

The Assembly of Eloah

This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent -- Jesus Christ. Jn. 17:3

The Seventh Commandment

Exo 20:14 ESV "You shall not commit adultery".

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Edition1

The concept of adultery is examined as it pertains to the Law of God and proper worship of the One True God.



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The seventh commandment

Exo 20:14 ESV "You shall not commit adultery.

Deu 5:18 ESV "And you shall not commit adultery.

SHD 5003 *na' aph*, is used for the physical act of adultery and also figuratively as an act of apostatizing.

This concept is seen in the references to Israel as an adulterous bride. Idolatry and adultery are spiritual concepts that have a physical manifestation that refers back to a spiritual structure.

Jer 3:6-10 ESV Y^ehovah [the LORD] said to me in the days of King Josiah: "Have you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and there played the whore? (7) And I thought, 'After she has done all this she will return to me,' but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. (8) She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. (9) Because she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree. (10) Yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but in pretense, declares Y^ehovah [the LORD]."

Jer 5:7 ESV "How can I pardon you? Your children have forsaken me and have sworn by those who are no gods. When I fed them to the full, they committed adultery and trooped to the houses of whores.

Jer 7:8-12 ESV "Behold, you trust in deceptive words to no avail. (9) Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, (10) and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, 'We are delivered!'--only to go on doing all these abominations? (11) Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares Y^ehovah [the LORD]. (12) Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it because of the evil of my people Israel.

Jer 23:13-15 ESV In the prophets of Samaria I saw an unsavory thing: they prophesied by Baal and led my people Israel astray. (14) But in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: they commit adultery and walk in lies; they strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns from his evil; all of them have become like Sodom to me, and its inhabitants like Gomorrah." (15) Therefore thus says Y^ehovah [the LORD] of hosts concerning the prophets: "Behold, I will feed them with bitter food and give them poisoned water to drink, for from the prophets of Jerusalem ungodliness has gone out into all the land."

Jer 29:22-23 ESV Because of them this curse shall be used by all the exiles from Judah in Babylon: " Y^ehovah [the LORD] make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire," (23) because they have done an outrageous thing in Israel, they have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, and they have spoken in my name lying words that I did not command them.

I am the one who knows, and I am witness, declares Y^ehovah [the LORD]."

Eze 16:30-38 ESV "How sick is your heart, declares the Adonay Y^ehovih [Lord GOD], because you did all these things, the deeds of a brazen prostitute, (31) building your vaulted chamber at the head of every street, and making your lofty place in every square. Yet you were not like a prostitute, because you scorned payment. (32) Adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! (33) Men give gifts to all prostitutes, but you gave your gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from every side with your whorings. (34) So you were different from other women in your whorings. No one solicited you to play the whore, and you gave payment, while no payment was given to you; therefore you were different. (35) "Therefore, O prostitute, hear the word of Y^ehovah [the LORD]: (36) Thus says the Adonay Yehovih [Lord GOD], Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your whorings with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children that you gave to them, (37) therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved and all those you hated. I will gather them against you from every side and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness. (38) And I will judge you as women who commit adultery and shed blood are judged, and bring upon you the blood of wrath and jealousy.

Eze 23:36-49 ESV Y^ehovah [the LORD] said to me: "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Declare to them their abominations. (37) For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. With their idols they have

committed adultery, and they have even offered up to them for food the children whom they had borne to me. (38) Moreover, this they have done to me: they have defiled my sanctuary on the same day and profaned my Sabbaths. (39) For when they had slaughtered their children in sacrifice to their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it. And behold, this is what they did in my house. (40) They even sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and behold, they came. For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments. (41) You sat on a stately couch, with a table spread before it on which you had placed my incense and my oil. (42) The sound of a carefree multitude was with her; and with men of the common sort, drunkards were brought from the wilderness; and they put bracelets on the hands of the women, and beautiful crowns on their heads. (43) "Then I said of her who was worn out by adultery, Now they will continue to use her for a whore, even her! (44) For they have gone in to her, as men go in to a prostitute. Thus they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, lewd women! (45) But righteous men shall pass judgment on them with the sentence of adulteresses, and with the sentence of women who shed blood, because they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands." (46) For thus says Adonay Yehovih [the Lord GOD]: "Bring up a vast host against them, and make them an object of terror and a plunder. (47) And the host shall stone them and cut them down with their swords. They shall kill their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses. (48) Thus will I put an end to lewdness in the land, that all women may take warning and not commit lewdness as you have done. (49) And they shall return your lewdness upon you, and you shall

bear the penalty for your sinful idolatry, and you shall know that I am Adonay Yehovih [the Lord GOD]."

Hos 2:1-13 ESV Say to your brothers, "You are my people," and to your sisters, "You have received mercy." (2) "Plead with your mother, plead-- for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband-- that she put away her whoring from her face, and her adultery from between her breasts; (3) lest I strip her naked and make her as in the day she was born, and make her like a wilderness, and make her like a parched land, and kill her with thirst. (4) Upon her children also I will have no mercy, because they are children of whoredom. (5) For their mother has played the whore; she who conceived them has acted shamefully. For she said, 'I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.' (6) Therefore I will hedge up her way with thorns, and I will build a wall against her, so that she cannot find her paths. (7) She shall pursue her lovers but not overtake them, and she shall seek them but shall not find them. Then she shall say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, for it was better for me than than now.' (8) And she did not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the wine, and the oil, and who lavished on her silver and gold, which they used for Baal. (9) Therefore I will take back my grain in its time, and my wine in its season, and I will take away my wool and my flax, which were to cover her nakedness. (10) Now I will uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and no one shall rescue her out of my hand. (11) And I will put an end to all her mirth, her feasts, her new moons, her Sabbaths, and all her appointed feasts. (12) And I will lay waste her vines and her fig trees, of which she said, 'These are my wages, which my lovers have given me.' I will make them a

forest, and the beasts of the field shall devour them. (13) And I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals when she burned offerings to them and adorned herself with her ring and jewelry, and went after her lovers and forgot me, declares Y^ehovah [the LORD].

Hos 4:1-6 ESV Hear the word of Y^ehovah [the LORD], O children of Israel, for Y^ehovah [the LORD] has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of Elohim [God] in the land; (2) there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. (3) Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens, and even the fish of the sea are taken away. (4) Yet let no one contend, and let none accuse, for with you is my contention, O priest. (5) You shall stumble by day; the prophet also shall stumble with you by night; and I will destroy your mother. (6) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your Elohim [God], I also will forget your children.

Hos 4:12-19 ESV My people inquire of a piece of wood, and their walking staff gives them oracles. For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray, and they have left their Elohim [God] to play the whore. (13) They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains and burn offerings on the hills, under oak, poplar, and terebinth, because their shade is good. Therefore your daughters play the whore, and your brides commit adultery. (14) I will not punish your daughters when they play the whore, nor your brides when they commit adultery; for the men themselves go aside

with prostitutes and sacrifice with cult prostitutes, and a people without understanding shall come to ruin. (15) Though you play the whore, O Israel, let not Judah become guilty. Enter not into Gilgal, nor go up to Beth-aven, and swear not, "As Y^ehovah [the LORD] lives." (16) Like a stubborn heifer, Israel is stubborn; can Y^ehovah [the LORD] now feed them like a lamb in a broad pasture? (17) Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone. (18) When their drink is gone, they give themselves to whoring; their rulers dearly love shame. (19) A wind has wrapped them in its wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

Hos 10:1-6 ESV Israel is a luxuriant vine that yields its fruit. The more his fruit increased, the more altars he built; as his country improved, he improved his pillars. (2) Their heart is false; now they must bear their guilt. Y^ehovah [the LORD] will break down their altars and destroy their pillars. (3) For now they will say: "We have no king, for we do not fear Y^ehovah [the LORD]; and a king--what could he do for us?" (4) They utter mere words; with empty oaths they make covenants; so judgment springs up like poisonous weeds in the furrows of the field. (5) The inhabitants of Samaria tremble for the calf of Beth-aven. Its people mourn for it, and so do its idolatrous priests-- those who rejoiced over it and over its glory-- for it has departed from them. (6) The thing itself shall be carried to Assyria as tribute to the great king. Ephraim shall be put to shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his idol.

Zep 1:1-7 ESV The word of Y^ehovah [the LORD] that came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah. (2) "I will utterly sweep away everything from the

face of the earth," declares Y^ehovah [the LORD]. (3) "I will sweep away man and beast; I will sweep away the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, and the rubble with the wicked. I will cut off mankind from the face of the earth," declares Y^ehovah [the LORD]. (4) "I will stretch out my hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal and the name of the idolatrous priests along with the priests, (5) those who bow down on the roofs to the host of the heavens, those who bow down and swear to Y^ehovah [the LORD] and yet swear by Milcom, (6) those who have turned back from following Y^ehovah [the LORD], who do not seek Y^ehovah [the LORD] or inquire of him." (7) Be silent before the Adonay Y^ehovah [Lord GOD]! For the day of Y^ehovah [the LORD] is near; Y^ehovah [the LORD] has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests.

Israel has committed idolatry and adultery against their Elohim Y^ehovah since they were delivered from bondage in Egypt. They are likened to an adulterous wife. They have violated the covenant relationship and sought relationships with a myriad of other gods.

We were all joined to the Father through His spirit upon our baptism. This is representative of the relationship between the husband and wife as they are joined as one flesh. The marital contract is sealed with a portion of that spirit in the same way one receives a down payment of the holy spirit upon baptism.

1Co 6:15-20 ESV 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 prostitute? Never! (16) Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." (17) But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. (18) Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. (19) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from Theos [God]? You are not your own, (20) for you were bought with a price. So glorify Ho Theos [God] in your body.

Marriage

Public witness to mutual consent and pledges of troth: these are the things that make a marriage.

The integrity of the whole moral argument of the ten commandments begins to stand out even more clearly in this. The mystery of making and keeping a pledge of loyalty, a promise, to God, to a spouse; the taking of the name of God in a solemn oath: these are the things upon which the moral law is built. These are the foundations of society. These are the things that are kept alive and in force by the inflicting of penalties for breaking them. Promises, vows, pledges, loyalties all vanish if they are broken with impunity. Society turns on keeping pledges and punishing violations. Credit is an extension of the principal into the business world. The contract is established by a spoken word, and is no better than that word. The bond of loyalty or the effect of a pledge lies in what we might call the spirit world: it has no shape or weight or size; it cannot be touched, seem, or heard. But it controls human life.

What an adulterer does is break a particular solemn vow. By this act he tramples upon marriage itself, mocks God and society, and figuratively tosses that particular promise into the trash can, making it of no value.¹

Marriage is the foundation of society. It contains all of the elements of the spiritual structure Y^ehovah created. There is a husband, a bride, a head and members of the single body called family.

The covenant between a husband and wife is a contract between the man, the woman and The One True God, Y^ehovah. It is critical to the success of the human race.

Marriage is also representative of the structure of the spiritual realm as well. Israel was a bride to Y^ehovah.

Jer 2:2 ESV "Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says Y^ehovah [the LORD], "I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown.

Jer 2:32 ESV Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number.

Jer 3:20 ESV Surely, as a treacherous wife leaves her husband, so have you been treacherous to me, O house of Israel, declares Y^ehovah [the LORD]."

Marriage is a covenant.

¹ Institutes of Biblical Law, Rousas John Rushdoony, Volume I, page 337, quoting T. R. Ingram, The World Under God's Law p. 84.

Mal 2:13-16 ESV And this second thing you do. You cover Y^ehovah's [the LORD's] altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. (14) But you say, "Why does he not?" Because Y^ehovah [the LORD] was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. (15) Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one Elohim [God] seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. (16) "For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says Y^ehovah [the LORD], the Elohim [God] of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says Y^ehovah [the LORD] of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."

God Almighty created the marriage covenant. He makes them one flesh through the marriage relationship and provides a portion of His spirit for the union. As a result the children are sanctified.

1Co 7:1-17 ESV Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." (2) But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. (3) The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. (4) For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. (5) Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come

together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (6) Now as a concession, not a command, I say this. (7) I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from Theos [God], one of one kind and one of another. (8) To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am. (9) But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (10) To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband (11) (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. (12) To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. (13) If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. (14) For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. (15) But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. (16) For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? (17) Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches.

Godly offspring are the result of this marital union. Y^ehovah's spirit involved in the union and he is the principal in the contract.

The marriage covenant falls under the trust relationship created with the children of Israel. This covenant has the creator Eloah as the executor or creator of the trust. The angelic host were charged with managing the trust.

Psa 91:11-12 ESV For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. (12) On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.

Gal 3:19 ESV Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.

Heb 1:13-14 ESV And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"? (14) Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Mat 18:2-10 ESV And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them (3) and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (4) Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (5) "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, (6) but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. (7) "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! (8) And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than

with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. (9) And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire. (10) "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.

The loyal angels of Y^ehovah minister or take care of human beings. From Matthew 18 we see that the angels assigned to children are before God the Father continually. They intercede on their behalf and petition the Father for their sakes.

The angelic host act as trustees in the covenant trust. Humanity are the beneficiaries of the trust. We benefit from all of creation. It was created for us. Even the Sabbath was created for our sakes.

Mar 2:27 ESV And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

The fallen host have breached the trust and are judged by the actions of Messiah.

Yehovah established the marriage covenant from the beginning.

Gen 2:18 ESV Then the Y^ehovah Elohim [LORD God] said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

Gen 2:20-24 ESV The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. (21) So the Y^ehovah

Elohim [LORD God] caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. (22) And the rib that the Y^ehovah Elohim [LORD God] had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. (23) Then the man said, "This at last is 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 his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Monogamy

From the beginning it is clear that Y^ehovah's intent was that one man and one woman join in the marital relationship. One woman was created from and for one man.

Gen 2:19-24 ESV Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. (20) The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. (21) So the Y^ehovah Elohim [LORD God] caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. (22) And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. (23) Then the man said, "This at last is 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 his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

We see this principal carried over into the church.

Mat 19:4-5 ESV 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'?"

1Ti 3:2-3 ESV Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, (3) not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

Polygamy is tolerated in the Law of God but the clear standard established by the creation ordinance and laid down by the Apostle Paul for members of the body of Christ in monogamy. Polygamy was generally only acceptable with the permission of the wife or wives.

The marriage is a covenant and the breach of the covenant through the act of adultery strikes at the very fabric of society, the family. Adultery destroys the family and in it there is no honor.

Pro 6:32-35 ESV He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself. (33) He will get wounds and dishonor, and his disgrace will not be wiped away. (34) For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge. (35) He will accept no compensation; he will refuse though you multiply gifts.

Adultery begins in the mind

All sin starts with the thought taking hold in the mind.

Mat 15:18-20 ESV But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and

this defiles a person. (19) For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. (20) These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone."

Mar 7:20-23 ESV And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. (21) For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, (22) coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. (23) All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

2Co 10:4-6 ESV For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. (5) We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of Ho Theos [God], and take every thought captive to obey Christ, (6) being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

Rom 8:6-7 ESV For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. (7) For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to Ho Theos [God], for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

Our thoughts lead to action. The "spiritual intent" of the law deals with this reality. No longer is it ok to obey merely the letter of the law but we now have to obey the spiritual aspect of the law which occurs in the mind.

Jesus addressed this with his disciples.

Mat 5:27-32 ESV "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' (28) But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his

heart. (29) If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. (30) And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. (31) "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' (32) But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

The thoughts lead to action. If we don't control our thoughts then they can grow. As they grow they manifest themselves outwardly in action. Negative thoughts into negative action and positive into positive. The unchecked negative thoughts lead to sin. By giving Satan the opportunity to influence us we err.

Eph 4:26-27 ESV Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, (27) and give no opportunity to the devil.

Jas 4:7 ESV Submit yourselves therefore to Ho Theos [God]. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Divorce and Remarriage

El Shadday has divorced Israel.

Isa 50:1 ESV Thus says Y^ehovah [the LORD]: "Where is your mother's certificate of divorce [*k^eri ythu th*], with which I sent her away [*sha lach*]? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities you were sold, and for your transgressions your mother was sent away.

Jer 3:6-8 ESV Y^ehovah [The LORD] said to me in the days of King Josiah: "Have you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and there played the whore? (7) And I thought, 'After she has done all this she will return to me,' but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. (8) She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away [sha lach] with a decree of divorce [*k^eri ythu th*]. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore.

Y^ehovah divorced Israel for her adulteries in following false gods.

However, He hates divorce...

Mal 2:16 ESV "For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says Y^ehovah [the LORD], the Elohim [God] of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the Y^ehovah tsa ba ' [LORD of hosts]. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless."

...but He allowed it due to the hardness of our hearts.

Mat 19:8 ESV 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.

The Hebrew term for divorce is *k^eri ythu th* pronounced *ker-ee-thooth'*.

Deu 24:1 ESV "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce [*k^eri ythu th*] and puts it in her hand and sends [sha lach] her out of his house, and she departs out of his house,

Notice the three-step process.

1. A certificate of divorce is written.
2. It is given to the woman.
3. She is sent out of the house.

Simply sending her out of the house (shalach) is not enough for the marriage to be dissolved.

The Pharisees tried to entrap Jesus by posing the divorce question to him. Their question stemmed from their corruption of Deuteronomy 24:1.

Mat 19:3-12 ESV And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce [apoluo] 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 Ho Theos [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 [apostasion] and to send her away [apoluo]?" (8) He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce [[apoluo] your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. (9) And I say to you: whoever divorces [apoluo] his wife, except for sexual immorality [porneia] , and marries another, commits adultery." (10) The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry." (11) But he said to them, "Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. (12) For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of

heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it."

Mat 19:9 KJV And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away [apoluo] his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away [apoluo] doth commit adultery.

Luk 16:15-18 ESV And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but Theos [God] knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of Ho Theos [God]. (16) "The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of Ho Theos [God] is preached, and everyone forces his way into it. (17) But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void. (18) "Everyone who divorces [apoluo] his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced [apoluo] from her husband commits adultery.

There are three points in the above verses that we will expound upon.

1. Porneia

The term "sexual immorality" is the Greek word *porneia*. This term is not simply adultery but includes many other acts as well. Scholars disagree on exactly what falls under the definition of *porneia* but they do agree that it encompasses more than adultery alone.

Rushdoony in Volume I of his Institutes of Biblical Law discusses the subject in-depth in pages 401-415. Suffice it to say that the exact answer is somewhat ambiguous. It certainly covers many different sexual acts but may also refer

to a rebellion and refusal to obey as in the sense of the following verses.

Mat 12:38-45 ESV Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." (39) But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. (40) For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (41) The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. (42) The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. (43) "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. (44) Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. (45) Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this evil generation."

Mat 16:1-4 ESV And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. (2) He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' (3) And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. (4) An evil and adulterous

generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So he left them and departed.

Mar 8:33-38 ESV But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of Ho Theos [God], but on the things of man." (34) And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. (35) For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. (36) For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? (37) For what can a man give in return for his soul? (38) For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mar 10:2-12 ESV And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" (3) He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" (4) They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away." (5) And Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. (6) But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' (7) 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, (8) and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. (9) What therefore Ho Theos [God] has joined together, let not man separate." (10) And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. (11) And he said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries

another commits adultery against her, (12) and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

While the Pharisees may indeed have been committing the physical act of adultery an act of a spiritual nature is much more plausible.

Some scholars hold that a wife who doesn't love her husband, rebels against her husband or refuses to obey her husband is guilty of *porneia* and therefore a divorce is permitted.

Israel committed adultery and Yehovah divorced her.

Jer 3:8-9 ESV She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. (9) Because she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree.

Obviously this is not referring to the physical act of adultery but to idolatry with false gods.

James wrote to the twelve tribes in the dispersion about the problems amongst them. He called them an adulterous generation just as Jesus did with the Pharisees.

Jas 4:1-10 ESV What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? (2) You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. (3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. (4) You adulterous people! Do you not know that

friendship with the world is enmity with Ho Theos [God]? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of Ho Theos [God]. (5) Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? (6) But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "Ho Theos [God] opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (7) Submit yourselves therefore to Ho Theos [God]. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (8) Draw near to Ho Theos [God], and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (9) Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. (10) Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

There are many acts that fall under the definition of adultery.

1. Swearing to false gods (Jer. 5:7)
2. Idolatry (Eze. 16:36; 23:37)
3. Human Sacrifice (Eze. 16:36; 23:37)

The "adulterous generation" rebels against the One True God; they corrupt His Law and teach as doctrine the commandments of men. They oppress the poor, orphans and widows and dishonor parents.

These acts are all "adulterous" against the principals of Y^ehovah. It appears that *porneia* includes many of these behaviors but it is uncertain as to the exact description of the word. Anyone who divorces [*apoluo*] his wife for anything except these behaviors **and** marries another commits adultery.

2. Apoluo

Apoluo is the Greek term for "put away". This term is not the same as the term used for divorce which is *apostasion*. One can see the distinction made between the two.

Mat 19:7 ESV They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce [*apostasion*] and to send her away [*apoluo*]?"

The Hebrew counterpart for the Greek term *apostasion* [divorce] is *k^eri ythu th*. The Hebrew counterpart for the Greek term *apoluo* [put away] is *shalach*.

Jesus never changed the law of Deuteronomy 24:1 and the process described therein still stands. What he is telling the Pharisees is that is a man puts away or separates [*apoluo*] from his wife and marries another commits adultery.

The problem here is that the certificate of divorce is not written and given to her! The man is still married to his wife unless these requirements are fulfilled! There is no *apostasion* just because there is *apoluo*. One must have both the *shalach* **and** the *ker-ee-thooth'*.

Marriage is a physical representation of the spiritual relationship one has with his/her creator. The loyalty in marriage is equated with the faithfulness in the relationship between God the Father and His children. This is why divorce is considered such an offense.

Divorce does violence because it tears the family asunder. The broken family is a prominent feature in today's society

and it is becoming more prominent all the time. Divorce destroys the family unit upon which society is built.

Divorce destroys the familial institution created by Y^ehovah and should be avoided to the extent one can avoid it. However, it is permitted in law due to the sinful nature and hardness of heart in humanity.

3. The term "except"

Mat 19:9 ESV And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."

Jesus stated to the Pharisees that it was unlawful to marry another woman while separated from a current wife. The divorce bill or certificate had to be provided and given to the wife first. He then gave an exception clause.

In the text it seems that if the wife were to commit one of the acts encompassed in the term *porneia* and the husband put her away or separated from here that he would then be free to marry another. This seems strange to our way of thinking but when examined it makes perfect sense.

In essence and in reality the marriage covenant is a legal trust. A trust is, in principle, a very simple concept. A trust is a private legal arrangement where the ownership of someone's assets (which might include property, shares or cash) is transferred to someone else (usually, in practice, not just one person, but a small group of people or a trust

company) to look after and use to benefit a third person (or group of people).

As creator of everything belongs to Y^ehovah.

Exo 19:5-6 ESV Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; (6) and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

Lev 25:23 ESV "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine. For you are strangers and sojourners with me.

Job 41:11 ESV Who has first given to me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine.

Eze 18:2-4 ESV "What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'? (3) As I live, declares the Adonay Y^ehovih [Lord GOD], this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. (4) Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die.

Hag 2:8 ESV The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Y^ehovah tsa ba ' [LORD of hosts].

1Co 6:19-20 ESV Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from Theos [God]? You are not your own, (20) for you were bought with a price. So glorify Ho Theos [God] in your body.

Everything in the universe belongs to Y^ehovah. He allows us to use 90% of it for our own use and only requires 10% of it in return.

As creator and owner of all things he created the marriage contract which is in the form of a trust. As creator of the trust he provides his property for use by the beneficiaries in the trust. As creator of the trust He is also the grantor or executor of the trust.

The husband and wife reap the benefits of the trust. They share themselves with one another for their mutual benefit. They share in the children which are a product or asset of the trust.

The husband and wife are also the trustees who have the responsibility to look after or manage the trust. The trust can be mismanaged and often leads to the dissolution of the contract.

In the case of *porneia* there is a breach of trust. This breach of trust is apparently enough to provide for a defacto divorce and the wife that is put away is divorced. This is why Jesus provided the exception.

Penalty for adultery

Lev 20:10 ESV "If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

The sin of adultery resulted in a death penalty. Adulterers were to be taken out and stoned to death.

Jesus showed that this penalty was no longer in force and the sin of adultery was a forgivable offense.

Joh 8:3-11 ESV The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been

caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst (4) they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. (5) Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" (6) This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. (7) And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." (8) And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. (9) But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. (10) Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" (11) She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."]]

While adultery may be forgiven one must cease to be an adulterer or they will lose their reward.

Gal 5:19-26 ESV Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, (21) envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (24) And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (25) If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. (26) Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

God's wrath will not be spared on the sexually immoral.

Col 3:4-6 ESV When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (5) Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. (6) On account of these the wrath of Ho Theos [God] is coming.

Adultery strikes at the heart of what should be the most loving relationship outside of one's relationship with God Almighty. Marriage is a relationship based on trust. The wife trusts that the husband will care for her and ensure her safety and wellbeing as the head of the house. The husband trusts that the wife will care for the household and the children. He trusts that she will bring his name honor. Both the husband and the wife trust that the marital bed will remain secure between the two of them. Adultery is an egregious violation of that trust and the responsibility of the adulterer in the covenant relationship.

Heb 13:4-5 ESV Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for Ho Theos [God] will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. (5) Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Adultery a breach of the 2nd great commandment

Rom 13:8-10 ESV Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one 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 covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (10) Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

An adulterer murders the trust in the marital relationship.; steals the peace and security of their spouse; covets another's spouse or someone other than their spouse. This is obviously symbolic but true nonetheless.

Fidelity in marriage is an outward manifestation of the heart. Salvation requires both faith and works. Adultery is an affront to both. It's an action against faith as it shows one's attitude toward faithfulness and loyalty. These two are both required by Y^ehovah. It is obviously not a justifiable work as it brings with it a death penalty.

Jas 2:10-26 ESV For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. (11) For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. (12) So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. (13) For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. (14) What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? (15) If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, (16) and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? (17) So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (18) But someone will say, "You

have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (19) You believe that Theos [God] is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder! (20) Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? (21) Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? (22) You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; (23) and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed Ho Theos [God], and it was counted to him as righteousness"--and he was called a friend of Theos [God]. (24) You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. (25) And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? (26) For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

Adultery and inheritance

Inheritance always passes through the males of the family. The eldest son was the primary benefactor of the inheritance.

Gen 48:11-20 ESV And Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face; and behold, Elohim [God] has let me see your offspring also." (12) Then Joseph removed them from his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. (13) And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him. (14) And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands (for Manasseh was the

firstborn). (15) And he blessed Joseph and said, "The Elohim [God] before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day, (16) the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the boys; and in them let my name be carried on, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." (17) When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, and he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. (18) And Joseph said to his father, "Not this way, my father; since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head." (19) But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations." (20) So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying, 'Elohim [God] make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.'" Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

The firstborn son was to receive a double portion of the inheritance.

Deu 21:15-17 ESV "If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him children, and if the firstborn son belongs to the unloved, (16) then on the day when he assigns his possessions as an inheritance to his sons, he may not treat the son of the loved as the firstborn in preference to the son of the unloved, who is the firstborn, (17) but he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the firstfruits of his strength. The right of the firstborn is his.

Y^ehovah's system preserved the family's allotment and inheritance. These allotments were made by familial tribes. The head of the family was responsible for managing the family assets and ensuring it was meted out appropriately.

The firstborn, as we have seen, was to receive a double portion of the inheritance. This benefit came with responsibility to care for the elderly parents and take over the managing of the family properties. This birthright is a serious matter and is not to be taken lightly. Esau disrespected his birthright and was considered profane as a result.

Gen 25:31-34 ESV Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright now." (32) Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" (33) Jacob said, "Swear to me now." So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. (34) Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

Disrespect of one's birthright is an unholy act.

Heb 12:15-17 ESV See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of Ho Theos [God]; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; (16) that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. (17) For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.

Esau did indeed lament the judgment error he committed.

Gen 27:30-41 ESV As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, when Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of

Isaac his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting. (31) He also prepared delicious food and brought it to his father. And he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me." (32) His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." (33) Then Isaac trembled very violently and said, "Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me, and I ate it all before you came, and I have blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed." (34) As soon as Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry and said to his father, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" (35) But he said, "Your brother came deceitfully, and he has taken away your blessing." (36) Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." Then he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" (37) Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Behold, I have made him lord over you, and all his brothers I have given to him for servants, and with grain and wine I have sustained him. What then can I do for you, my son?" (38) Esau said to his father, "Have you but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. (39) Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: "Behold, away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling be, and away from the dew of heaven on high. (40) By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; but when you grow restless you shall break his yoke from your neck." (41) Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

Esau disregarded his birthright and sold it. His birthright as the firstborn was to receive the double portion of the inheritance. Notice that Esau gave up his right as the firstborn of the double portion but Jacob deceitfully stole his blessing. Esau blamed him for both even though he was culpable for the loss of his birthright.

Reuben lost his birthright for his evil acts against his father Jacob.

Gen 35:22 ESV While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine. And Israel heard of it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.

1Ch 5:1-2 ESV The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's couch, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he could not be enrolled as the oldest son; (2) though Judah became strong among his brothers and a chief came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph),

Joseph received the birthright as a result of Reuben's sin against his father. That birthright passed to Ephraim and Manasseh as Jacob's adopted sons.

Gen 48:3-20 ESV And Jacob said to Joseph, "El Shadday [God Almighty] appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, (4) and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a company of peoples and will give this land to your offspring after you for an everlasting possession.' (5) And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are.

(6) And the children that you fathered after them shall be yours. They shall be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. (7) As for me, when I came from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan on the way, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)." (8) When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" (9) Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." And he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." (10) Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. So Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. (11) And Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face; and behold, God has let me see your offspring also." (12) Then Joseph removed them from his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. (13) And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him. (14) And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands (for Manasseh was the firstborn). (15) And he blessed Joseph and said, "The Elohim [God] before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the Elohim [God] who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day, (16) the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the boys; and in them let my name be carried on, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." (17) When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, and he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. (18) And Joseph said to

his father, "Not this way, my father; since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head." (19) But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations." (20) So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying, 'Elohim [God] make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.'" Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

The birthright promises were given to the sons of Joseph but in order to maintain the integrity of the rights of the firstborn they had to be adopted by Israel as his own sons. This right of the firstborn was removed from Reuben and given to Joseph.

The birthright of the firstborn can be removed in the case where the son refuses to honor his father. It is incumbent upon all of you firstborn sons to honor your fathers and ensure you are acting to the will of Y^ehovah. The birthright is the passing of the baton from the patriarch of the family to the next generation which will become the next patriarch for the family. Do NOT forsake your birthright and become unholy through your actions.

The inheritance issue was so critically important that Y^ehovah provided a means to perpetuate the family name in the event a man died with no son.

Deu 25:5-10 ESV "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the

duty of a husband's brother to her. (6) And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. (7) And if the man does not wish to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.' (8) Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him, and if he persists, saying, 'I do not wish to take her,' (9) then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face. And she shall answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.' (10) And the name of his house shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal pulled off.'

The inheritance lines were to be protected so that a family's inheritance could never be removed. The Jubilee system was designed to protect the familial property so the inheritance could never be removed.

Lev 25:9-17 ESV Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. (10) And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan. (11) That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of itself nor gather the grapes from the undressed vines. (12) For it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you. You may eat the produce of the field. (13) "In this year of jubilee each of you

shall return to his property. (14) And if you make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not wrong one another. (15) You shall pay your neighbor according to the number of years after the jubilee, and he shall sell to you according to the number of years for crops. (16) If the years are many, you shall increase the price, and if the years are few, you shall reduce the price, for it is the number of the crops that he is selling to you. (17) You shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your Elohim [God], for I am Y^ehovah [the LORD] your Elohim [God].

Y^ehovah established the protocol for managing the inheritance when a man's inheritance can't be passed to a son.

Num 27:8-12 ESV And you shall speak to the people of Israel, saying, 'If a man dies and has no son, then you shall transfer his inheritance to his daughter. (9) And if he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. (10) And if he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father's brothers. (11) And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the nearest kinsman of his clan, and he shall possess it. And it shall be for the people of Israel a statute and rule, as Y^ehovah [the LORD] commanded Moses.'" (12) Y^ehovah [the LORD] said to Moses, "Go up into this mountain of Abarim and see the land that I have given to the people of Israel.

The inheritance ensures the family's ability to provide for itself from generation to generation. The family lines were to remain intact. This is why it is illegal for a man to divorce a woman and then, after she has been remarried and divorced a second time, then to marry her once more.

Deu 24:1-4 ESV "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, (2) and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, (3) and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, (4) then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before Y^ehovah [the LORD]. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that Y^ehovah [the LORD] your Elohim is giving you for an inheritance.

If a man marries the divorced woman how can he be sure she is not with child from the second husband? If she were, then a son could be born, the son of the second husband, that would inherit the man's property. This is not allowed in Israel.

Jer 3:1 ESV "If a man divorces his wife and she goes from him and becomes another man's wife, will he return to her? Would not that land be greatly polluted? You have played the whore with many lovers; and would you return to me? declares Y^ehovah [the LORD].

Conclusion

From the beginning it was intended for one man and one woman to be joined in the marital relationship that is bonded by a portion of the spirit of Y^ehovah. The purpose of this relationship was to produce godly children.

The family unit is the basis of society and it has a responsibility to produce offspring that follow Y^ehovah as their parents are supposed to teach them. When the family unit is attacked the ability for it to produce offspring to Yehovah is diminished.

In this sense adultery strikes at the very building blocks of a moral society. As society loses its moral compass any blessing from Yehovah becomes impossible. In fact, the cursings, as promised, will ensue.

Polygamy and the broken family unit confuse the inheritance lines and can lead to family property being removed from one family and placed under the name of the other.

Marriage is a sacred institution created by God Almighty. Just as He requires obedience and faith in Israel's relationship with Him as His bride; and just as faith and obedience are required of the body of Jesus the Christ as his bride; we are expected to keep the marital union sacred and intact through our faithfulness in it.

The familial institution is seen throughout scripture in Y^ehovah's relationship with us. We see the husband/bride relationship and we see the Father/child relationship. Christ as His firstborn sits at His right hand as his birthright. Christ is our elder brother and we are sons of God Almighty. As such we participate in the inheritance of the kingdom under the rule of our elder brother.

Brethren, don't make the mistake of underestimating the seriousness of the sin of adultery. It can and has resulted in the destruction of the family unit which is holy to our God and Father.

We are the temple of God because His spirit resides in us from our baptism and the laying on of hands. We are required to keep that temple holy.

1Co 6:15-20 ESV 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 prostitute? Never! (16) Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." (17) But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. (18) Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. (19) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from Theos [God]? You are not your own, (20) for you were bought with a price. So glorify Ho Theos [God] in your body.

Amen Y^ehovah.