

What are Your Beliefs on the Practice of Polygamy or Plural Marriage?

This has always been a nagging question posed to us when we witness the Book of Mormon. It is unfortunate because we would much rather discuss the beautiful Gospel of Jesus Christ than something we do not believe in. In the Old Testament many of the Patriarchs and Kings of Israel did have many wives and concubines. Nowhere is it recorded that God ever commanded the practice. In each case the practice brought the people trouble, even complete ruin leading to Israel's captivity into Babylon. The Book of Mormon speaks plainly concerning this practice by the Patriarchs and Kings of old:

Jacob 2:32 For behold, thus saith the Lord, This people begin to wax in iniquity; they understand not the scriptures: for they seek to excuse themselves in committing whoredoms, because of the things which were written concerning David, and Solomon his son. 33 Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives, and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord,

In the Book of Jacob, the Nephites had read in the Brass Plates (Old Testament) about David, Solomon and others having many wives and concubines and mistakenly assumed God's tacit approval of the practice. Here through "Thus saith the Lord" direct revelation given to Jacob, God corrects this mistake and labels the practice a whoredom and an abomination to Him.

Jacob 2:36 Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none: For I, the Lord God, delighteth in the chastity of women. 37 And whoredoms are an abomination before me: thus saith the Lord of hosts. 38 Wherefore, this people shall keep my commandments, saith the Lord of hosts, or cursed be the land for their sakes. 39 For if I will, saith the Lord of hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people: otherwise, they shall hearken unto these things.

Again God commands the Nephites to have one wife and no concubines. Even the very concept of having an unmarried concubine is an affront to Christian belief. In verse 39 God is stating He is commanding them to have one wife and not give heed to "these things" which is referring to the mistakes of David and Solomon.

Mosiah 7:2 For behold, he did not keep the commandments of God, but he did walk after the desires of his own heart. 3 And he had many wives and concubines.

In this passage of the Book of Mormon an evil King named Noah (not to be confused with Noah of the Bible) disobeyed the commandments of God, laid heavy taxes on the people, practiced polygamy, had the true prophet Abinadi burned at the stake, and caused a civil war that led to the deaths of countless thousands.

Ether 4:48 - And it came to pass that Riplakish did not do that which was right in the sight of the Lord, for he did have many wives and concubines, and did lay that upon men's shoulders which was grievous to be borne; yea, he did tax them with heavy taxes; and with the taxes he did build many spacious buildings.

Again another person forcing heavy taxes, had many wives, and did many evils also leading to a civil war. There seems to be a consistent pattern here where men get into power, want to tax the people, want to fulfill their lusts by having many wives and concubines, and universally this leads to destruction. Not once is there a passage in the Book of Mormon that even remotely hints at this practice as being acceptable to God.

Jacob 2: 40 For behold, I, the Lord, have seen the sorrow, and heard the mourning of the daughters of my people in the land of Jerusalem; yea, and in all the lands of my people, because of the wickedness and abominations of their husbands.

One of the prime reasons why plural marriage is so wrong is the hurt and lost confidence this causes to their wives and children. Even since the 1800s to today accounts of plural marriage are very unhappy accounts. How is it even possible that a man can give the love and nurture to more than one wife and set of children that they naturally will need? Jacob addresses this and even states that the unbelieving Lamanites were more righteous than the Nephites because they still practiced having only one wife and loved their children. Before Joseph Smith's death he vehemently denied ever practicing this and excommunicated any who promoted this. The Church of Christ has never defended nor practiced this doctrine from the very beginning.