

Shalom, child of God. Welcome!

Let us reflect on the Scriptures and learn from the Word of God together. Today, by the grace of our Lord, we will explore a subject that has caused much debate among believers: Why did God seemingly allow men in the Old Testament to marry multiple wives? And is it lawful to divorce?

This issue has caused confusion for many Christians, especially those without the full illumination of the Holy Spirit. But when we examine Scripture carefully, we discover God's heart and original design for marriage.

1. Did God Ever Command Polygamy?

The first point to understand is this:

Nowhere in the Bible did God ever command or encourage a man to marry more than one wife.

You may ask, *“But what about Deuteronomy 21:15 or 25:5, which mention multiple wives?”* Yes, those verses mention polygamy, but they do not establish it as God's will. They are regulations, not endorsements.

To understand God's intent, let's look at:

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (ESV)

14 "When you come to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, 'I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,'

15 you may indeed set a king over you whom the Lord your God will choose...

17 And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.

Here, God is giving instructions for a future king a king the people would eventually demand (against His original will). And one of those commands is: Do not multiply wives. Why? Because many wives would turn the king's heart away.

So if polygamy truly were God's will, why would He warn against it here?

2. The Demand for a King Was Not God's Original Plan

Although Deuteronomy 17 gives laws about kings, it does not mean God originally wanted Israel to have a king like the nations around them. In fact, when they eventually demanded one, God was displeased:

1 Samuel 8:4-7 (NIV)

6 But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord.

7 And the Lord told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.”

This passage reveals that Israel's demand for a human king was a rejection of God's rulership.

Similarly, their practices of polygamy and divorce were departures from God's original will not things He ever commanded.

3. God Permitted Polygamy and Divorce Because of Hard Hearts

Just as God gave Israel laws concerning kings because of their disobedience, He also gave regulations for marriage, polygamy, and divorce not as ideals, but as concessions due to the hardness of their hearts.

This is confirmed by Jesus Himself, who clarified God's original intention for marriage.

Matthew 19:3-8 (ESV)

3 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?”

4 He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,

5 and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast 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 separate.”

7 They said to him, “Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?”

8 He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.”

Jesus reaffirms: God's design is one man, one woman united for life.

4. Jesus Restores God's Original Design for Marriage

Jesus is greater than Moses, greater than the prophets, and greater than the Old Covenant (Hebrews 1:1-2). In Him, we see the fullness of God's will for human relationships.

Colossians 2:9 (NKJV)

“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

Therefore, what Jesus says about marriage overrides all previous permissions given under the Old Covenant due to sin.

To follow Jesus is to return to God's original design: One man, one wife.

Multiple wives or divorcing for convenience is against God's revealed will in Christ.

5. What About Divorce Today?

According to Jesus, the only valid reason for divorce is sexual immorality (Matthew 19:9). Other reasons such as disagreement, incompatibility, or conflict do not justify divorce in God's eyes.

- God never commanded polygamy or divorce.
- He allowed certain regulations in the Old Covenant because of Israel's sinfulness.
- Polygamy and divorce were never God's original plan (Genesis 2:24).
- Jesus restored and clarified the divine pattern: one man, one woman, joined as one flesh for life.
- As followers of Christ, we are to walk according to His teaching, not Old Testament allowances made for rebellious people.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV)

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."

Let us be faithful students of Scripture rightly dividing the Word and walking in the truth that sets us free.

May the Lord bless you abundantly as you seek to walk in His truth.

Share on:
WhatsApp