

Patriarchs' Journal™

Dedicated to the restoration, support and encouragement of biblical family structure.

Volume 1
Issue 6

Time to Be Provoked

(with a critique of Bob Yandian's book, *One Flesh*)

by — B.A. Berean

Do you love the Bible? I do. You could say I'm crazy about it.

Because I love and respect the Word, I wanted to write a book that would stir people up to dig in and study with a passion.

I didn't believe that a book written as a pep rally for Bible study would actually stir people up. I also knew that simply reminding people of the inspiration of God's Word and the authority of the Word wouldn't motivate most people. After all, the majority of Christians say they believe God's Word is inspired, but they still don't read it much less diligently study it.

I knew I needed a different approach. Until I found that approach, the idea of writing a book had to be put on the back burner. Then one day it hit me. Most people have strong convictions about what they believe. *Right?*

Imagine if I could find a topic that the majority of us are in agreement on, dogmatic about, and quick to express strong opinions regarding. And, while our belief has no basis in Scripture, we absolutely think it does.

If I could discover that topic/doctrine/belief and then systematically unravel it in a book, would that shock the reader enough to become more like the Bereans?¹

1. Do you remember the Bereans in the book of Acts? We meet them in chapter 17, where the Bible tells us something wonderful about them.

As Paul and Silas went to Berea to preach and teach, Acts 17:10 tells us that the people of Berea were "*more fair-minded*" or literally "*of more noble character*" than those in Thessalonica "*in that they received the word with all readiness and searched the Scrip-*

tures daily to find out whether these things were so."

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Do you get the picture? The people listened intently as Paul and Silas preached, because they had a genuine desire to learn. But unlike the folks in Thessalonica, who basically ran Paul and Silas out of town when they heard something they didn't agree with, the people of Berea went home to dig into the Scriptures each day to discover if what Paul taught was indeed true. In other words, the Bereans assumed personal responsibility for what they believed.

Do you try to be like the Bereans? Are you a person of "noble character"? Have you taken it upon yourself to earnestly search the Scriptures? If not, why do you believe what you believe?

Do you believe what you believe because Mama told you so? Do you believe what you believe because it's what the Sunday school teacher told you? Do you believe what you believe because you heard someone on Christian television say it? Do you believe what you believe because everyone else seems to believe that way, therefore you've never thought to question it?

Have you ever stopped to consider that at least some of what you believe to be biblical may not actually be based on Scripture at all? Have you ever stopped to consider that at least a few of your religious beliefs may simply be the commandments or traditions of men?

FINDING A "SACRED COW"

I realized that, if I could find a "sacred cow" like that and kick it a few times, it might inspire (or anger and upset) folks enough to dig into the Word on their own to discover why they believe what they believe.

I knew that kicking this "sacred cow" could get me in trouble and perhaps stir up a hornet's nest; but to me, truth is worth some stings!

The only problem was that I wasn't sure what that sacred cow might be.

At this point, let me clarify what I mean by a "sacred cow." When I use that term, I'm talking about

a doctrine or belief that seems immovable, solid and irrefutable. It's a doctrine that the majority agrees upon. It is a belief that most people assume is correct without ever taking time to honestly examine it for themselves in the Scriptures from cover to cover.

A "sacred cow" is a doctrine that most people would never think to question because it has been firmly planted within us for many generations.

This type of belief is so firmly rooted in culture that, if we hear anyone speak anything contrary to our cow, we question their intelligence, sanity and possibly their salvation.

E-MAIL AND A "SACRED COW"

In January 2004, I got an e-mail that kicked one of my sacred cows and made it go "moo." Actually, it made it go "MOOOOOOO!"

My cow got kicked so hard that I limped for a week! As a result, I started to dig into the Bible in a way that I hadn't before.

My cow was wounded and I needed to bandage it up.

I had strong beliefs about my cow. I had preached about my cow. I had told others that what I believed about my cow was right because "the Bible says so."

Although I could quote a few passages that appeared to support the traditional view of my sacred cow, I had never really taken the time to dig in on my own to discover what the Bible really has to say about it.

For years I had simply been repeating what I had heard from a teacher who had heard it from another teacher who had heard it from another teacher.

If I happened to come across a passage that didn't support my sacred cow, I simply ignored it or tried to explain it away.

When it came to this particular belief, I had not been a Berean. *Why?* Because it seemed too obvious. There seemed to be no way that my traditional view could be wrong. Therefore, I had never bothered to take an honest "biblical" look at it.

MARRIAGE AND THE BIBLE

The topic that rocked my world, rattled my cage and

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Patriarchs' Journal is a periodical dedicated to the definition, defense, support and encouragement of the God-ordained family as an autonomous, sovereign entity that existed before civil governments and religious organizations, and is independent of their approval and direction.

Patriarchs' Journal is <i>NOT</i> about ...	Patriarchs' Journal is <i>IS</i> about ...
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We will attempt to take an honest, fresh look at the subject of the family from a Biblical perspective, and to recover truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13). Readers are encouraged to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21). This publication is not intended to provide personal or legal advice.

Minor changes to punctuation and grammar may have been made to articles for better reading.

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kicked my cow had to do with marriage and the Bible.

The e-mail I mentioned a few moments ago came from a person who had read about American missionaries who had gone to Africa to share the Gospel. People who were polygamous (meaning that the typical family consisted of one husband, several wives and a lot of children) inhabited the region the missionaries were visiting. For these people, polygamy was simply normal and it had been that way for thousands of years. Nobody in that culture seemed to question the validity of their family structure ... Until the American Christians arrived.

What happened? Well, as the missionaries shared the Gospel, they were right in many things. They had shared the Bad News (All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God) with the News (Jesus Christ died on a cross for our sins and rose from the dead three days later. He appeared to many witnesses and then ascended up into heaven and now He is seated at the right hand of the Father. Salvation is a free gift, and we have been justified by grace through faith etc.).

The Christian missionaries told them that they needed to repent (have a change of mind for the better), receive Jesus Christ as Savior and begin to follow the teachings of Christ.

Here's where things got complicated and where perhaps the missionaries went off-course (I'll leave that for you to decide once you dig in like a Berean!)

They began to tell the natives that they needed to repent of the "sin of polygamy." The native men needed to decide which one of their wives to keep and then send the rest away because no Christian could continue to live in such gross sin. As you can imagine, this created a stir within these families.

The person who sent me the email raised some interesting questions.

Does telling a man to divorce/leave his wives, thus creating multiple single mother families in a harsh living environment, sound like the Christian thing to do?

I know that we're to repent and turn to Jesus; but what if these people weren't really sinning by be-

ing polygamous?

How many men of faith mentioned in the Bible had living situations that were much the same as the tribal people in Africa?

If you were to lead a missions trip to Africa, how would you deal with these people?

These questions really got me thinking, and I began to dig in to the Word to find some answers.

I began to study the subjects of marriage, monogamy, polygamy, sex and sin in the Bible. I began to look at the Old Testament Law to see what it had to say. I looked at the examples of men and women of faith in the Scriptures. I searched for every command regarding marriage, every command regarding sex, and every rebuke of any man or woman in Scripture for committing sexual sin. Then I took a look at what was taught by Jesus and the Apostles. What I found surprised me in some very uncomfortable and life-changing ways.

PRESIDENTIAL TICKET

During this time of intense study, campaigning for the 2004 presidential election was in full swing. The two big players on the ticket were President George W. Bush and John Kerry. Part of the debate was over the proposed "Federal Marriage Amendment," which was meant to put in place a Constitutional amendment that would define marriage as a union of "one man and one woman."

A few months before the election, I was invited to a luncheon hosted by governor Huckabee of Arkansas. There were a total of 15 or 20 pastors in attendance, along with the governor, a couple of his aides, and two or three radio and newspaper reporters.

The main focus of conversation was the "Federal Marriage Amendment." Several times in the course of the luncheon, the pastors said things like,

We all know that according to God's Word, the *only* acceptable form of marriage is one man and one woman. Anything other than that is a sin.

A few months earlier, I would have echoed those same words believing I was taking a stand for Jesus, the Bible and righteousness. However, as I reflected on what I had been studying, things didn't seem to add up.

The personal provocation to study intensified over the coming months. In September 2004, my family and a close friend went out for dinner. After dinner we stopped by a very large bookstore and decided to browse. My daughter headed straight for the art section to find some books on animation. The rest of us headed straight for the Christian book section.

To make a long story short, I purchased a book by Dr. James Dobson entitled *Marriage Under Fire* (published by Multnomah Publishers, Inc.). At that time, I respected Dr. Dobson and was excited to find his book, because I believed it would shed some light on the issue at hand and perhaps bandage up my wounded sacred cow. I purchased it and hungrily read it from beginning to end.

The following is quoted from the back cover.

◆ *Why shouldn't the definition of family be broadened and modernized?*

◆ *Same-sex marriage will destroy the fundamental principles of marriage, parenthood, and gender.*

◆ *Families will be increasingly unstable as their definitions expand to incorporate multiple "moms" and "dads."*

◆ *Legalization of gay marriages will lead to polygamy and other alternatives to one-man/one-woman unions.*

◆ *The divorce rate will be even higher, making our children less safe.*

◆ *Marriage Under Fire provides the foundations of a battle plan for the preservation of traditional values in our nation.*

BIBLICAL OR TRADITIONAL?

As I read the back cover (and the entire book from

the first page to the last), several thoughts came to mind. These thoughts provoked me even more.

First of all, Dr. Dobson stated that legalization of gay marriages will lead to polygamy and other alternatives to one-man/one-woman unions. That thought moved me to ask myself some questions.

How would legalization of alternatives to one-man/one-woman marriage affect me personally?

As a pastor, what would I do if a married couple in our congregation wanted to add another wife to the family?

Could I condone something like that in any way, shape or form? Would it be biblical for me to "officiate" a ceremony of that sort?

What would happen if a family that included one husband and multiple wives (for instance, a Muslim family that moved to America, heard the Gospel and got saved) began to attend our fellowship? Would I be right in calling it sin? Would I have a solid biblical basis for excommunicating them for their "fornication" or "adultery"?

Secondly, why did Dr. Dobson choose to use the word "traditional" to describe our American values? Why didn't Dr. Dobson refer to them as "biblical values"?

Had I, along with the vast majority of others (Dr. Dobson included), allowed "traditional" American values to influence how we look at the Bible? Was Dobson intentionally using the word *traditional* because he knew he couldn't support his view from the Bible?

Come to think of it, why is it that, across the board, preachers consistently refer to the *traditional* family rather than the *biblical* family? Are they afraid of what the Bible really has to say? Afraid for their job security? Or, perhaps, simply embarrassed?

Could it be that, because we are more concerned with traditional values than with biblical values, the family is suffering? Could it be that the staggering divorce rate is because our traditional values are not on track with biblical values?

Could a biblical family approach which allowed for more than one wife in a household actually provide more stability for children, a higher standard of living, and keep children home with a loving parent rather than in day care from nine to five?

Is the staggering divorce rate in our nation the result of placing un-biblical pressures on men and women? Pressure that could be relieved with more adult helping hands in the household?

Many Christian women wear themselves out as they strive to be the Proverbs 31 woman. Was she part of a monogamous union? Was she doing all that work alone? Did she have some help from other wives?

Is part of the problem that there are too few men willing to love their wives as Christ loves the church? As a result, are the majority of women settling for inferior husbands simply for the sake of being married?

Is it possible to truly love more than one spouse?

Answers that, at one time, seemed so clear to me suddenly weren't very clear anymore. Needless to say, I was provoked even more to dig into the Scriptures to see what God has to say about the issue ... and to see what God doesn't say about it. All of which could be equally important.

LIVING IN SIN

If we conclude that anything other than a one man and one woman household is indeed sin, what must we conclude about men such as Abraham, Jacob, Gideon and David?

Were these heroes of faith living in rebellion against God? Were they really living in sin? Would we be right to call them adulterers or fornicators?

Since the Bible tells us that God spoke to these men directly, doesn't it seem likely that God would have corrected their behavior if they were living a life of blatant and horrific sin?

Doesn't it make sense that, if they were sinning, the Holy Spirit would have led the writers of the Scrip-

ture to clearly call it sin?

If these men were truly adulterers or fornicators, why would the Holy Spirit lead the writer of the Book of Hebrews to list them as great heroes of faith, and then two chapters later state that adulterers and fornicators would be judged?

Is it possible that plural marriage cannot biblically be considered adultery or fornication?

Why don't we see a single example of God rebuking these men for caring for more than one wife?

As you read the Bible, you discover that these were men whom God would openly rebuke when they were in sin (a great example of this is the rebuke David received after committing adultery with Bathsheba), but none were rebuked for their multiple wives. In fact, God actually took credit for "giving" David his multiple wives. What? Read the following verses carefully.

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!' 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" (II Samuel 12:7-9).

As you read the words of the prophet Nathan, did you notice anything interesting? God rebuked David for stealing another man's wife (adultery), but then took credit for giving David multiple wives of his own.

Let's look at it again. The Lord said,

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!

If having multiple marriage partners is sin, it would



make no sense for the one true God, Who is holy and sinless, to put His servant into a position of living a life of sin (regardless of the circumstances) and then saying that if that had been too little He would have given him much more. What do you think? Have you ever heard of God giving someone more sin?

THE POPULAR VIEW

The popular contemporary Christian view of multiple wives and the argument against it is summed up very well in a book entitled *One Flesh* (Copyright 1992 by Bob Yandian, published by Pillar Books and Publishing Company).

Because the author does such a fantastic job of presenting the popular view, I would like to quote him extensively and then come back and address some of the points he makes.

As you read the following pages, please remember that we are to be people of more noble character like the Bereans. When someone teaches something, it's up to those who hear it or read it to search the Scrip-

tures to see if it's true. Are you ready to put that into practice? Are you ready to begin to be like a Berean?

On pages 14 and 15 of *One Flesh* Mr. Yandian writes the following:

There is a question that comes up every time I teach that God ordained one woman for one man. "What about the fact that the Bible records many instances of polygamy (being married to more than one wife) in the Old Testament?" The Mormons who still practice polygamy today will defend their way of life by quoting Scriptures that talk about Jacob, David, and many others who had more than one wife.

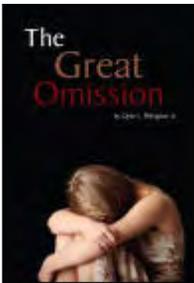
However, if you will study their lives carefully, it will be obvious that confusion reigned in households of those who had more than one wife. Furthermore, both the Old and New Testaments make it clear that this was not God's will.

The first recorded case of polygamy is in Genesis 4:19, where a man named Lamech took more than one wife. We find out later, in verse 23, that he was a murderer. So the first polygamist recorded in the Bible was a murderer!

Jacob was the first Jew to have more than one wife. He worked for seven years to get Rachel and was tricked into marrying her sister Leah, so he worked another seven years to get Rachel as well. Needless to say, the two wives fought all the time, there was jealousy and strife between them and their children, and Jacob always had trouble in the home. Eventually, the sons of Leah tried to kill Joseph, one of the sons of Rachel.

In First Samuel 1:1-6, we have the account of Elkanah, who had two wives, Peninnah and Hannah. As you remember, Hannah was not able to have children and Peninnah, who had given Elkanah many children, constantly insulted and harassed Hannah because she was barren. When Samuel was finally born to Hannah, the insults about being barren may have stopped, but the strife and jealousy did not.

Under Moses, God set the record straight when



The Great Omission:
Christendom's Abandonment of the Biblical Family
by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
204 pages, PB. \$15

This book presents twenty years of study, taking a candid look at the issue of multiple wives in Scripture and society. The book chapters are:

- The Problem: The Sad, Ignored Epidemic
- The Divine Provision
- The Marital Gift
- The Old Testament Scriptural Precedent
- The New Testament Scriptural Precedent
- The Religious System's Destruction of the Biblical Family
- The History of Its Practice
- The Cultural Issue
- The Benefits of Plural Marriage
- Who Is Immoral?

This book also has 14 appendixes.
(see order form on back page)



He gave the law. Leviticus 18:18 and Deuteronomy 17:17 are two verses of Scripture which make it clear that a man should not have more than one wife. Later, David broke this law. When he met Bathsheba, he already had five wives. The Bible doesn't say anything about strife among the wives, but his children committed incest, tried to kill one another, and even attempted to overthrow David from his throne.

David and Bathsheba's son, Solomon, out married everyone, with seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines ... No one was ever more miserable and dissipated because of sexual immorality than Solomon.

The New Testament explicitly tells us there is to be one woman for one man, and one man for one woman.

Never in the entire Word of God do you read, "Husband, love your wives!" We're told in First Timothy 3:2 that a bishop should be the husband of one wife; and First Timothy 3:12 says that a deacon should be the husband of one wife. This is confirmed again in Titus 1:6, where it says that elders should be the husband of one wife.

Since marriage is a type of Jesus and the Church, we can also take this one step further and ask, "How many bodies does Jesus Christ have?" One. Jesus is coming back for one Church, One Body. Jesus is called the bridegroom and the Church is called the bride – one bride for one bridegroom.

Moreover, how many bodies do you have? One. There is one body for one head. You would look really strange having more than one body under your head – or more than one head on top of your body! There are freaks in nature, and they are against what God has ordained for mankind in marriage as well.

Throughout the Bible, the cornerstone of the family is the one-flesh, one-man-for-one-woman marriage relationship.

I applaud Mr. Yandian for putting together such a great argument. In fact, it's such an effective argu-

ment that I have borrowed from it extensively to preach against multiple marriage partners in the past.

As you read through his argument you were probably just as impressed as me. But let me ask you a question or two.

As you read through the paragraphs above, did you bother to look up the Scriptures that were referenced by Yandian but not actually written in?

Or did you simply take his word for it that the Bible says what he says it says? Were you being a Berean?

I would like to take this opportunity to dig in with you, do some referencing and see if Mr. Yandian is absolutely completely on track, or if there is a chance that he is simply wanting to use Scripture to back up the view that he wants to believe.

Let's take a look at each paragraph on pages 14 and 15 of his book and see what we find.

DID CONFUSION REIGN?

In the first two paragraphs on page 14 Yandian says,

There is a question that comes up every time I teach that God ordained one woman for one man. "What about the fact that the Bible records many instances of polygamy (being married to more than one wife) in the Old Testament?"

However, if you will study their lives carefully, it will be obvious that confusion reigned in households of those who had more than one wife. Furthermore, both the Old and New Testaments make it clear that this was not God's will.

As a Berean, have you taken the time to study the lives of every man in Scripture who had more than one wife? If so, have you found that "confusion reigned" in all of their households? If so, does that mean that there will be no confusion in a "one-man-one-woman" household?

Take time to really think about it.

The first marriage in the Bible was one man and one

woman. Maybe it's just me, but they seemed a bit confused. In fact, they plunged all of mankind into sin and brought death into the world.

If, as Mr. Yandian states, the Old and New Testaments make it clear it is not God's will for any man to have more than one wife, then we should easily be able to find passages throughout the Bible that make it abundantly clear. After all, when it comes to sin, God always makes it very clear by simply stating that something is sin.

For instance, when it comes to the sin of murder, He very clearly states in the law of Moses, "*You shall not murder*" (Exodus 20:13). When it comes to adultery, He also makes it very clear in Exodus 20:14 by stating, "*You shall not commit adultery.*"

However, there is no command in the Old Testament that says, "A man shall have only one wife."

We find David being rebuked for adultery with Bathsheba, but he was not rebuked for having multiple wives. If polygamy is adultery, shouldn't we expect to see God rebuking David for it?

If Yandian is right about the New Testament stance on polygamy, then it should be easy for us to find. However, the New Testament does not contain even one passage stating that "A man shall have only one wife."

If you think you know of a passage that could be taken as such, please take a moment to look it up now. Pay attention to all the words in the passage and then re-evaluate your answer. We'll talk more about that a little later.

LAMECH THE MURDERER

On page 14, Yandian also states,

The first recorded case of polygamy is in Genesis 4:19, where a man named Lamech took more than one wife. We find out later, in verse 23, that he was a murderer. So the first polygamist recorded in the Bible was a murderer!

I've used that statement several times from the pulpit as I've taught through the book of Genesis, think-

ing that I was making a solid case against polygamy. Does the fact that a polygamist killed another man prove the sinfulness or polygamy itself?

Think through that type of logic as you consider the first monogamous family in Scripture.

In the book of Genesis, we find that Adam was the first man who had only one wife. Yet he and his wife plunged mankind into sin and caused the earth to be cursed.

If we believe that polygamy was the cause of murder among mankind, should we also then conclude that monogamy led to the fall which resulted in bringing death to all people? Do you see the senselessness of that type of logic?

Here's another thought provoker. The first-born son of monogamous Adam and Eve was named Cain. Do you remember what Cain is famous for?!

Cain was the very first murderer. He killed his younger brother, Abel. Does that mean that the first-born of monogamous couples will turn out to be murderers? Does that mean that all first-born sons are more wicked than second born sons? Does that mean that monogamy is the source of murder? I don't think so. Yet that is the type of reasoning that Mr. Yandian uses in his argument.

Lamech is indeed the first polygamist mentioned in Scripture, and he did kill a man. But let me challenge you to do a little studying on your own. Do some research to find how many murderers have been the husband of only one wife.

The fact that the first recorded polygamist was a murderer and the first-born human being (Cain) was also a murderer is simply evidence that the heart of man is wicked. It is proof that since the fall, we are all born with a sinful nature. It is not evidence that having multiple wives is sin. It is simply evidence that human beings are sinners with the capacity to murder.

TRICKED INTO MARRIAGE

On page 14, Yandian also states:

Jacob was the first Jew to have more than one

wife. He worked for seven years to get Rachel and was tricked into marrying her sister Leah, so he worked another seven years to get Rachel as well. Needless to say, the two wives fought all the time; there was jealousy and strife between them and their children, and Jacob always had trouble in the home. Eventually, the sons of Leah tried to kill Joseph, one of the sons of Rachel.

How many monogamous marriages do you honestly believe would be trouble-free if the groom was tricked into marrying the wrong woman, and he didn't find out until the morning after?

In the case of Jacob, this was not a case of a man choosing to have more than one wife. It is also perhaps not a case of the wives willfully choosing to be in a polygamous marriage situation. It could be that they were all tricked (or perhaps these sisters were manipulated by their father Laban) into this marital arrangement. As I type these words another verse comes to mind.

Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive (Leviticus 18:18).

It should be obvious that the above passage is not a prohibition against having more than one wife. It does, however, clearly prohibit a man from having sex with or marrying two sisters as rivals (it could be interpreted as sisters whose relationship is already one of rivalry).

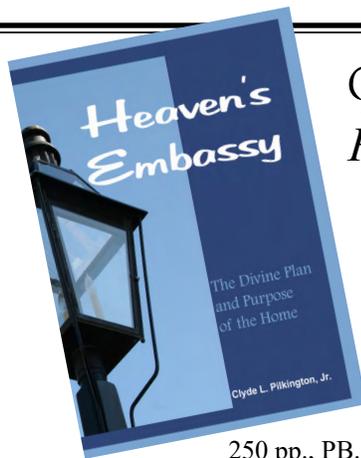
In the verse just before it, the LORD dealt with a man taking a mother and her daughter or a mother and her granddaughter.

Here is another passage dealing with a mother and daughter in a relationship with the same man.

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 (Leviticus 18:17).

These passages are prohibitions against incest. They have nothing to do with a man being husband/provider/protector of more than one wife.

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 (Leviticus 20:14).



Heaven's Embassy – The Divine Plan & Purpose of the Home

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it (Psalm 127:1).

This book represents many years of work. The author believes that it is one of the most important books that he will ever be privileged to write, simply because it is about one of the most vital scriptural subjects that could ever be addressed.

The home is central to all of God's dealings with man throughout the course of time. It is His Divine "institution" and "organization" on the earth; and for the believer, it is the *Embassy of Heaven*. An embassy is "**the residence or office of an ambassador.**" Since the believer is an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 5:14-21), his home is thus the *Divine Embassy* of heavenly ministry.

Pauline ministry is centered in the homes of believers. This is even the true sphere of the Body of Christ; for this reason our apostle speaks of "*church in thy house.*" This book doesn't focus upon the *external* specifics of the ministry of *Heaven's Embassy* (such as *hospitality*); that will be saved for another volume. Instead, it looks at the inner-workings of the *Embassy* itself, focusing upon its very nature and *internal* purpose and function.

(see order form on back page)

THE FELLOWSHIP INN

At
Pilkington
Abbey

The Fellowship Inn presently is comprised of three houses built in 1895, located in Paint Borough adjacent to Windber, PA. These structures provide ample space for dedicated guest lodging. *The Fellowship Inn* is not a business venture, but the hospitality ministry extension of Pilkington Abbey; there are, therefore, no guest charges.

A large part of the Pilkington family passion has always been hospitality. Father has placed this in their makeup. The website www.FellowshipInn.com is an online calendar that will assist you in coming for a visit. It will allow you to see our family activities and who's scheduled to visit us. Hopefully this will make it easier for *you* to make your plans

to come, and let you know how serious we are about having you visit us.

"If you need fellowship, or sound teaching, or counseling, or you just plain need a break from life and want to come to a place of palpable peace and lovely love for a day, or a weekend, or a week, come here. It's free. Just bring yourself, as you are. Go to the website and make a reservation. Find out when we're all going to be here, and come here and taste for yourself what God has produced in the middle of nowhere." – Martin Zender

If these verses apply to marriage, it seems they would leave the door open for multiple wives as long as the wives are not rival sisters or a mother and daughter. Unless of course you want to *add* something to what is actually being said in the passage.

It seems that if the LORD saw multiple wives as a sin, He would have covered all of the bases in one shot by simply saying; "Do not marry more than one woman." But God didn't do that!

Instead, He tells men not to marry a woman and her daughter, and not to "take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness."

Could it be that since God does not condemn multiple wives in a general sense, it is strong evidence that He approves of it as long as it does not involve two sisters as rivals (Rachel and Leah) or a mother and daughter?

INSULTS AND HARASSMENT

The next paragraph on page 14 of *One Flesh* states,

In First Samuel 1:1-6, we have the account of El-

kanah, who had two wives, Peninnah and Hannah. As you remember, Hannah was not able to have children and Peninnah, who had given Elkanah many children, constantly insulted and harassed Hannah because she was barren. When Samuel was finally born to Hannah, the insults about being barren may have stopped, but the strife and jealousy did not.

Do you think that polygamy is the source of insults, harassment and jealousy? I know plenty of monogamous couples who are very quick to insult one another. I also know plenty of monogamous couples who are slaves to jealousy, including jealousy of other couples who have children.

The problems in the verses Yandian cited were not caused by polygamy. The problems were caused by the sinful hearts of fallen human beings. These same problems are issues for all people, including me and you.

GOD SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT

The last paragraph on page 14 of *One Flesh* says,

Under Moses, God set the record straight when



He gave the law. Leviticus 18:18 and Deuteronomy 17:17 are two verses of Scripture which make it clear that a man should not have more than one wife. Later, David broke this law. When he met Bathsheba, he already had five wives. The Bible doesn't say anything about strife among the wives, but his children committed incest, tried to kill one another, and even attempted to overthrow David from his throne.

Mr. Yandian says that God set the record straight when He gave the Law. He then referred to Leviticus 18:18 and Deuteronomy 17:17. Notice that he only referred to these verses, but he did not quote them word for word in his book. Perhaps he was hoping that none of his readers would be Bereans. Let's take a look at what these verses actually say.

First is Leviticus 18:18 (we referred to this verse earlier). This passage is dealing with incestuous sex relationships. Let's look at it in context.

You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness.

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. Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive (Leviticus 18:16-18).

When you take time to actually read the verse, you immediately see that it is not a prohibition against multiple wives. It simply appears to be saying that a man is not to have sex with or be married to two sisters as rivals.

Next is Deuteronomy 17:17. Let's start in verse 14.

When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, "I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me," 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. 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." Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself (Deuteronomy 17:14-17).

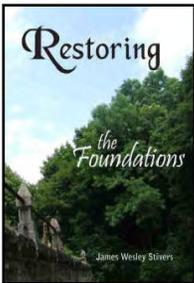
Now is the time to ask some Who, What, When, Where, Why questions. When you take time to do that, you discover that this passage is giving guidelines for the king. This is not addressed to people in general. It is specifically for the king of the children of Israel. If you are not a king of Israel, this is not for you.

The passage also lists several specific things that the king should not "*multiply for himself.*" These include horses, wives, silver and gold.

It seems pretty obvious that having two or three horses wouldn't qualify as "*multiplying of horses.*" After all, it was very common for chariots to be pulled by a team of horses, not just one. If a team of horses would not qualify as multiplying, would more than one wife qualify as multiplying? Multiplication seems to speak of exponential growth, not simple addition.

As we look at Scripture, the only example we find of a king of Israel "multiplying wives" is Solomon. He disregarded this law, married hundreds of pagan women, and his foreign wives led him into idolatry.

What about multiplication of silver and gold? What would that mean? Would it mean anything more than one gold coin and one silver coin? Of course



Restoring the Foundations: *Essays in Relational Theology*
 by — James Wesley Stivers
 (originally published in 1995)
 94 pages, PB, \$13

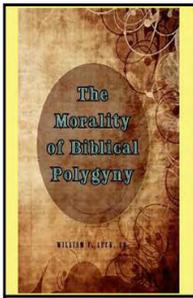
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not. There is no way a king could rule a kingdom with only one gold coin at his disposal.

It should be very evident that the two verses cited by Yandian do not make it perfectly clear that a man should have only one wife.

These verses do, however, make it clear that a man should not have sex with two sisters who are rivals; marry a woman and her daughter; and if he is a king in Israel, he should not multiply horses, wives, silver or gold.

Have you begun to see how asking Who, What, When, Where and Why questions makes Scripture so much more clear? Have you begun to see the importance of reading Scripture in context? Are you being challenged to be more of a Berean?



The Morality of Biblical Polygyny

by — William F. Luck, Sr.

28 pages, PB. \$5

This is an amazing, courageous, contemporary work. William Luck is the son of Moody Bible Institute's Dr. G. Coleman Luck, Sr, Chairman of the Department of Theology, and a capable biblical scholar in his own right.

“God didn't ask me my opinion about the issue. He expected me to represent His. I've tried. If you can prove I'm mistaken, I'll be the first to thank you. But I'm not holding my breath in the meanwhile.” – the Author, from the Introduction

“To date [over twenty years after its original publication], I find the arguments ‘pro’ quite superior to those ‘con.’” – the Author, from the Conclusion

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- Laws That Imply the Moral Propriety of Polygyny
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- The Association of Polygyny with Other Evils
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- Questions Concerning the Possibility of Moral Polygyny

(see order form on back page)

INCEST IN THE FAMILY

Let's continue to look at quotes from the book *One Flesh*.

Later, David broke this law. When he met Bathsheba, he already had five wives. The Bible doesn't say anything about strife among the wives, but his children committed incest, tried to kill one another, and even attempted to overthrow David from his throne.

Realizing David had 10 or 12 wives and God took credit for giving them to him, it doesn't appear that David broke the commandment against multiplying wives for himself.

The fact that some of David's children committed incest proves nothing. Incest is unfortunately all too common in homes with one husband and one wife. Check out the statistics for yourself.

Here's another thought provoker: I wonder how many monogamous kings have had family members try to overthrow them? Political power struggles are not the result of polygamy.

SOLOMON BROKE THE RULES

In his book, Yandian says,

David and Bathsheba's son, Solomon, out married everyone, with seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines ... No one was ever more miserable and dissipated because of sexual immorality than Solomon.

Solomon absolutely positively broke the command of Deuteronomy 17:17. Seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines definitely falls into the category of multiplication. As a result of being yoked with idol-worshipping women, Solomon himself was led into idolatry.

Perhaps Solomon would also be a good case study on the importance of not being unequally yoked with unbelievers. Being unequally yoked is something that happens all too often in pseudo monogamous America.

Solomon was incredibly miserable because he began to

look for satisfaction in all of the wrong places. If you read the book of Ecclesiastes in its entirety, you will discover that the misery of Solomon was not simply the result of his sexual relationships or his many wives.

STATED EXPLICITLY?

According to Mr. Yandian,

The New Testament explicitly tells us there is to be one woman for one man, and one man for one woman. Never in the entire Word of God do you read, “Husband, love your wives!” We’re told in First Timothy 3:2 that a bishop should be the husband of one wife; and First Timothy 3:12 says that a deacon should be the husband of one wife. This is confirmed again in Titus 1:6, where it says that elders should be the husband of one wife.

If something is explicitly stated, then you should be able to read a verse that explicitly states it. Right?

Yet there is no passage of Scripture that is explicitly worded, “There is to be one woman for one man, and one man for one woman.”

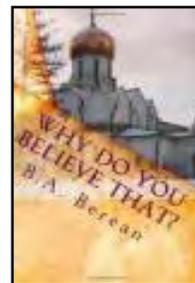
True, the Bible doesn’t say, “Husband, love your wives.” It does, however, command that husbands should *“love their wives as Christ loves the church.”*

It seems that if the traditional view was true then Moses could have saved a lot of time and energy writing out the law by simply stating, “One man shall marry one woman. Anything other than one man and one woman joined together sexually in marriage is sin.”

At this point, you once again need to look at the Bible passages cited by Mr. Yandian, read them in context and ask some simple Who, What, When, Where, Why questions. When you do that, you will quickly discover that I Timothy 3:2 and I Timothy 3:12 are both dealing with church leadership, not people in general.

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quar-

relsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence; not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife ruling their children and their own houses well. 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 (I Timothy 3:1-13).



Why Do You Believe That?

by — B.A. Berean.

148 pages, Paperback

This well written, easy to read book is designed to provoke the reader lovingly to examine why they believe what they believe, while at the same time encouraging and equipping readers to study the Scriptures for themselves. Hold on tight, as aim is taken at a couple of the most sacred cows in the church today: traditional marriage and monogamy. It is done in an effort to help you see that what you’ve been told the Bible “says” may not actually be what the Bible teaches. Hailed by some advocates of polygamy, plural marriage, polygyny, etc. as the best “under the radar” educational tool available to introduce the masses to Biblical marriage and the options it provides beyond those presented in religious tradition. If you are pro-polygamy, part of the biblical families movement, or simply a truth seeker, you will enjoy reading this insightful book. The Bible study helps presented within these pages are well worth the price of admission. You will want to read it again and again and share it with others.

(discontinued)

After reading these verses in context, it should be easy to see that this is in no way a prohibition against caring for more than one wife as a believer.

These verses also have nothing to do with church membership, nor do they deal with prerequisites for salvation or maintaining good standing within the church.

These are not verses we could use if we wanted to tell an African, a Muslim or a Mormon that he needed to repent of the sin of polygamy before he could be saved and be a part of a community of believers. The truth is that this passage is not defining any sort of sin at all.

Titus 1:6 also deals specifically with leaders in the church. Take a look at the passage in context starting in verse 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 – if a man is blameless, the husband of

one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 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, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, 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 (Titus 1:5-9).

Since these passages deal specifically with certain leaders within the church, they can in no way be used to teach that all Christians must be monogamous.

The simple fact that Paul states that leaders must be the husband of one wife may imply that it is acceptable for those who are not leaders to have more than one wife. It also demonstrates that polygamy may have been common within the early church since it was common in various cultures of the day.

These verses also demonstrate that it would be wrong for a missionary to insist that a polygamous African man repent of polygamy before he can be saved.

To use these verses as a prohibition against multiple marriage partners is twisting the text. It also exhibits a complete disregard for basic rules of biblical interpretation.

ONE BODY–ONE HEAD

Let's move on in *One Flesh*.

Since marriage is a type of Jesus and the Church, we can also take this one step further and ask, "How many bodies does Jesus Christ have?" One. Jesus is coming back for one Church, One Body. Jesus is called the bridegroom and the Church is called the bride – one bride for one bridegroom.

Moreover, how many bodies do you have? One. There is one body for one head. You would look really strange having more than one body under your head – or more than one head on top of your body! There are freaks in nature, and they are against what God has ordained for mankind in marriage as well.



Biblical Families

Biblical Families is a ministry dedicated to encouraging and strengthening Biblical marriages, including, but certainly not limited to, plural marriage. We see plural marriage as a good, and caring, option for believers – ensuring that no one need be left without a family. Biblical Families places a strong emphasis on fellowship and supporting each other, as per the New Testament, and organizes national retreats and regional meetings.

Our website includes many helpful resources:

- Online Articles
- Discussion Boards
- Newsletters
- Retreat Information
- Local contacts
- Links to other helpful resources

www.BiblicalFamilies.org



Christ is truly the Head of the Church, which is made up of many individual members.

Is it possible that one man with many wives could actually be a great picture of Christ and His church? After all, Christ does have an individual and personal relationship with each of us. Even though we are many ... together we are one.

Take a look at what Paul stated in Ephesians chapter 5. It's fairly thought-provoking.

So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:28-32).

All believers together make up one body. All believers together are the bride of Christ. Paul described it as a "great mystery." How could so many be "one"?

If it works for Christ and the church, could it work for a husband and his individual wives, since marriage is a picture of Christ and His church?

Is it possible for a man to be "one flesh" with more than one woman? Let me provoke you to keep reading by answering that question with a confident "yes."

I know it sounds like heresy to our "traditional" ears, but in a later article we will clearly see a biblical reference to an individual person being "one flesh" with many more than one other person. I know it sounds crazy, and you've probably never heard it mentioned. However, it is in the Bible. In fact, it's in the New Testament and you've probably read it before. You've probably just never stopped to think about it.

According to Yandian,

Throughout the Bible, the cornerstone of the family is the one-flesh, one-man-for-one-woman marriage relationship.

Marriage is indeed a cornerstone. However, for many of the mighty men of faith whom we all admire, the traditional American/Roman ideal for marriage is not what we see.

We see celibacy as being acceptable to God. We see monogamous marriage as acceptable to God. And we also see multiple partner marriages as acceptable.

In fact, the twelve tribes of Israel were the product of a "non-traditional" family that included one father and four mothers. The offspring of that polygamous relationship led to the coming of our chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ. **H**

An excerpt taken from B.A. Berean's excellent book, *Why Do You Believe That?* (see ad on page 93).



Bible Polygamy

Biblepolygamy.com features the straightforward teaching ministry of Brian Kelson. Here is a sampling of many topics found:

- Why teach the truth of Polygamy?
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- Polygamist men and women in the Bible
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When the apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians he had been painted in a negative light by those opposing him. His apostleship had been put in question, his gospel had been ridiculed and his person had been defamed.

Paul's vigorous appeal to his friends was ultimately ignored and in his last letter to Timothy we read that "all in Asia had turned away from him." ... This very Paul warned that in the last days, sound doctrine would not be endured and Christians would ever learn but never acknowledge the truth.

Many attempts will be made to discolor the truth of polygamy, but this site appeals to all readers to examine the Word of God against popular theology.

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