

To answer your question accurately according to both the **King James Version (KJV)** and the **Ethiopian Scriptures** (such as the *Book of Jubilees* and the *Kebra Nagast*), we must separate two distinct issues: **intermarriage with pagan/heathen nations** versus **polygamy within Israel**.

Both traditions draw a sharp line between these two scenarios.

1. Is the Lord Angry When Israelites Marry Foreign/Heathen Women?

Scriptural Answer: Yes, absolute divine wrath is attached to taking foreign, heathen wives.

Whether a man took one heathen wife or several, the act of marrying outside the covenant into pagan nations was condemned as a catastrophic sin.

A. The KJV Prescription

In the KJV, God strictly banned intermarriage with the heathen nations (the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Moabites, etc.). The danger was not racial; it was **spiritual pollution and idolatry**.

- **The Command:** *"Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly."* — **Deuteronomy 7:3–4**
- **The Historical Wrath (Ezra & Nehemiah):** After returning from Babylon, the men of Israel took heathen wives. Ezra wept, tore his garments, and declared that the wrath of God was upon the nation for this specific sin (*Ezra 9:1–4*). Nehemiah literally beat the men who had married heathen women, making them swear to put them away (*Nehemiah 13:23–27*).

B. The Ethiopian Scripture Perspective (*Book of Jubilees*)

The Ethiopian tradition is even more explicit and uncompromising on this rule. In **Jubilees 30:7–14**, taking a heathen wife is classified as a profanation of the holy seed, carrying the penalty of death:

"If there be any man who wishes in Israel to give his daughter or his sister to any man who is of the seed of the Gentiles, he shall surely die... for he hath wrought shame in Israel."

In the Ethiopian texts, Abraham gives strict orders to Isaac, and Rebekah commands Jacob, that under no circumstances may the sons of the promise take wives from the daughters of Canaan. When an Israelite went outside to the heathens, it was viewed as an act of treason against the covenant.

2. Was it Acceptable to Have More Than One Wife Within Israel?

Scriptural Answer: Yes, polygamy (polygyny) within the covenant was legally permitted and regulated, though it was not the original Edenic ideal.

Within both the KJV and Ethiopian scriptures, taking multiple wives **from among the daughters**

of Israel was allowed under the Mosaic Law and the Patriarchal customs.

A. How the Law Regulated Multiple Israelite Wives (KJV)

The Mosaic Law never banned a man from having more than one wife, provided they were Israelite women and he treated them with equal justice:

- **Provision for Multiple Wives:** *"If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish."* — **Exodus 21:10**
- **Prohibition Against Favoritism:** In **Deuteronomy 21:15–17**, the law explicitly addresses a man who has *"two wives, one beloved, and another hated."* The law forbids the husband from stripping the inheritance rights from the firstborn son of the "unloved" wife to give it to the favored wife's son.
- **The Mandatory Levirate Marriage:** Under **Deuteronomy 25:5–10**, if an Israelite man died without an heir, his brother was *commanded* to marry the widow to raise up seed for his brother—even if that brother already had a wife of his own.

B. The Ethiopian Scripture Tradition

In the Ethiopian Orthodox canon, polygamy in the Old Testament period is recognized as a tolerated historic reality for the patriarchs and kings (e.g., Jacob having Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, and Zilpah, who were all within the ancestral Hebrew lineage).

However, both the Ethiopian tradition and the KJV highlight a major distinction between **permission** and **perfection**:

1. **The Original Ideal:** Monogamy is established in Genesis 2:24 ("one flesh") as the original standard.
2. **The Practical Consequences:** Whenever polygamy appears in scripture—even within Israel—it inevitably brought domestic strife, rivalry, and family division (e.g., Hannah and Peninnah in 1\text{ Samuel }1, or the rivalry between Leah and Rachel in Genesis).

Summary Matrix

Marriage Type	Allowed Under KJV?	Allowed Under Ethiopian Scriptures?	Divine Reaction
Multiple Wives WITHIN Israel	Yes (Regulated by Law in Exodus 21 / Deut 21)	Yes (Tolerated for patriarchs/kings, though created family strife)	Permitted / Regulated (Not condemned as a sin, but brought natural turmoil).
Wives OUTSIDE Israel (Heathen/Pagan)	No (Strictly Forbidden in Deut 7)	No (Severe judgment in <i>Jubilees</i> 30)	Severe Divine Wrath (Leads to idolatry, judgment, and destruction).

The Lord's anger was not sparked by an Israelite man having more than one Israelite wife under the Old Covenant laws; His anger was ignited when Israelite men went **outside the covenant to foreign, heathen women**, which turned their hearts away to false gods.