals are to a first approximation insects then i do not understand why at least some mammals do not have six legs.

I raise this point because it seems to me that survival of the fittest suggests that, at least in some cases, six or eight legs would be preferable to four. In the case of a four legged animal, if is in a fight or in danger and one leg is injured, it has a significant disadvantage as far as i can see. In contrast, it seems clear to me that a six or eight legged animal would be in a much better position to survive.

When a cat such as a lion, tiger or cheetah is pursuing its prey at speed, the television programmes that i have watched suggest to me that the cat is relatively unstable when it tackles its prey and it sometimes loses the animal it is pursuing as a consequence. It seems to me that if it was running on four legs and had two legs to tackle its prey this would give a higher survival rate.

I have travelled at high speed over rough terrain in armoured fighting vehicles with four, six and eight wheels. In my experience the six and eight wheel vehicles have far better stability and traction. I have also travelled at speed in a six wheeled armoured personnel carrier which was missing one wheel. The vehicle remained stable and mobile. This experience gives me strong grounds to suggest that a four legged mammal is sub-optimal from a survival of the fittest perspective.

Accordingly, i don't understand why there are no land mammals with more than four legs. As far as i am aware there have not even been reports of fossils of land mammals with more than four legs. Particularly if a prominent evolutionist believes that mammals evolved from insects i have great difficulty in seeing how this can support evolution.

It seems much easier for me to believe that there is a creator who chose to create mammals with four limbs for whatever reasons He considered appropriate.

Along similar lines, it seems to me that survival of the fittest would support many animals having four eyes with two at the back of the head, certainly for those animals that are subject to being preyed upon such as antelope. It seems to me that rodents which are subject to predation by birds would benefit from eyes in the top of their heads as well.

If survival of the fittest occurred in terms of spontaneous evolution i wonder why humans do not have eyes in the back of their heads, this would surely improve survival rates? This seems to me to suggest a creator who wanted humans in particular to learn to work in teams.

Television recreations of "primitive" men fleeing from pursuers show them constantly looking over their shoulders, surely an additional two or four eyes must have come into existence spontaneously at some stage and must surely have supported survival if spontaneous evolution is valid.

Virtually every motor vehicle that travels on public roads has a rear-view mirror or a television camera at the rear again evidencing the importance of rearward vision.

On another track, there are reptiles which have similar external structure to that of the mammals outlined above. This seems to me to indicate the need for at least one additional intermediate form which branches off into warm blooded and cold blooded animals.

The left and right side symmetry (2,740,000) of most animals also seems to me to be remarkable. In many cases the external organs and structure, including the skeleton are symmetric whereas the internal organs are asymmetric. I do not understand how spontaneously evolving animals without an external design agency could decide which components should be symmetric and which asymmetric. For example, why two lungs but one heart? two kidneys but one (asymmetric) stomach? two ovaries but one uterus? etc.

Considering symmetry from another perspective, i do not understand how the molecules and cells on one side of the evolving animal knew what those on the other side were doing when they assembled themselves if there was no external creative agency with a clear plan and design. I also do not understand how these cells and molecules managed to communicate this information to the reproductive cells.

Taking this further, i do not understand how DNA knows what the body looks like and how it grows if the cells have to "communicate" this to the DNA and none of these specialist cells and material have any way of seeing how they all fit together and seeing the full picture and no way of articulating their interfaces in the context of an overall design?

I do not understand how DNA kept pace with the evolution of the body if the cells and molecules were randomly and spontaneously attaching themselves to other cells and molecules and evolving at the same time.

I do not understand how the teeth which, as i understand it, largely comprise non-living chemical material, communicate with the DNA and rest of the body about their design, manufacture and growth. How did teeth, bone, hair and toe and finger nail design keep pace with the rest of the body when these items are not alive as i understand it? How did human teeth decide to replace themselves at a certain age if there was no designer?

I find the appearance of many plants and animals to be aesthetically pleasing and proportioned in a way that appeals to me. These are subjective opinions which i understand to be shared by many human beings. The fact that human beings experience beauty and aesthetics seems, in some way, to indicate a level of non-physical complexity in human beings that i have difficulty comprehending as happening spontaneously without a creator. The fact that many human beings experience much of the world around them as being aesthetically pleasing seems to me to suggest some inter-related

design concept directed at producing an environment and inhabitants that are in some way beautiful and also appreciate beauty.

The functional efficiency and effectiveness of the organs of the bodies of animals and humans and of plants and ecosystems, etc is, it seems to me from an engineering perspective to be highly complex and sophisticated and to require considerable design effort.

It also seems to me that the information about common attributes of land mammals indicates that for evolution without a creator to apply there must be a common "missing link" between the predecessor of all the above mammals and those mammals through a single pair. It seems to me that there must also be a common missing link between that missing link and all cats, another for all cattle type mammals, another for all apes, etc.

The duck-billed platypus has a large tail, a bill that looks like a duck's bill, an overall appearance that looks a bit like a crocodile, lays eggs and allegedly has blood temperature lower than other mammals. Spontaneous evolution needs to take account of how this happened. Is this animal THE "link" between cold blooded reptiles and mammals?

I have only encountered reference to the missing link between apes and humankind. While i can understand that this seems most relevant and most recent i have difficulty in envisaging the practicality and survivability of what now seems to me to be a significant number of what might be termed "evolution points" where it seems to me from a design consistency perspective that only a single pair could have survived worldwide at each evolution point.

I think that detailed mapping of all required evolution points required to trace spontaneous evolution from a very simple cell to human beings and all other plants and animals alive today would require a substantial number of "missing links".

I do understand that it is possible to develop a scenario or hypothesis to counter these objections and demonstrate that spontaneous evolution can account for all this. As an engineer i simply cannot find a basis to believe that this could possibly happen in practice.

Once more it is a matter of choice.

B. HUMAN HABITATIONS

I would now like to examine something that is more directly experienced and known by nearly all human beings, the dwelling in which each person lives and the dwellings their families, friends, associates and community members live in.

This dwelling is a structure created by human beings by applying their intelligence, knowledge, experience, cultural background, etc and therefore it seems to me that you are likely to ask what relevance it has to this article.

I would like to suggest that since in many countries many people specify and build their own dwellings, this gives a useful example of what happens in a situation which to me approximates spontaneous evolution.

In some countries and in some localities there are state housing regulations and standards which limit the materials, ground utilization, etc of private dwellings. These regulations vary from country to

country. The standards in former British colonies tend to be similar, those in countries with other histories differ. Even within former British colonies there are noticeable differences in basic architecture with regard to traditional housing.

The building materials in different countries differ markedly in some cases. In much of the United States of America houses are built with timber frames or entirely of timber. In South Africa, where i live, houses are almost entirely built with bricks or blocks and timber houses are not frequently encountered. Elsewhere in the world there are differences.

In most of the places that i have travelled in the world, individual private dwellings are different one from another. In some locations there may be a limited range of designs on a particular housing estate but, overall, my experience is that houses in nearly all cases are distinct, unique and different from those around them and from those i have visited elsewhere in the world. They are different in terms of architecture and appearance and they are different in terms of layout of rooms, number of rooms, size of rooms, etc.

My conclusion is that when human beings undertake spontaneous creation within the limits of state imposed standards the resulting dwellings are distinct, individual and unique. Since human beings are highly intelligent and capable of learning, including being capable of discerning an optimum design, this suggests to me that there are other factors which inhibit the formation of an optimum design or that there is no such thing as an optimum design for a human dwelling place.

It seems to me that as a first approximation, any spontaneous evolution process with no external creative intervention is unlikely to produce less diversity than the example given here.

Conversely, where there is a high level of standardization with regard to dwellings, as far as i have ever encountered it, this has always resulted from state intervention or economic factors or similar. In other words, a higher authority has set limits on individual creativity and imposed standards. It seems to me that this example demonstrates that it is very unlikely that spontaneous evolution would give rise to the level of standardization of basic structure and architecture and technical components that i perceive to exist in the animal and plant kingdoms and amongst stars, planets, etc.

C. MOTOR VEHICLES

It seems to me that the diversity of motor vehicles, even though mass produced, reinforces this point.

Motor vehicles are produced to diverse designs by different manufacturers and, as far as i can see, there is currently little or no convergence and i think there may well be divergence. Within the ranges produces by individual manufacturers there are diverse models ranging from low cost functional low performance low luxury vehicles to sophisticated luxury models, sports models, off road models, etc. Then there are commercial vehicles, military vehicles, etc.

As far as i know, even within classes of motor vehicle that look externally similar there is considerable diversity in terms of internal structure, metallurgy, etc. It is my understanding that this diversity is far greater than in mammals. I base this observation on casual observation at motor vehicle body repair shops.

It seems inconceivable to me that there will ever be convergence on a very limited number of models unless there is a global government that imposes very harsh external standards and controls.

Military vehicles within a particular fighting force tend to be highly standardized for practical reasons, however these standards are imposed by a higher authority and are not necessarily optimal they may be commercial or political.

I infer from these examples that unless there is a higher authority imposing standards there is little or no tendency for spontaneity to lead to convergence on a single design or even a limited range. Accordingly, from an engineering perspective i cannot understand how there can be the level of standardization that i experience in the animal and plant kingdoms without an external creator who has applied rigorous engineering disciplines and standards within the scope of a clearly defined plan.

Again, i cannot prove this and leave it for your consideration and choice.

D. DOMESTIC FURNISHINGS, FINISHES, ORNAMENTS, ETC

My experience of visiting private dwellings in various countries leads me to conclude that at the level of the contents of a dwelling every single dwelling on the planet is different unless there is some very intense level of control, such as in a maximum security prison where inmates are prevented from bringing in personal items. Even in prison it is my impression that every inmate will do something to differentiate their cell from the others or, in other terms, to "stamp their personality" on their cell.

Again this suggests to me that spontaneous evolution is very unlikely to result in the level of conformity that i perceive exists within the plant and animal kingdoms.

In the so-called "industrialized" nations, many of the furnishings, fabrics, bric-a-brac, ornaments, etc that result in the inside of every home being different are mass produced in factories to fine manufacturing tolerances with exacting standards. Accordingly, it seems clear to me that even when there is a high level of commercially imposed standardization on the components, the end result is spontaneous, diverse and does not converge on any single outcome.

E. THE NUMBER OF WORDS IN ENGLISH

The number of words in the English language is another indication of constrained diversity.

These words are essentially based on twenty six letters in the alphabet if one ignores capitalization, inflections and other special forms of standard letters and punctuation marks such as apostrophes.

An article by Glenn Kersten, titled "Speaking of Language..." at <http://www.sls.lib.il.us/reference/por/features/97/language.html> presents an interesting discussion of the number of words in the English language.

It appears from this article that there are about 400,000 to 600,000 words depending on the definition of "word". The article states that "*there are more than a million chemical names, more than a million plant species, and more than a million insect species names*". In addition there are hundreds of thousands and possibly over a million technical terms. From this i conclude that there are probably over four million words in the English language.

The web site <http://www.kabalarians.com> lists 714,399 proper names.

The article also states that "*The most important count for your patrons to remember is the one given by Bryson: 'Altogether, about 200,000 English words are in common use.'*" The article also points out that new words are constantly being "coined".

This is an example of how much diversity can be generated within the constraint of twenty six basic letters. Even if one includes the additional diversity of capitalization, accents, etc it seems unlikely to me that there are more than about ninety characters that account for the full diversity referred to above.

If one considers the number of words in all languages in the world and all character sets the diversity of language is considerable.

At the opposite extreme, letting an illiterate child of three sit at a computer and punch the keyboard for hours is not likely to produce many character combinations that are meaningful words. Even placing an illiterate adult in front of a computer and letting them punch the keyboard is unlikely to produce many meaningful words. This is an indication of the degree of difficulty that i think is associated with the spontaneous assembly of molecules to produce cells and assembly of cells to produce human beings which are many orders of magnitude more complex than a word.

This seems to me to give an indication of the diversity that can result from intelligent evolution of a language with limited resources (letters). If one considers all the possible character sequences that could result with no intelligence applied to the assembly of letters this gives some indication of the challenges that i foresee in postulating unplanned, unengineered, spontaneous evolution involving millions of possible source molecules.

I would like to suggest that this example is something that most people on the planet can relate to from practical experience. It took effort to learn a basic vocabulary and even more effort to learn to spell and write the words that made up that basic vocabulary. In my case, it did not happen spontaneously, someone taught me and incentivised me to learn.

F. BOOKS AND WRITING

Taking the diversity of words to the next level, it is my understanding that no two people will write the identical sentence if the sentence is more than a few words and addresses anything but the most basic concept or is based on a more widely taught phrase.

As i understand it, this is a fundamental principle of intellectual property rights legislation. If two documents contain the same paragraph this is taken as prima facie evidence that the one author copied the work of the other.

This is also an essential principle of intellectual property rights legislation with regard to computer software as well as with regard to books.

Even the shape and form of items designed by humans is subject to intellectual property rights legislation. I have heard a report of case law to the effect that the curvature of the dome of a barbecue was the subject of successful court action. As i recall the matter, it was held that two unrelated designers will not arrive at exactly the same curvature and form unless one has copied the other.

I hold that it is experientially true that i cannot repeatedly write a paragraph about the same subject and use exactly the same words and sentence structure every time unless i copy a previous version.

Accordingly, i hold that it is true that it is not possible for two animals to have the same design of any component unless they both evolved from the same source animal OR they were designed by the same designer.

As a simple example of this principle, you could try searching on the internet for random sentences that are not generic in nature. Place the sentence in quotation marks and search. Try using any sentence of more than about ten words from any document that you have ever written and you are unlikely to find that sentence on the internet unless it is a reference to the document that you have used as a source.

The same applies to using a sentence out of any book in your possession or any page on the internet. It is highly unlikely that you will find that exact sentence unless it is an exact reference to the same document that you have used as source.

My personal understanding is that it will not happen that you will find an exact match except where the match refers to the same source.

Taking one sentence or moderately long phrase off a web page is regarded as a simple and efficient way of testing whether one's web site is listed in the search engines, the expectation is that only that web site will be returned. This has been my experience and seems to me to be intuitively correct.

To me this demonstrates what i suggest is "infinite random potential" - as far as i know spontaneous generation will never generate a book unless there is an author.

This principle of infinite randomness in word assembly to form paragraphs and longer passages of text is also inherent in the forensic analysis of writing style which i seem to recall has been used in certain criminal cases as a means of identifying a suspect.

G. HANDWRITING AND SIGNATURES

I am under the impression that it is a generally accepted principle that the handwriting of every person is different and specifically that every signature is different unless copied. It is my understanding that this is an essential principle in contract law and even in legal process. Great reliance is placed on every signature being unique.

If one considers that a signature comprises a limited number of discrete strokes with the writing instrument in a very specific general shape, form and sequence, in a limited space on a piece of paper, generally in one colour ink or pencil it illustrates how much difference can be generated with very few resources.

This is an indication of how diverse constrained randomness can be in the domain of experience of every person who has a bank account or enters into contracts or uses a signature for any purpose.

H. ELEMENTS IN THE PERIODIC TABLE OF ELEMENTS

An aspect which may not be well known to many readers is the periodic table of elements which describes the systematic relationship in properties of all the atoms from which all known matter is created.

Since many readers may not have personal experience of this table i will not go into detail.

The important points for me are that there is structure in this table which suggests to me that there is a creator and also that there are 113 elements or atoms in the entire table including a number of derivatives of uranium. Other articles suggest that there are 109 basic atoms.

For the purpose of this article i would simply like to contrast the degree of diversity of words based on twenty six letters, of which we all have some degree of experience, with the degree of variability that is possible based on 109 or 113 elements. The number of combinations is enormously greater.

Spontaneous evolution requires these elements to have come into existence of their own volition and then have chosen to assemble themselves to form molecules in ways that result in the molecules that are required for the planets, suns, earth, plants, animals and humans.

My experience as a person who has written literally tens of thousands of pages of text in the form of articles, white papers, technical reports, books, etc is that i cannot even begin to conceive how all these elements could spontaneously combine to form molecules and cells such that the entire universe and everything in it could come into existence on its own even in billions of years.

I. NUMBER OF KNOWN MOLECULES

As an extension of the above point, i tried to find an estimate of the number of molecules known to humankind.

I could not find any estimate other than "huge".

Based on the example of words, it seems to me that this is an inevitable conclusion.

Molecules are not linear like words, they are multidimensional. Molecules are not limited in length by the capacity of a reader to interpret the letters and form a word, molecules can comprise very long chains which can include patterns of atoms repeated in different forms.

As far as i know many industrial chemicals, medical drugs and other chemical compounds, including the chemical compounds that make up the human body are extremely complex. Many industrial and pharmaceutical chemicals are in the realms of trade secrets and intellectual property. At least some of these chemicals require the use of "catalysts" to form and these require highly trained, knowledgeable and experienced chemical engineering expertise to create and operate the processes that generate the output molecules.

As an engineer i cannot begin to conceive how specific atoms formed specific molecules that formed specific cells that formed specific organ systems that formed the human body without a highly intelligent, highly visionary, highly experienced external creative agency planning, analyzing, designing and overseeing the entire process.

I would go so far as to suggest that even a highly advanced creative being would require a considerable number of incremental developments, iterations and prototypes to progress development from a collection of matter, such as i understand to be postulated as existing before the "big bang", to what exists today in terms of the universe, my immediate surroundings and the person i see when i look in the mirror.

Building on the earlier point about evolution taking place in an incremental manner, this point suggests to me that there is no need for a creator to have a precise view of the end result of any major increment of an evolutionary creative process. I believe that the creator DID have a macro objective in mind at the beginning, however, i conclude that it is not necessary for the creator to have had a detailed view of what a human would look like at the start of the creation process.

I understand that belief that the creator knew exactly what a human would look like and in fact exactly what i would look like and how i would behave and exactly what i would accomplish in my life IS widely subscribed to. I submit that such capability is NOT a necessary prerequisite for deciding whether there is a creator or not.

As an engineer, my experience indicates that exact foreknowledge of the outcome of a design process is not a requirement for commencing a design. One can commence design of a very complex system with a vague concept and refine it as one gains understanding of the parameters of the situation and the components of the solution through progressive prototyping, etc.

Once can undertake experiments in order to gain knowledge without knowing what the outcome will be. That is a fundamental principle behind the concept of "original research" (462,000) which in my experience is pre-requisite for a doctoral thesis.

J. DIFFERENCES

All the above points point to what i consider to be enormous levels of variability, difference and unpredictably in a diversity of situations which i consider to exist under various levels of macro constraint in terms of possible outcome.

I hold that many of these examples provide substantial evidence of comprehensive randomness where spontaneity occurs even when there are intelligent creative beings involved.

I would like to develop this theme a bit further. I am NOT sure that all the following statements are fully provable, however, i have heard or read statements supporting what is reported below sufficiently frequently to consider that they have a reasonable probability of being significantly true.

They ALL rely on third party evidence which cannot be comprehensive. The points do seem to me to be widely held but the complexity of what is embedded in the statements seems to me to make it difficult to obtain significant statistics in Google. Accordingly, i have chosen to assume that these statements are valid at a statistically significant level but not to build the entire case on them.

1) "Every snowflake is different" (246)

While the occurrence of the statement that "every snowflake is different" in Google 246 times suggests that this is a widely held belief, i did not find absolute evidence and did find an indication that two nearly identical snowflakes had been observed. It seems to me that given the total number of snowflakes that have ever fallen it is probable that at some point there is duplication over time.

This example does, however, seem to me to indicate a very wide diversity of basic outcomes from the assembly of a single molecule (water) in ice crystals.

This seems to me to point clearly to the level of diversity that can be expected when different molecules randomly assemble themselves in the "primeval soup" (3,600) that i have repeatedly found referred to in the context of evolution.

Insofar as i am not aware of snowflakes assembling themselves into structures of material size and complexity, even in arctic ice packs, this seems to me to suggest that progressive assembly of systems of material size and complexity involving a more diverse combination of molecules is even more unlikely without a creator.

2) "Every fingerprint is different" (24)

Other searches result in "all fingerprints are different" (16) and -all fingerprints are different- (214,000), -all fingerprints are unique- (144,000).

<http://www.straightdope.com/classics/a980821.html> suggests that *"the chances of duplicating even a portion of a fingerprint are 1 in 100 quintillion (one followed by 20 zeros)."* This same site also reports that even identical twins have different fingerprints.

The above quote refers to a "portion of a fingerprint". If this is extended to the combination of the full prints of all ten fingers the probability will increase dramatically.

I do not have any solid evidence that the above statistic is correct but i understand the complexity of the parameters that define a fingerprint to be such that it seems to me that this number is at least a reasonable approximate indication.

I DO know that computer based finger print reading devices are being used increasingly for a range of reasonably high security applications including access control, banking, etc.

I also know that i have heard of the use of finger prints in criminal trials throughout my life and that it has consistently been my understanding that this is based on the exceptionally high uniqueness of finger prints.

Given that there is so much constrained randomness in the print of one finger, i cannot conceive how the entire human being can have come into existence through a spontaneous random process without an external intelligent agency responsible for design and fabrication.

3) Every voice is different

Voice recognition is being used in computer based access control and security systems.

4) Every human retina is different

Retina recognition is being used in computer based access control and security systems.

5) Every human face is different

Photographs are routinely used to identify individuals in passports, identity documents, etc. Computer access control systems that recognize the overall facial structure also exist.

6) The marking of every zebra / ... is different

Photographs of markings on a diversity of animals are used to uniquely identify specific individuals ranging from Killer Whales to zebra, to tigers, to dogs and so on.

As i understand it, this is essentially the same principle as finger prints.

7) Other examples

As far as i know every dancer is different, every musician is different, every soccer player and other sports "star" is different. This applies no matter how well an individual is trained and coached, that is why there are called stars, they are unique.

What such people do is extremely complex and takes years to develop a high level of skill and accomplishment. In all cases a material amount of learning, practising, etc is required to reach a high level of consistent and sustainable successful outcome within formal disciplines.

This again points me to the conclusion that really harmonious and effective outcomes require a high level of intelligent input to accomplish and does not happen randomly.

I hold that it is not possible for someone to become an accomplished violinist if they have never seen a violin and heard it played. Accordingly, I hold that it is not possible for calcium atoms to assemble themselves into complex molecules and create teeth without the input of an external design and fabrication agency to create the first prototype and programme its reproduction.

Every television image (per fraction of a second) is different unless it is a replay of a previous image. It is my understanding that the number of image points and the number of possible colour values for every image point on a television screen per refresh cycle is far less than the complexity that exists in a human being. Accordingly, since I have no evidence of television producers randomly producing the same images independently of one another I hold that random generation of two identical or even similar designs for human beings or animals or plants or planets without an external creative agency is not possible.

The more complex the item the more probable that there is universal uniqueness. This is not a prerequisite for proving the existence of a creator but it seems to me to be a useful indicator of what spontaneous evolution is likely to produce and an indication that there are serious challenges in obtaining what we have in the universe today by spontaneous evolution.

As I see it, this offers evidence of a creator who orders some things to be rigidly consistent, such as the structural and functional design of each species of animal and plant and yet permits other things, such as fingerprints, to be completely random in order to give each individual plant or animal its own unique attributes.

K. DIFFERENTIATION IN STRATEGY AND MARKETING

As a management consultant, one of my areas of claimed expertise is in the field of development and detailed design of strategic plans.

A vital aspect of market focused strategic planning is the need to develop a "unique selling proposition" (25,000) to "differentiate" the organization from its competitors (1,770,000, also relates to calculus). Differentiation (2,790,000), "competitive advantage" (2,420,000).

Accordingly, it seems to me that one of the primary requirements for survival of the fittest in commerce is "differentiation". It seems to me that this is also a requirement for survival in "nature".

Insofar as many businesses supplying nominally similar products, such as motor cars, manage to survive for decades based on different strategies, this seems to me to indicate that survival of the fittest does NOT require that only one variety of intelligent being (human beings) should evolve.

Since it seems to me that differentiation is a natural consequence of spontaneity and randomness. It also seems to me that if spontaneous evolution is valid there are strong grounds to expect a variety of very different intelligent life forms that could evolve on different continents or in different locations on the same continents. I really cannot see why several forms of intelligent, human-like, life could not develop even coexisting within a single location and community if spontaneous evolution is a valid model that works in practice.

L. COMPUTERS

I have been using computers for over thirty years and studied "computer science" at University.

I have designed and built or supervised the building of computer solutions at various times during this period.

For the past fifteen years i have consulted to various organizations on the effective application of computers in business and have recently written a book on "The Critical Factors for Information Technology Investment Success".

One of the things that i a very clear on is that computers are very complex adding machines that add 0's and 1's. They are very sophisticated binary adding machines.

Computers are powerful because they are able to do these additions extremely rapidly.

The power of computers as experienced by human beings results from a number of layers of increasing sophistication and complexity in terms of the human interface languages which are used to tell the computer what to do.

This functionality is generated in various ways, the way that i understand to be most common today involves the use of characters comprising eight bits, that is eight consecutive binary digits that can have a value of 0 or 1. This eight bit character definition enables the computer to distinguish 256 discrete alphanumeric and other characters that are used in interfacing with human beings. Every letter of the alphabet, every number, every punctuation mark, every line delimiter, etc has a unique eight bit value assigned to it which is part of the widely used ASCII (American Standard Code of Information Interchange) standard.

Using these characters programmers have created increasingly sophisticated "programming languages" which provide instructions that activate lengthy and complex "machine code" commands.

These languages have been used to create "graphical user interfaces" like the "Windows" operating system which use graphics as well as text to communicate with the user.

However, even the most impressive and most sophisticated computer applications are ultimately based on a micro-processor adding 0's and 1's - on off switches.

One of the hard lessons that i have learned about computers is that they are completely unintelligent. If i type in something and make a mistake, the computer will not correct the mistake unless a human being has programmed the computer to recognize that particular mistake and given the computer instructions how to correct the mistake.

In other words, if i make a single "syntax error", a single spelling or punctuation error in a computer programme, it will either not run at all, that is "crash" or it will return an outcome that is not the outcome i intended.

All my experience with computers and the application of engineering rigour to the application of computers indicates to me that computers will never be more than binary adding machines and will never reach a point where they can make complex, abstract cognitive decisions that have not first been defined by a human being in terms of rules.

This leads me to a number of conclusions.

Firstly, when i read of "computer simulations" being used to "prove" some thesis of spontaneous evolution, i cannot even begin to consider such a "proof" valid. It was necessary for a human being to create the software application that was used for the simulation, accordingly such simulation either proves the need for a creator or proves nothing at all.

Secondly, since every computer application i have ever used and you have ever used has operated fundamentally on the basis of the extremely fast operation of millions of binary on-off switches, this indicates to me that even the most simple binary coupling of the simplest molecules in a model of spontaneous evolution is never going to produce anything of value. Since it takes considerable knowledge and experience for a human being to programme a computer to do even the most elementary tasks how can complex molecules randomly assemble themselves into anything useful, let alone a human being?

I have also found that a number of computer programmers presented with the same problem of any level of material complexity will go about solving the problem in somewhat different ways and the resulting computer programme will be different for each programmer and will look different for each programmer, UNLESS such programming takes place within rigidly defined and enforced standards which make it possible for two programmers to create something that looks the same. Even so, the source code generated by each programmer will be different.

As with text, this is the basis of intellectual property rights legislation relating to computer software. Such legal action addresses both the "look and feel" and the internal specification of the solution.

This example points to the extremely low probability, in my mind impossibility, of systems of material complexity self creating themselves in a spontaneous way without an external creative agency who has developed a concept, undertaken analysis and design and managed the fabrication and commissioning process.

If one moves away from binary arithmetic and considers the visible eight bit characters displayed in text portions of a computer display, this relates into the point about written text and again illustrates that personal experience indicates that no two people will produce the identical screen of text on a computer unless one copies the other.

If one moves to the level of graphic displays with screen resolutions in common use today, where every screen "pixel" or dot can have 256 or more different colour values, it is apparent to me that no two people will independently create a single identical screen design unless they use the same tools, same standards and same content specification. Even then, my experience indicates that it is very challenging to get two people to achieve an identical result.

This points again to the need for a creator to create what exists in the universe and the world around us.

As another example, computer viruses are very precisely designed pieces of software which require very specific knowledge of complex components of the Windows operating system. Using computer viruses as an example to support non-creative evolution, as some people do, is therefore something that i have great difficulty in not using harsh judgmental language to describe.

As mentioned above, i have recently written a book on the effective application of computers in business. One of the primary reasons for writing the book is a large body of evidence that indicates that seventy percent of all business computer system investments fail totally. That is that nothing that works is accomplished. A further twenty percent of investments fail materially to meet the original business requirement.

In addition, a recent report stated that ninety five percent of international brand name "Enterprise Resource Planning System" (E.R.P.) investments "do not deliver what is promised". This is referring to investments running to millions and even tens of millions of US Dollars made by medium to large organizations around the world.

These failure statistics occur despite information technology being a multi-billion dollar turnover industry.

I have it that millions and possibly billions of person years have so far been invested in the information technology industry over the past fifty years or so and yet the above failure rates are being recorded.

I also have it that even the most complex computer software application is less complex than a human being if one takes account of emotions, feelings, etc. Accordingly, given that my data indicates that millions of highly qualified and highly intelligent people have so far failed to develop a reliable method of designing, building, configuring, implementing and operating complex business computerized information systems, there is no basis to suggest that human beings could possibly have come into existence without an external, highly intelligent agency engaging in a process of design.

M. CAN A DOG KENNEL SELF CONSTRUCT?

As i understand it one of the fundamental aspects of the theory of evolution without a creator is a requirement for collection of molecules in some form of "primeval soup" to find a way of combining with one another to form a living organism over some period of time which could be millions or billions of years.

An example which comes to mind for me as some sort of parallel to use in validating the hypothesis of spontaneous evolution without a creator is the construction of a physical structure without human intervention.

I would like to suggest that my life experience teaches me that if i designed a basic dog kennel, cut all the timber to size, purchased all the required fasteners such as screws and created detailed assembly drawings and instructions and placed them outside in my back garden together with all required tools, that material would never assemble itself into a dog kennel. My experience indicates to me that depending on where i was in the world the paper and timber would rot or be eaten by insects, the fasteners and tools would corrode and, in anything from a few years in the case of a location on a tropical ocean beach to a few decades in a desert climate, there would be little if anything left of this material.

Even if these items were placed in an environment where no deterioration was possible, my entire life experience indicates to me that these materials, fasteners and tools would not assemble a dog kennel even if left for a million years or longer.

As i see it there is an inherent assumption that non-intelligent building components, whether organic and inorganic molecules or building materials have some capability to make decisions about how they

join to one another in such a way that they can create something of greater and more useful complexity than the component parts.

It seems to me that an inherent requirement of spontaneous evolution is that diverse molecules decide whether a union they have formed with another molecule is "fitter" (in the sense of survival of the fittest) or not. If the union is NOT "fitter" it seems to me that it would be necessary for the molecules to break their union in order to try another combination. I hold that this is only possible if there is an external intelligent agency with a clearly defined definition of "fitter" who is able to make this decision AND apply energy and resources to separating molecules that have not formed a "fitter" union.

As an aside, i really don't understand how someone who has not successfully designed and built a reasonably complex system can express a really authoritative opinion in support of the feasibility of spontaneous evolution in a way which addresses the objections raised in this document. On the other hand, it seems to me that most human beings have enough personal experience to be able to relate to at least some of the examples used in this document and conclude that spontaneous evolution without a creator is not a viable explanation.

I cannot prove this and i leave it to you to decide.

N. PLANT AND ANIMAL BREEDING AND OPTIMIZATION

Many years ago i had limited personal exposure to the procedures followed in South Africa in developing pine trees capable of producing structural timber. This process included careful selection of specimens exhibiting the desired traits, breeding in a manner that prevented spontaneous fertilization and replication of prime specimens by grafting twigs onto reliable rootstock.

Over decades the South African timber industry succeeded in breeding high performance trees that today reliably produce structural timber.

Based on my observation of television programmes and my exposure to dog and cat breeders, these same basic principles are applied in many areas to produce plants and animals that are optimized in terms of some human requirement, be it structural, aesthetic, functional or whatever.

It seems to me that all these programmes are directed at producing specimens that are "fittest" for their specific purpose as defined by a specific human or group of humans.

In the case of aesthetic criteria such as the appearance of dogs, cats and other show animals, different humans have different aesthetic criteria and the criteria of the same human changes over time. As far as i can see this results in diversification of dog and cat varieties and also results in defects that result from excessive in-breeding.

The conclusion i draw is that the criteria for "fitness" are not absolute and that systematic improvement requires the active intervention of an intelligent external agency to design and manage the selective breeding process.

O. BINARY SPONTANEITY - WHICH SIDE OF THE ROAD TO DRIVE ON

It seems to me that one of the most visible examples of constrained spontaneity that most human beings can relate to is the issue of which side of the road to drive on.

What is the probability of a person taking a well used pack (deck) of playing cards, shuffling them thoroughly and finding that they are all in the predefined sequence that is widely known?

This is an example of constrained randomness.

Therefore, what is the probability of all the molecules in the human body arranging themselves into the form that we know today, ditto other plants and animals?

20. TYING UP LOOSE ENDS

The last time that i worked on this document was 14 May 2004.

On 27 September 2007 i proof read the document to this point and found that i had a further 25 pages of notes, Google statistics and partially complete passages.

In the past three and a half years since writing what you have read thus far, i have read much that reinforces my belief in the existence of a creator as well as my belief that humans came into existence in their present form approximately six thousand years ago, but in a very superior form to what exists today.

I am also convinced that there was a massive global destructive event in which the earth tilted on its axis as a consequence of a comet flyby and massive tectonic earth crust movement occurred coupled with massive flooding that covered the earth and totally reshaped it. For more information refer to www.beforeus.com.

None of this additional information is central to the thesis of this book.

Accordingly, i have decided to hold over some of the remaining notes in the document produced in 2004 towards a second document which may be produced at some time in the future.

I choose to do this because of personal time constraints at this time and also because, having read the book this far i am satisfied that while it does not necessarily provide incontrovertible evidence of the existence of a creator and the invalidity of evolution with no creator, i think that it does provide solid food for thought.

Accordingly, in the sections that follow i will pick out items that seem relevant and easy to extract and leave the rest for a book to perhaps be written in the future.

21. VARIOUS BITS AND PIECES

Following are various bits and pieces built on the notes i made three and a half years ago.

A. PROBABILITY OF FAILURE AND CONSTRAINED RANDOMNESS

Based on the examples given above with regard to the very high statistical variability that occurs within constrained spontaneity it is my understanding of the statistics that the probability of spontaneous (random) self assembly of a human being with all the documented and experienced functionality is too small to be expressed in any numerical system available to us other than in an exponential that runs into millions of leading zeroes.

All my engineering and statistical knowledge and experience says that there is absolutely no possibility whatsoever that human beings in male and female form could come into existence in terms of a model

of spontaneous evolution without an external creative agency who has an overall design, prototypes individual components, designs them to fit, optimizes them and then codes the specification into DNA.

When i say it cannot be done, i am saying that the number of statistical permutations and combinations available are so great that they are "infinite" in the true sense of an open ended range of alternatives that will NEVER converge on a constrained outcome no matter how many billions of years pass.

Examples of evolution of mouse traps and computer simulations of the evolution of an eye, as used in some of the arguments for non-engineered evolution, do not in any way begin to address the magnitude of the range of statistical options that are available to the chemicals and molecules in existence to assemble themselves in ways that even begin to approximate the human body, let alone develop the detailed intellectual, emotional and other capabilities that human beings possess.

I am aware that others seem willing to offer explanations as to why the above is not valid. I cannot prove that what i have written is valid yet my entire engineering training and experience and my training and experience of statistics tell me that this is intuitively so.

I hold that there are many people who have this type of engineering experience who, if presented with the information contained above, would agree that this is so.

My engineering training leads me to conclude that this conclusion is absolute and indisputable. However, i have read articles by people with claimed reputations who suggest otherwise.

I don't know how to respond to this other than to suggest that unless someone has personally designed and supervised the creation of a complex system i do not see how they can possibly have an authoritative opinion on the subject.

In concluding this section, all i can say is that it is a matter of personal choice, check the above points out with your personal life experience and draw your own conclusions.

B. OTHER TOPICS IN MY NOTES

The following additional topics are covered in my notes and you are welcome to correspond with me about them. They are included in the hope that they will stimulate further avenues of inquiry for you to evaluate your position on this question.

Standards -- there is a high level of standardization and uniformity apparent in the world around us, whether the shape of planets, the shape of animals and plants, etc.

Standardization results from the imposition of a set of standards and guidelines imposed with discipline by an intelligent creative being with a clear view of the outcome that is required.

The reproductive process in all organisms on earth that i can think of is highly standardized. The children are recognizably standardized models of the parents and are not randomly variable manifestations of contorted randomly assembled elements comprising derivatives of the building blocks that represent the parents. There is constrained, that is managed and controlled, randomness that confirms to precise standards.

Configuration management and version control: The same argument as with standards apply -- there is careful configuration management in the creation of each new generation of plants, animals and humans. Something that in the world of engineering only occurs with rigorous formal training and disciplines.

Conformity between different plant varieties that produce whorls of leaves, fronds, etc: The existence of whorls of leaves and fronds in Aloes, Lilies, Ferns, Palms, and other plant types cuts across different specific lines in a way that suggests that these plants all originated through a single evolutionary path or that a creative intelligence found this model to be attractive and effective and introduced it into the design of various distinct plant families and species. Other components of these same plant families have correlation with families that do not produce leaves in whorls.

This is a huge subject and i am not qualified to comment in depth. My casual observation as someone with a basic qualification in botany is that there is not much evidence that all the plants that existed today could have evolved without some external creative influence.

Survival of the fittest in technology: Survival of the fittest appears to be a model that applies in the context of managed evolution directed by an external, engineering creative agency.

Small errors cause failure of the fittest in modern technology and survival of the fittest has as much to do with technical bestness as it does with best marketing -- the VHS versus Betamax video recording technology outcome is an example.

The technologically superior Betamax was defeated by VHS in the market on the basis of better marketing. So here we have survival of the fittest being influenced by soft issues relating to the human psyche and the response of human beings to persuasive advertising NOT mechanical survival of best practice in the context of a creative agency producing these items.

If development of complex systems is spontaneous then why do engineers and technicians need to be trained? Many of these examples beg the question as to why engineers and technicians spend three or four years at University or Technical College and then serve an apprenticeship of a further three years or more in order to learn how to design and build things that work. If the norm of the world was spontaneous non-engineered evolution then surely such training is not necessary?

Macro standardisation of humans, animals and plants: The macro standardization of humans, animals and plants is touched on above, how does this happen without an external creative agency apply engineering disciplines to constrain variability?

Cardiovascular system is a closed pressurized system: The cardiovascular system is a closed pressurized system that operates in very specific ways and if the blood pressure becomes too high or too low the organism becomes ill and may die. If primary arteries are punctured or severed death follows almost immediately. How did pressure build up in such a precise way in response to unstructured spontaneous evolution without an external creative agency with a clear view of the outcome that was required?

If survival of the fittest is the fundamental law of existence then why is murder a problem for those who support non-creative evolution? -- surely, if we live by survival of the fittest then murder is a manifestation of a more fit individual eliminating a less fit individual in support of evolution of the species and therefore cause for rejoicing? Yet there is an underlying fear of and abhorrence of murder

that is the manifestation of a deep underlying set of ethics and morals in most societies. Again, this suggests a higher creative being who has instilled in us innate values that are widely regarded as appropriate.

How can fragments of exploding matter form into perfect spheres (suns and planets) with very different properties? If a "big bang" took place with the inherent picture of an explosion of sufficient force to fling fragments of materials into space, how did those fragments become spheres, how did some form into suns and some into planets, how did they develop trajectories of rotation around one another that are different to the radial trajectory that would result from a central explosion?

The order of the universe speaks to me again of some engineering agency that carefully fashioned each star and planet and assembled them in solar systems, etc in such a way as to create the huge diversity and beauty that we behold coupled with carefully balanced gravitational forces that allow these units to inter-operate in gravitational balance that enables us to see stable, gradually evolving patterns rather than huge randomness coupled with a destroyed body of matter comprising fragments that somehow magically shape themselves into perfect or near perfect spheres in a vacuum with no erosive or other formative external agency to provide the smoothing and rounding.

Massive manmade structures that are thousands of years old suggest that humans were more advanced thousands of years ago. The pyramids, Machu Picchu, the temple at Baalbeck, etc. Large structures, many of which we would be hard pressed to engineer today yet created thousands of years ago by human beings who were apparently evolving from apes. Search on the Internet for examples.

If human beings on earth in 2007 are the most highly evolved form of the ape, homo sapiens, then these structures are inexplicable, except through stories of men from outer space.

The story of men from outer space could be plausible but does not help at all because all that this does is to transfer the debate on earth to a wider created environment and still leaves us with precisely the same dilemma as to where those beings "evolved" from leading again to the conclusion of an external creative engineering agency that created those beings from another planet.

Incidentally, i do not believe that beings from another planet did form human beings, i believe that we were created on this planet but i cannot offer you substantive evidence other than to say that i think that the question is irrelevant for the reasons mentioned above.

We need to home in on the essence of the question -- how did what we see today come into existence of its own creative volition with the structure, order, complexity, interoperability, etc that we see today without a higher creative agency?

Untrained people cannot use sophisticated technology: I don't think that a single person who has no knowledge or experience of tools, construction, etc and who comes from a "primitive" environment where they have not been exposed to any Western constructed products, if placed in an extremely large workshop with a comprehensive selection of hand tools and diverse construction materials would product anything useful.

One only needs to pass a wood saw once over stone or metal to blunt it. This being so, i don't understand how a molecule surrounded by other molecules can decide to join itself to another molecule in any way that has any hope of resulting in something that could eventually result in a one

cell living organism, let alone proceed to self construct a human being by randomly picking other molecules and cells to join to itself.

22. SOME OTHER CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING CREATION VERSUS EVOLUTION

In wrapping up this document, i would like to return to consideration of the question of whether i can offer "provable physical evidence" of creation.

In seeking to attempt this, i would like to confirm that it seems to me that the physical evidence used in support of evolution is seldom, if ever, in conflict with a concept of "evolutionary creation". It also seems to me that the physical evidence used in support of creation, a flood, etc is not in any way in conflict with a concept of "evolutionary creation".

It seems to me that the basic point of conflict with regard to "evolution" relates to the question of whether there is a creator or whether evolution took place by developmental response to environmental factors and where the matter that exists today came from. In other words, it seems to me that the dispute relates to HOW to interpret the data, NOT to the data itself.

It seems to me that the basic point of conflict with regard to "creation" relates more to diverse points of interpretation, many of which relate to "the Bible says" rather than to what i perceive to be the essential question of whether a creator exists and whether He is willing to enter into a close personal relationship with any human being who seeks Him. In other words, reference to the Bible, while a source of certain peoples perspective of history, is not a basis to dispute evolution and, as i see it, is counter productive.

As indicated in a previous section i have chosen to ignore "argument from incredulity" for the rest of this document.

I am still left without "physically verifiable evidence" of a creator outside of what i have offered so far.

While accepting that "argument from incredulity" potentially neutralizes all that i have to offer, i would like to offer a few points for consideration which, to me, seem to clearly demonstrate the existence of a creator.

A. LOVE, GRIEF, PASSION, ETC

In my life i have experienced love with a woman at a level of intensity that has had what i experienced as intense, tangible and reproducible physical manifestations.

I have experienced grief in comparable ways and i have experienced intense passion with a woman.

I find much evidence to support the view that these are widespread human experiences.

Since these experiences clearly seem to me to result from a level of interaction between human beings that is not dependent on environmental factors, and since it seems to me that these experiences indicate a level of spiritual and emotional / psychological sophistication that i find amazing, they seem to me to evidence the existence of a creator who has created humankind with enormous hidden and abstract complexity.

I cannot prove this but it seems real to me and i have not encountered any non-creation evolution explanation that i can experience as valid in terms of my life experience.

B. HUMAN SEXUALITY, ORGANS AND REPRODUCTION

As far as i know, it is physically possible, barring limited extreme cases, for any male human being on this planet to couple sexually with any female human being on this planet, experience some level of sexual pleasure and, provided the woman is fertile, conceive a child which will be functionally and recognizably a human being with similarity to its parents.

My entire experience of engineering tells me that it would require an enormous amount of design effort and enormous intellect and creative ability to build this level of compatibility into over six billion people in the current generation with what i understand to be an extremely low failure rate.

I say this in terms of:

1) CONCEPTION

The level of compatibility of the process of conception. It is my understanding that any human sperm is capable of fertilizing any human ovum and that, once fertilized the developmental process is consistently the same, the division of DNA between parents is consistent and reproducible and the resulting offspring will be an exact 50:50 composite of the parents.

To me this evidences a level of precision in design, construction and sustainable reproduction over hundreds or even thousands of generations that is beyond my capability to conceive of happening except through the offices of a super natural (above nature) creator of exceptional knowledge and capability.

The biggest issue for me is that the male and female human are provably physically materially different. It is my understanding that non-creationary evolution requires that both these types evolved in parallel in response to environmental stimulus. I cannot conceive how it is possible for the matching components in the male and female reproductive cells to have come into existence without the intervention of a creator who designed them to fit.

I do recognize that argument from incredulity can be used to neutralize this point but i really do submit to you that i cannot conceive that incredulity is a valid logical construct.

2) MECHANICAL FIT

As stated above, it is my understanding that virtually any human male organ will fit virtually any human female organ on the planet. I understand this to be irrespective of racial grouping, physical size or any other parameter across over six billion people.

This indicates to me a level of flexibility and adaptability that again indicates considerable engineering design and sophistication of construction. I do not understand how this could happen with any form of parallel evolution that did not involve an external creator who designed and built these systems to do this.

Contrast this with other "male" - "female" connectors such as electrical plugs and machine screws. The male and female components need to be machined with exceptional precision to precise standards otherwise no workable coupling will be possible.

23. SOFT ATTRIBUTES OF HUMAN BEINGS

There is enormous "soft" non-physical (psychological, spiritual) complexity in human beings that seems to me to have no relevance and no way of coming into existence with a mechanical evolution from molecules model.

Following are some quotes, statistics and phrases to consider:

A. SELF SACRIFICING LOVE

Sir John Templeton "Agape Love: A Tradition Found in Eight World Religions" (35)

Works of love find a high-minded financier

William R. Macklin, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Winter 2002

Sir John Templeton cares so much about agape love that he's even written a book about it. But when he's asked to define it, he pauses, lets a few reflective moments waft by, then, almost cryptically, says, "It's easier to tell you what it is not."

"It is not eros love. It is not filial love. It is not tribal love," says Templeton.

Then, the one-time financier reaches into the recesses of the complex mind that helped conceive the rudiments of global investment and finds a definition that seems to belie all the hard-nosed tactics associated with the business world in which Templeton made millions.

"It is pure love for every human being with never any exception," he says.

Love, boundless and all-encompassing, a concept the ancient Greeks termed agape (AH-gah-pay) but that Templeton says exists everywhere and knows no sectarian boundaries.

"I might even say that the universe is an expression of God's love," he says.

*Templeton, a lifelong Presbyterian who turns 87 tomorrow, expounds the prevalence of universal goodwill in his recently published book, *Agape Love: A Tradition Found in Eight World Religions*. The founder, chairman and chief donor of the foundation that bears his name - which pays upwards of \$35 million a year for the scientific study of spiritual faith - Templeton is a forceful, sometimes controversial figure in the world of ecumenical theology.*

Before remaking himself as a sort of Indiana Jones in search of lost spiritual virtues, Templeton made a fortune in international finance as the founder and head of the Templeton Group of Mutual Funds.

But while he once commanded the forces of global capitalism, he now seeks to understand the vast, "mysterious force" of agape.

Its disparate strands are evident in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism and American Indian religions, Templeton maintains. Agape is the charity, kindness, forgiveness and compassion expressed by believers everywhere, he says. At least everywhere that the human ego has been brought into check.

http://www.templeton.org/sir_john_templeton/phillyinquirer.asp

I find it very difficult to conceive how what is described above could evolve from a primordial soup.

Agape Love

A Tradition Found in Eight World Religions

John Marks Templeton

The tradition of agape, or unconditional love, is not exclusive to any one religion. Actually, it is a major underlying principle found in religions worldwide. The concept of altruistic love is one that challenges the spiritual person to "love your enemies," or to "love without thought of return." It is a love that flows out to others in the form of compassion, kindness, tenderness, and charitable giving.

Buddhists have a path of compassion, where caring for others becomes the motivating force behind existence. Hindus have a branch of yoga, the heart-centred path, that leads to enlightenment through an overwhelming love for God that takes the form of loving all of humanity. Eastern religions, such as Taoism and Confucianism, see transcendent love as an essential part of true wisdom.

The Jewish faith carries the essential message of agape in this passage from Leviticus: "You shall not hate your brother in your heart... but you shall love your neighbour as yourself." - Lev. 19:17f. This is very similar to the New Testament passage: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." - Matthew 22:39.

The universal theme of love is found in all religious traditions, whether Buddhist, Christian, Islam, or others. As we begin to realize that all religions have at their core this spiritual principle of love, we can develop a sense of common humanity. The religious tradition of agape love examined in this book will serve as an inspiration for those who are learning to grow in compassion and love for all people.

http://www.conexuspress.com/catalog/agape_love_world_religions.htm

Various phenomena or experiences that seem to me to be spiritual and not amenable to explanation by spontaneous evolution and yet which are referred to throughout the Internet representing the thoughts of millions of writers (statistics as at April - May 2004) -- **love (122,000,000)**, passion (15,400,000), telepathy (277,000), intuition (1,690,000), intuitive (3,230,000), empathy (843,000), feelings (8,320,000), feel (57,500,000), emotion (4,930,000), emotional (9,430,000), fear (18,700,000), fearful (1,130,000), laugh (7,050,000), laughter (3,110,000), joy (15,000,000), joyful (1,170,000), happy (41,600,000), happiness (5,380,000), anger (6,500,000), angry (6,580,000), numb (1,300,000), numbness (503,000), stress in human terms, other uses of this word -- stressful (1,270,000), hugs (1,640,000), hug (2,410,000).

Continuing: kiss (14,800,000), smell (4,720,000), taste (13,700,000), lust (7,660,000), lustful (294,000), lusting (121,000), covet (225,000), covetous (111,000), magic (30,500,000), luck (11,800,000), hypnosis (1,540,000), hypnotize (298,000), curses (884,000), curse (3,400,000), lucky (11,800,000), selling (34,500,000), sell (58,100,000), market (89,500,000), marketing (71,400,000), perfect (41,300,000), perfection (3,500,000), mercy (5,290,000), grace (13,400,000), intuition (2,140,000), intuitive (3,260,000).

Evidence of creativity in humans -- **music (224,000,000)**, song (43,900,000), **art (180,000,000)**, dance (39,400,000), imagine (12,900,000), imagination (5,970,000), vision (32,000,000), visionary (1,650,000), cognitive (5,490,000), cognition (1,520,000), experience (75,100,000), experienced

(16,800,000), knowledge (51,700,000), abstract (62,100,000), abstractness (23,900), abstraction (1,800,000), concept (22,800,000), conceptualise (166,000).

There are a huge number of references to music and art.

Non tangible attributes of knowledge and ability: IQ (15,800,000), psychology (14,100,000), psychometric (277,000), psychiatric (3,180,000), semantics (2,710,000), individuality (793,000), knowledge, experience, experienced.

How did all this come to pass spontaneously and randomly when it all fits together in such a complicated and congruent manner? Why is it so difficult to believe in a creator who created this entire environment and creates us in all our complexity in order to teach us about things like love, joy, caring, compassion, empathy, passion, partnership, sacrificial love, putting others first and innumerable other intangible and abstract concepts all directed at assisting us to learn to know Him better day by day.

Surely learning about these things and how to apply them in a holistic, integrated manner for the better service of those around us is the ultimate test of fitness (as in survival of the fittest)?

Evidence of a need for plans or guidelines or other assistance in order to reliably create things -- recipe (14,700,000), **plan (108,000,000)**, design (167,000,000), analyze (13,900,000), analysis (72,000,000), guide (103,000,000), "step by step" (7,930,000), instructions (29,900,000), teach (14,100,000), teaching (32,200,000), blueprint (1,290,000), "change management" (1,890,000), "how to" (23,000,000), coordination (8,210,000), liaison (4,670,000).

Evidence of a consideration of beauty and form -- aesthetics (1,440,000), beauty (41,500,000), beautiful (38,000,000), proportion (7,030,000) -- various meanings not necessarily what i had in mind.

People working collaboratively -- teams (25,300,000), teamwork (1,780,000), marching (2,160,000), army (27,200,000).

The numbers are offered without comment other than to say that they are an indication of the level of interest of human beings in these subjects and therefore an indication of the probability that these non-tangible attributes exist and, i submit, evidence of a higher creative authority in creating this level of abstract, non-tangible complexity.

B. POWER OF WORDS

You've heard of the saying, "A picture is worth a thousand words?" Well, it's also true that "a word is worth a thousand pictures!" Let me show you what I mean. Like the dentist example earlier, it's hard to picture, say, "calculus removal." Wouldn't you agree?

But with "beautiful smiles," you can instantly visualize teeth that are (among many other things): shiny, white, stainless, straight, unbroken, clean, healthy, strong and perfectly aligned!

You see, words are extremely potent! So, the words you pick are CRITICAL!

When you use the right words on your website, they all have a sort of magical power to make your visitors salivate with mouth-watering envy and mesmerize them to the point that they're whipping out their credit cards, pleading with you to sell them your products!

<http://www.webcopysecrets.com/?13168>

"power of words" (59,600)

The Power of Words

Emotional appeals, fallacies, manipulations, disinformation,

misdirection and Political Correctness

Generally, when people get their own way with others, they do it with words; they want others to agree with their point of view, give them what they want, do what they ask and buy what they are selling. From the car salesman's hard sell, the hammering of television commercials, the relative's request for a loan, the doctor's diagnosis to the child's pleading to stay up late, the seduction and/or assault of words is continuous.

In these verbal contests between one person's desires and another's, some people find they always lose, convinced they must be wrong, while others consistently win; their logic, their reasons are so powerful, so compelling, they almost force others to change their opinions, their beliefs and their behaviour to comply with what's being asked.

This enormous power is in the meaning of the words, what they mean to the person who hears them. Far more than simple communication, truth, falsehood and the infinite shades between them, words have the power to manipulate other people's thinking and behaviour. These powers have been defined as fallacious arguments.

There are 20 or so of these misleading and deceptive arguments. Their tremendous power lies in the fact that they elicit emotional responses in those who hear them. While the arguments appear to relate to the subject under discussion, they do not. In most cases they have little to do with the subject at all.

Their danger lies in the fact that decisions based on them are not based on truth, common sense, logic, legality, one's best interests or right and wrong but on emotions favouring those who put forth the more powerful arguments. They are designed to benefit someone else!

As emotions are constantly changing, opinions and decisions based on them also change. They are not stable, dependable or consistent over time. At any moment, they can be overthrown by someone else's more compelling argument. Unknowingly making choices based on emotional appeals and logical tricks, one allows others to control their thinking, and their behaviour, setting themselves up to be used for someone else's interests.

Recognizing these arguments for what they are renders them ineffective and powerless. Knowing them to be false and self-serving, one can separate their emotional responses from the subject at hand, knowing they are not the same thing.

<http://www.aniota.com/~jwhite/words.html>

C. PLEASURE AND SEX

I have personal experiential evidence that the coupling of male and female can be ecstatically pleasurable and give rise to sensations that reach great intensity. I am aware of an enormous body of evidence that this is an extremely widespread experience. There are numerous writings on the subject

of sexual pleasure and the statistics below indicate that one of the most prevalent uses of the internet relates to people interested in sex.

Searches on www.google.com resulted in the following statistics -- orgasm (4,040,000), **sex (214,000,000)**, lovemaking (545,000), "sex technique" (66,900)

Sex rates with art and music in terms of frequency of occurrence.

This compares with "argument from incredulity" (578), "reductio ad absurdum" (41,000) reported previously and **bible (24,200,000)**, **Jesus (24,000,000)**, Quran (1,010,000), Muhammed (393,000), Christian (48,900,000), Islam (9,540,000), Mohammed (2,010,000), Koran (986,000), Christianity (6,310,000).

Compare this with -- creation (21,200,000), evolution (18,100,000), "proof that there is no creation" (1,110,000)

There are approximately 4.4 times as many instances of "sex" than of "Christian" and 11.8 times as many instances of "sex" than of "evolution". In May 2004 Web pages with the word "sex" represent over five percent of all the web pages indexed by Google.

In April 2002 "sex" was the sixth most frequently searched word on the internet -- <http://www.waller.co.uk/web.htm>

The site literotica.com which publishes explicit erotic literature was ranked by www.Alexa.com as the 719th most visited web site in the world.

It seems that there is a reasonable basis to suggest that sexual pleasure is one of the most significant interests, if not the most significant interest, on the Internet and, as i see it, by extension, on the planet.

This relates to something that is not tangible and is not necessary for chemicals in a "soup" to combine together randomly to create human beings. In fact, sex is a massive obstacle to non-creative evolution -- it is inconceivable that the two parts could come together without an overarching architect come engineer.

Words indicating interest in sex: "sexual intercourse" (676,000), slang for sexual intercourse (f...) (32,200,000) and f...ing (29,500,000), vagina (6,710,000), slang for vagina (c...), (6,690,000), penis (17,200,000), slang for penis (c...), (25,100,000), vulva (793,000), slang for vulva (p....), (39,500,000), labia (510,000).

There is a close association between the concept of love and sex "love" and "sex" (10,500,000).

Pornography as an indication of a level of interest in sex that does not seem to me to correlate with any concept of spontaneous evolution, there does not seem to me to be any reason why an evolving animal (humankind) would have such an interest in such things -- porn (70,400,000), pornography (3,850,000), "sex pics" (4,670,000), "live sex feeds" (54,600), "sex videos" (2,560,000). Particularly when the same level of sexual obsession is not evidenced at comparable levels in any of the life forms from which humans have supposedly evolved.

Sexual chemistry as a non physical phenomenon that seems to me to indicate a level of complexity that seems to me to be spiritual and difficult to explain in terms of spontaneous evolution -- "sexual chemistry" (20,700), pheromones (374,000), hormones (2,690,000), stroke (9,010,000), erotic (56,100,000), erotica (8,670,000), caress (817,000), tickle (769,000), erogenous (69,300), "cold woman" 2,970, "cold man" (10,900).

Sex is associated with religion at a seemingly significant level "sex in religion" (1,400), "sex and religion" (11,500), "sex" and "religion" (both words on the same page) (5,220,000).

D. NON-ESSENTIAL PARTS OF THE HUMAN BODY

The human body has a number of appendages that appear to only have relevance in the context of biblical requirements. The foreskin is an apparently unnecessary organ (472,000) except in the context of circumcision (793,000).

The clitoris is an apparently unnecessary organ which it does not seem could be explained by spontaneous evolution -- clitoris (2,560,000), slang for clitoris (c...) (3,650,000).

The so called "G Spot" in women is another seemingly redundant organ "G spot" (643,000) that only has relevance in creating human beings to obtain pleasure from sexual interaction in a way that brings about a level of sexual interaction that certainly in humans is dramatic.

It is reported that about 10% of women experience a direct stimulatory link between their nipples and their clitoris -- how did the nerves come into existence that make this possible, what evolutionary purpose do they serve, how do they satisfy any survival criteria?

Orgasm as a phenomenon that it does not seem to me could evolve without a creative intervention "multiple orgasm" (32,700), "simultaneous orgasm" (22,100). It requires the ability in both parties to stimulated and simultaneously be stimulated at a level that is at least partly psychological. How did this happen in random, non-engineered evolution -- the mechanics involved all point to a highly sophisticated design and precise engineering control and standards to enable this to be present in over six billion human beings today.

Another phenomenon that does not seem to have any useful purpose in the context of spontaneous evolution is "female ejaculation" (395,000) it seems to me that it may even work against fertilization in the same way that the design of the cervix as an outward facing cone appears also to work against fertilization. Both of these items seem to support a view that the primary purpose of the female human sexual organs is pleasure not reproduction.

Consider also masturbation as a seemingly unnecessary act in terms of spontaneous evolution, not appropriate for survival -- masturbation (6,650,000).

E. VIRGINITY AS SOMETHING THAT SEEMS PARTICULARLY UNNECESSARY

Emphasis on virginity as seeming evidence of creation -- virginity (642,000), virgin (20,6000,000) supported by an organ that does not seem to have any relevance in terms of spontaneous evolution the hymen (327,000).

The hymen (or maidenhead) is a membrane </encyclopedia/membrane> which completely or partially occludes the vaginal opening in human females. The term comes from a Greek word meaning "membrane". Because sexual activity would usually puncture this membrane, its presence has been

considered a guarantor of virginity </encyclopedia/virgin> in societies that place a high value on female chastity </encyclopedia/sexual_abstinence> before marriage.

Hymen

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/encyclopedia/hymen>

Yet the Bible attaches very strong importance to virginity and indicates clearly that a woman who is not a virgin is not free to marry another man.

Deuteronomy 22:13-29

13 If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,

14 And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid:

15 Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate:

16 And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;

17 And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him;

19 And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days.

20 But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel:

21 Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

22 If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

23 If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;

24 Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

25 But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die:

26 But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter:

27 For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her.

28 If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

(King James Version of the Bible)

So, circumstantially we find a passage in a book which is believed by many to contain commandments from the Almighty which has very specific commandments relating to virginity. There are other passages which support this interpretation.

It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that the Almighty created woman with a hymen and man with a foreskin for very specific covenant purposes. If this is so then the existence of these organs makes sense. If there is no creator it seems difficult to postulate the relevance of these organs in spontaneous non-engineered evolution.

F. BABIES AND EGGS

Surely babies and eggs cannot have evolved, they could not survive. Thus the adult must have evolved and then subsequently developed replication by eggs or babies. How did they replicate before this?

Surely the way they replicated previously must be more reliable and more survivable than replicating through eggs which can be eaten, trampled on, etc and which must frequently be left to fend for themselves or via babies who must be nurtured, fed, etc.

Surely if even the newborn child of the two most gifted (however this is defined) people in the world was left in a room with all the food it required for the first twenty years of its life it would die within a few days?

Surely if a number of newborn children were placed in an environment with all they require to grow and thrive and numerous books, tools and materials and they were somehow kept alive until old enough to feed themselves with no education, they would end up as "primitive" people with no material knowledge and experience who would survive by experimentation and accomplish little more than survive?

If not, why does no one conduct the experiment? Surely, if we evolved our new born infants must have some way of surviving without us or else there is a more reliable form of reproduction that we are overlooking.

24. DOES THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION PROVE CREATION?

It seems to me that it takes a great deal of creativity to arrive at some of the explanations i have read about evolution and about why there is not a creator.

Why reject the long history of a creator?

Surely the people closer to the event have more knowledge? -- so if ancient books like the Bible report creation then surely these sources should be regarded as authoritative at some level?

25. IF ALL ELSE FAILS ASK FOR A "SIGN"?

So, i find myself at a point where i have assembled a huge diversity of information which i can relate to in terms of my own personal life experience over nearly 54 years and all of these things suggest to me convincingly that we have come into existence and all around us has come into existence as a

systematic creative endeavour by a super engineer, architect, scientist, etc who over thousands and quite possibly millions of years has progressively created and assembled building blocks to produce what we have today.

Was there an element of evolutionary prototyping and experimentation, yes i think so.

Did all this self create itself to achieve such perfection and completion and complexity all on its own, particles binding to particles to create atoms, atoms to atoms to create molecules, molecules to molecules to create planets, plants, animals and finally humans? Without an external engineering agency i do not think that it is possible to provide any substantive evidence that this is possible. But, i am still left to conclude that if you do NOT want to see this there is nothing i can do to force you to see it.

I can offer you the dozens of examples and arguments presented in this document but i cannot provide you with the one solid piece of irrefutable evidence that proves that there is a super-natural creator, that is a choice that you have to make.

If you are more comfortable with an inexplicable creative miracle that caused all that we see around us to come into existence without any creative agency, then you have greater faith than i do.

I choose to believe in the existence of a creator and i cannot prove to you where He came from but accept His existence by faith and through fourteen years of personal experience of His existence.

So, both sides of the debate have faith in something they cannot explain.

There is one remaining thing to consider: Revelation 21:8 in the Bible says *"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."* (King James Version of the Bible)

The Bible and other books such as the Quran, allege that people who do not believe in the creator will spend eternity in a lake of fire and brimstone (sulphur).

So the best reason i can give you to look at all that i have presented and choose to consider strongly the existence of a creator is simply that there is evidence of a strong belief in the lake of fire -- Google 3 October 2007 reports "lake of fire and brimstone" (40,500), "lake of fire" (1,990,00).

What IF it is REAL?

If you want to consider this further, my ebook, *"Where will YOU spend Eternity"* provides an in-depth examination of this subject. Please email me on james@etimin.org and i will send you a copy.

There is one further course of action -- pray in humility and openness and ask the Almighty to reveal Himself to you and prove to you that He is real. You will need to be open and willing to see the sign or signs that He gives you but i have great confidence that He will answer you if you are truly seeking truth.

I have written a document *"Essential Principles in Seeking a Valid Sign from The Almighty"* which goes into this subject in some detail. Please email me at james@etimin.org and i will send you a copy.

In essence you might pray something like the following:

"I am told that there is a mighty creator and that He desires a relationship with me. I ask that if you are there you will reveal yourself to me in ways that i can understand and i ask you to help me to see when you are revealing yourself to me".

I cannot guarantee this prayer will be answered but i do believe that if you pray it sincerely it will be answered, the challenge will be for you to discern that it has been answered.

The bottom line is that the essential question is a question of faith and belief, not a question of intellect.

As i hope you will see from this document, you can rationalize, argue, present facts, find fault with facts presented by others, etc and at the end of the day if you are really honest with yourself you will probably intellectually decide absolutely that there is a creator, but is unlikely that without a personal experience you will really conclude that He wants a relationship with you and that there is a high throne in heaven for eternity if you serve Him faithfully to the end versus a place in a lake of fire and brimstone for eternity if you reject Him and do your own thing.

26. CONCLUSION

I think that it is likely that you will not agree with all of the points in this document.

Some of my points may even have offended you, for which i apologize.

I think that it is probable that there are some points where i have missed something or have not thought of all the possibilities and therefore that some of the points could be invalid.

I am confident that most points are materially valid and i do think that taken together the entire body of evidence in this document DOES provide robust, substantive, provable evidence of a creator, perhaps not at an entirely absolute level but at a level that i am satisfied provides the best i can do.

In the end, it seems to me that if one accepts that there is a creator one is left with the question of where the creator came from.

If one decides there is no creator, it seems to me that this leaves a significant number of unsolved puzzles presented in this document that i cannot conceive can all be satisfactorily explained in terms of engineering disciplines which require proof that it works or could conceivably work under any set of circumstances.

My conclusion is that all these puzzles cease to be puzzles once one accepts a creator who has created this universe and world and all that is in them in an evolutionary, step by step manner and who is not bound to create everything in six consecutive twenty four hour periods. If one accepts that a day of judgment coupled with heaven and a lake of fire is the ultimate form of "survival of the fittest" then creation seems to me to be even easier to reconcile with most of what is said about evolution.

I find it far easier to believe that there is a creator than to believe in spontaneous evolution without a plan, without any direction and without any objective.

However, i hold that i have many personal experiences of the creator and therefore this is easy for me to say.

At the end of the day, in absolute terms, i cannot prove absolutely that there is a creator.

In closing, i leave you with this thought about how i see things:

- If there is NOT a creator then when one dies that is the end, there is nothing, one simply ceases to exist.

- If there IS a creator and a judgment then when one dies one is faced with eternity to consider what one did on earth.

- I would rather believe there is a creator and be found in error, because i will never know my error, than to die and find there IS a creator and spend eternity regretting my decision.

I think that this IS THE ULTIMATE TEST OF "SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST" -- willingness to enter into a loving relationship with the creator and learning to please Him by loving others and serving others and putting others first within the constraints of the fundamental moral and ethical laws that He has appointed.

With that, i leave the choice up to you.

I hope that you have found this article interesting and challenging and that it leads you to discover the existence of the creator if you did not know Him prior to reading this.

JAMES ROBERTSON

Most of this document was drafted in the weeks up to and including 14 May 2004, it was completed between 27 September and 4 October 2007.

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Conclusion

I hope that this collection of writings will help you to choose to draw much closer to the Almighty and will help you to chart your course.

You are welcome to email me at [James Book 5 @ETI-Ministries.org](mailto:James_Book_5@ETI-Ministries.org)

May Father bless you and keep you and make His face to shine upon you

May Yah judge me severely and correct me harshly and show me the level of my present deception and how to correct it with regard to everything that I write and publish

Warm regards and blessings,

James Robertson
Emissary and Spokesman of Yah
25 September 2018

End Time Issue Ministries

The Almighty Creator Desires a DEEP Personal Relationship with YOU!

Volume 5

Various Early eBooks written between 1998 and 2007

by Dr James A Robertson



Following a dramatic encounter with the Almighty in 1993 in which the Almighty spoke audibly to him, James Robertson set himself to seeking the Almighty and serving Him with strong focus by applying all the disciplines of his Engineering training to ensure a rigorous relationship and line of inquiry.

By 1999 James had realized that there was massive error in the formal Christian Church and the Almighty told him to come out of the church.

In 2000, following a series of fasts, associated with prayers like "*lead me into ALL truth by Your Spirit*", "*show me the level of my present deception and how to correct it*" and "*judge me severely and correct me harshly so I may serve you more perfectly*" James started to receive a stream of revelation and discovery about truths that were not widely known and started to publish what he learned by email to a small list of people.

Over the years, with more fasting, more praying and more seeking, James started to progressively get direct revelation from the Almighty relating to matters that were not known on Earth at this time. He continued to publish by email and more recently also on a website.

As a culmination of this search in 2013 the Almighty said to James regarding an unbelieving friend "*why would I want someone to spend eternity with me when they do NOT believe I exist?*"

Subsequently the Almighty said to James regarding believers generally "*why would I want someone to be close to me in Heaven, which inherently means I will give them great authority, if they do NOT have a deep personal relationship with me and have NOT proven to me that they can be trusted on Earth?*"

Some years before this point James became intensely aware that Father Yah (the true name of the Creator) was extremely lonely and had very few true friends where a friend is someone who does NOT demand things from the Almighty but who seeks to bring joy to their Father in Heaven.

As a consequence of these revelations in 2014 James published an article "*The Almighty Creator Desires a Deep Personal Relationship with YOU*" and "*Seven Components of Drawing Close to the Almighty Creator*".

James regards these two articles as the most important messages there are regarding the Almighty and they form the core of Volume 1 of this book together with an article on "Where will YOU Spend Eternity" and a series of other supporting articles including a summary of the REAL History of the Earth and a detailed discussion of the Proof of a Global Flood.

This volume is the fifth in a set of eleven volumes, thirteen books, publishing all of James' writings since 1998. Articles written after the Day of Atonement in 2009 are also available on the website www.ETI-Ministries.org

This volume contains a number of major pieces of writing in the form of eBooks that were written to provide in-depth analysis of a number of major topics.