

# Sex from a Biblical Perspective

Theresa Crabtree

The Bible has a lot of information to share on topics we normally consider “taboo.” I uncovered a lot of interesting stories, as well as the deeper meaning behind the laws as I studied the following Bible verses. Did you know that God told one of his prophets to marry a prostitute and have children? Although, some of the Old Testament laws are archaic, it is still good to know what Yahweh has to say about these topics. His views haven’t changed, although culturally, there have been many changes over time.

When God created humans, He endowed us with the gift of “free will,” the ability to make conscious choices, whether they are in alignment with His will for us or not. Since the beginning of life on earth, humans repeatedly fall into the traps of Satan. God responds with various measures to bring us back to Him. Although God is long-suffering, there are times when He needs to mete out a punishment to hopefully motivate us to get back in alignment. This is similar to how we often have to set down strict parameters when our children, close relationships, employees or criminals get out of line.

I mention this because I often hear people say they don’t want anything to do with the God of the Bible because He’s too strict. Yet, when one studies the Bible, it becomes clear that God loves us and wants us to know him. He is well aware of the agenda of Satan, who is going full force to lure people away from God. In addition, when one abides by God’s laws, much pain and suffering in the world can be avoided. For example, there would be a marked decrease in unwanted pregnancies, abortions, sexually transmitted disease, rape, divorce and incest if everyone followed God’s suggestions.

The Bible makes it clear that the only sex approved by God is between a man and his female wife. I have addressed this topic in the video “Marriage, Divorce, Polygamy: What does the Bible say?” Here’s the link to my YouTube channel where you can watch it, <https://www.youtube.com/c/TheresaCrabtree88/> There is also an accompanying document of Bible verses that you can read or download at: <https://www.theresacrabtree.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Marriage-Divorce-Polygamy-Bible-Verses.pdf> This link can also be accessed in the description of the YouTube video and on my website: <https://www.theresacrabtree.com/bible-studies/>

In this document, I have categorized the verses into eleven categories. Some of the Bible verses fall into more than one category. When this occurs, I have included the full text of the verse in just one category. Whereas just the scripture reference is listed in the other categories. This will make it easier if you want to focus on a specific topic for your study or to send to someone else. In most cases, within each category, the verses are presented in the order they are found in the Bible.

Before you watch the video or read the following scriptures, I highly encourage you to get into a prayerful state of mind and ask God, Yahweh, to show you the truth and how to apply it to your life. If you find that you are not in alignment with God’s will, acknowledge this and strive to make the necessary changes. I hope you find the following information to be of value! If you find anything that you feel is in error, let me know. Feel free to share this document others.

**ADULTERY** ~ Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:20; Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 5:18; Deuteronomy 22:22, 23-24; Proverbs 2:16-19; Proverbs 6:32-35; Proverbs 30:20; Jeremiah 5:7-9; Jeremiah 7:9-10; Jeremiah 13:27; Jeremiah 23:14; Jeremiah 29:20-23; Ezekiel 22:6-12; Matthew 5:27-32; Matthew 15:16-20; Matthew 19:3-9; Matthew 19:18; Mark 7:20-22; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; Luke 18:20; John 8:3-11; Romans 7:1-3; Romans 13:9; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Hebrews 13:4; James 2:11

**Leviticus 18:20** ~ “Do not defile yourself by having sexual intercourse with your neighbor’s wife.”

**Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18; Matthew 19:18, Luke 18:20** ~ “You must not commit adultery.”

**Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22** ~ “If a man is discovered committing adultery, both he and the woman must die. In this way, you will purge Israel of such evil.”

**Deuteronomy 22:23-24** ~ “Suppose a man meets a young woman, a virgin who is engaged to be married, and he has sexual intercourse with her. If this happens within a town, you must take both of them to the gates of that town and stone them to death. The woman is guilty because she did not scream for help. The man must die because he violated another man’s wife. In this way, you will purge this evil from among you.”

**Proverbs 6:32-35** ~ “But the man who commits adultery is an utter fool, for he destroys himself. He will be wounded and disgraced. His shame will never be erased. For the woman’s jealous husband will be furious, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge. He will accept no compensation, nor be satisfied with a payoff of any size.”

**Proverbs 30:20** ~ “An adulterous woman consumes a man, then wipes her mouth and says, “What’s wrong with that?”

**Jeremiah 5:7-9** ~ Message from the prophet Jeremiah to the citizens in Jerusalem  
“How can I pardon you? For even your children have turned from me. They have sworn by gods that are not gods at all! I fed my people until they were full. But they thanked me by committing adultery and lining up at the brothels. They are well-fed, lusty stallions, each neighing for his neighbor’s wife. Should I not punish them for this?” says the Lord. “Should I not avenge myself against such a nation?”

**Jeremiah 7:9-10** ~ “Do you really think you can steal, murder, commit adultery, lie, and burn incense to Baal and all those other new gods of yours, and then come here and stand before me in my Temple and chant, ‘We are safe!’—only to go right back to all those evils again?”

**Jeremiah 13:27** ~ “I have seen your adultery and lust, and your disgusting idol worship out in the fields and on the hills. What sorrow awaits you, Jerusalem! How long before you are pure?”

**Jeremiah 23:14** ~ “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.”

**Jeremiah 29:20-23** ~ “<sup>20</sup>Therefore, listen to this message from the Lord, all you captives there in Babylon. <sup>21</sup>This is what the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, the God of Israel, says about your prophets—Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah—who are telling you lies in my name: ‘I will turn them over to Nebuchadnezzar for execution before your eyes. <sup>22</sup>Their terrible fate will become proverbial, so that the Judean exiles will curse someone by saying, ‘May the Lord make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon burned alive!’ <sup>23</sup>For these men have done terrible things among my people. They have committed adultery with their neighbors’ wives and have lied in my name, saying things I did not command. I am a witness to this. I, the Lord, have spoken.”

**Matthew 5:27-32, Luke 16:18** ~ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. Furthermore, it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”

**Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12** ~ “The Pharisees also came to Him [Jesus], testing Him, and saying to Him, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?’ And He answered and said to them, ‘Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.’ They said to Him, ‘Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?’ He said to them, ‘Moses, because of your stubbornness, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.’”

**John 8:3-11** ~ “<sup>3</sup>As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd. <sup>4</sup>‘Teacher,’ they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. <sup>5</sup>The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?’ <sup>6</sup>They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. <sup>7</sup>They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, ‘All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!’ <sup>8</sup>Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust. <sup>9</sup>When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, ‘Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?’ <sup>11</sup>‘No, Lord,’ she said. And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I. Go and sin no more.’

**Romans 7:1-3** ~ “Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.”

**Romans 13:9** ~ “For the commandments say, “You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet.” These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

**Hebrews 13:4** ~ “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.”

\*\*\*\*\*

## **BESTIALITY** ~ Exodus 22:19; Leviticus 18:23; Leviticus 20:15-16; Deuteronomy 27:21

**Exodus 22:19** ~ “Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.”

**Leviticus 18:23** ~ “A man must not defile himself by having sex with an animal. And a woman must not offer herself to a male animal to have intercourse with it. This is a perverse act.”

**Leviticus 20:15-16** ~ “If a man has sex with an animal, he must be put to death, and the animal must be killed. If a woman presents herself to a male animal to have intercourse with it, she and the animal must both be put to death. You must kill both, for they are guilty of a capital offense.”

**Deuteronomy 27:21** ~ “Cursed be anyone who lies with any kind of animal. And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’”

\*\*\*\*\*

## **HOMOSEXUALITY** ~ 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:9-10; Genesis 19:1-38; Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13; Judges 19:16-24; Romans 1:24-27; Jude 1:7

The apostle Paul coined a new term by combining two words (arrhen = male) and (koite = bed), meaning two men in bed for sexual purposes. This word is translated into English as “homosexual.” The term is only used in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and 1 Timothy 1:9-10.

**1 Corinthians 6:9-10** ~ “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral (porne), nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who submit to (malakoi) or perform homosexual (arsenokoitai) acts, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor verbal abusers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.”  
The word (malakoi) means, “soft, delicate, effeminate.”

**1 Timothy 1:9-10** ~ “We realize that law is not enacted for the righteous, but for the lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinful, for the unholy and profane, for killers of father or mother, for murderers, for the

sexually immoral, for homosexuals (arsenokoitai), for slave traders and liars and perjurers, and for anyone else who is averse to sound teaching that agrees with the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.”

-----  
**Genesis 19:1-38** ~ This chapter gives an interesting, yet disturbing account of the rampant homosexuality in the city of Sodom (vs 4), and ending with incest to keep the family lineage.

**Leviticus 18:22** ~ “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.”

**Leviticus 20:13** ~ “If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.”

**Romans 1:24-27** ~ “Therefore, God gave them over in the desires of their hearts to impurity (akatharsian) for the dishonoring of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator, who is forever worthy of praise! For this reason, God gave them over to dishonorable passions/lust (pathē). Even their women exchanged natural relations/sexual intercourse (chrēsin) for unnatural ones. Likewise, the men abandoned natural relations (chrēsin) with women and burned with lust (orexei) for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.”

**Jude 1:7** ~ “Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.” Referring back to Genesis 19 and other Old Testament verses.”

\*\*\*\*\*

## **INCEST** ~ Leviticus 18:1-18; Leviticus 20:1-21

**Leviticus 18:1-18** ~ <sup>1</sup>“Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘I am the Lord your God. <sup>3</sup> According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances. <sup>4</sup> You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God. <sup>5</sup> You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord.

<sup>6</sup>“You must never have sexual relations with a close relative, for I am the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>“Do not violate your father by having sexual relations with your mother. She is your mother; you must not have sexual relations with her.

<sup>8</sup>“Do not have sexual relations with any of your father’s wives, for this would violate your father.

<sup>9</sup>“Do not have sexual relations with your sister or half-sister, whether she is your father’s daughter or your mother’s daughter, whether she was born into your household or someone else’s.

<sup>10</sup>“Do not have sexual relations with your granddaughter, whether she is your son’s daughter or your daughter’s daughter, for this would violate yourself.

<sup>11</sup>“Do not have sexual relations with your stepsister, the daughter of any of your father’s wives, for she is your sister.

<sup>12</sup>“Do not have sexual relations with your father’s sister, for she is your father’s close relative.

<sup>13</sup>“Do not have sexual relations with your mother’s sister, for she is your mother’s close relative.

<sup>14</sup>“Do not violate your uncle, your father’s brother, by having sexual relations with his wife, for she is your aunt.

<sup>15</sup>“Do not have sexual relations with your daughter-in-law; she is your son’s wife, so you must not have sexual relations with her.

<sup>16</sup>“Do not have sexual relations with your brother’s wife, for this would violate your brother.

<sup>17</sup> “Do not have sexual relations with both a woman and her daughter. And do not take her granddaughter, whether her son’s daughter or her daughter’s daughter, and have sexual relations with her. They are close relatives, and this would be a wicked act.

<sup>18</sup> “While your wife is living, do not marry her sister and have sexual relations with her, for they would be rivals.”

-----

**Leviticus 20:1-21** ~ The following are the punishments for those breaking the above-mentioned laws.

“The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> “Give the people of Israel these instructions, which apply both to native Israelites and to the foreigners living in Israel.<sup>8</sup> Keep all my decrees by putting them into practice, for I am the LORD who makes you holy.

<sup>11</sup> “If a man violates his father by having sex with one of his father’s wives, both the man and the woman must be put to death, for they are guilty of a capital offense.

<sup>12</sup> “If a man has sex with his daughter-in-law, both must be put to death. They have committed a perverse act and are guilty of a capital offense.

<sup>14</sup> “If a man marries both a woman and her mother, he has committed a wicked act. The man and both women must be burned to death to wipe out such wickedness from among you.

<sup>17</sup> “If a man marries his sister, the daughter of either his father or his mother, and they have sexual relations, it is a shameful disgrace. They must be publicly cut off from the community. Since the man has violated his sister, he will be punished for his sin.

<sup>19</sup> “Do not have sexual relations with your aunt, whether your mother’s sister or your father’s sister. This would dishonor a close relative. Both parties are guilty and will be punished for their sin.

<sup>20</sup> “If a man has sex with his uncle’s wife, he has violated his uncle. Both the man and woman will be punished for their sin, and they will die childless.

<sup>21</sup> “If a man marries his brother’s wife, it is an act of impurity. He has violated his brother, and the guilty couple will remain childless.”

\*\*\*\*\*

**LUST** ~ Exodus 20:17; Matthew 5:27-29; Mark 7:20-22; Luke 16:18; Romans 1:24-27; Ephesians 2:1-3; Ephesians 4:17-24; Colossians 3:2-5; James 1:14-15; 1 Peter 4:3-5; 2 Peter 2:14

**Exodus 20:17** ~ “You must not covet your neighbor’s house. You must not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.”

**Mark 7:20-22** ~ “And then he added, “It is what comes from inside that defiles you. For from within, out of a person’s heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality (porneiai), theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness.”

**Ephesians 4:17-24** ~ <sup>17</sup> “With the Lord’s authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. <sup>18</sup> Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. <sup>19</sup> They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.

<sup>20</sup> But that isn’t what you learned about Christ. <sup>21</sup> Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, <sup>22</sup> throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. <sup>23</sup> Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. <sup>24</sup> Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.”

**Ephesians 2:1-3** ~ “Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. All of us used to live that way,

following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else."

**James 1:14-15** ~ "Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death."

**1 Peter 4:3-5** ~ "You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols. Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So, they slander you. <sup>5</sup> But remember that they will have to face God, who stands ready to judge everyone, both the living and the dead."

**2 Peter 2:14** ~ "They commit adultery with their eyes, and their desire for sin is never satisfied. They lure unstable people into sin, and they are well trained in greed."

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MASTURBATION** ~ Leviticus 15:16-18; Leviticus 15:32-33; Leviticus 22:4-6; Matthew 5:27-30

**Leviticus 15:16-18** ~ "Whenever a man has an emission of semen, he must bathe his entire body in water, and he will remain ceremonially unclean until the next evening. Any clothing or leather with semen on it must be washed in water, and it will remain unclean until evening. After a man and a woman have sexual intercourse, they must each bathe in water, and they will remain unclean until the next evening."

**Leviticus 22:4-6** ~ "If any of Aaron's descendants has a skin disease or any kind of discharge that makes him ceremonially unclean, he may not eat from the sacred offerings until he has been pronounced clean. He also becomes unclean by touching a corpse, or by having an emission of semen, or by touching a small animal that is unclean, or by touching someone who is ceremonially unclean for any reason. The man who is defiled in any of these ways will remain unclean until evening."

**Matthew 5:27-30** ~ In this verse, Jesus is giving his most famous public talk, which is often referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. The following relates to our topic.

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to depart into hell."

I don't know if Jesus is referring to masturbation specifically, but he is making a strong point about the dangers of lust. Losing one's right hand creates quite a handicap, but is much better than eternal damnation. Although masturbation isn't a sin, it is grounded in lust and can lead to more serious behaviors. Masturbation can become addictive. With any addiction, one craves more to reach that elusive high. The need to fantasize tends to become more often and sometimes aggressive. This can lead to "acting out" with criminal behavior such as incest, rape, child porn, and sex trafficking. Many serial murderers say that they started off with soft porn: Ted Bundy, Jeffrey Dahmer, Gacy and Berkowitz to name just a few.

Sexual fantasies can make it difficult to have healthy, loving sex because one's partner will never measure up to the fantasy lover. Additionally, lust and loneliness can attract incubi and succubi, which are aggressive and possessive demonic sexual predators.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MENSTRUAL SEX** ~ Leviticus 15:19-24, 32-33; Leviticus 18:19; Leviticus 20:18; Ezekiel 22:6-12

**Leviticus 15:19-24** ~ "<sup>19</sup>Whenever a woman has her menstrual period, she will be ceremonially unclean for seven days. Anyone who touches her during that time will be unclean until evening. <sup>20</sup> Anything on which the woman lies or sits during the time of her period will be unclean. <sup>21</sup> If any of you touch her bed, you must

wash your clothes and bathe yourself in water, and you will remain unclean until evening.<sup>22</sup> If you touch any object she has sat on, you must wash your clothes and bathe yourself in water, and you will remain unclean until evening.<sup>23</sup> This includes her bed or any other object she has sat on; you will be unclean until evening if you touch it.<sup>24</sup> If a man has sexual intercourse with her and her blood touches him, her menstrual impurity will be transmitted to him. He will remain unclean for seven days, and any bed on which he lies will be unclean.” **Leviticus 15:32-33** “These are the instructions for dealing with anyone who has a bodily discharge—a man who is unclean because of an emission of semen or a woman during her menstrual period. It applies to any man or woman who has a bodily discharge, and to a man who has sexual intercourse with a woman who is ceremonially unclean.”

**Leviticus 18:19** ~ “Do not have sexual relations with a woman during her period of menstrual impurity.”

**Leviticus 20:18** ~ “If a man has sexual relations with a woman during her menstrual period, both of them must be cut off from the community, for together they have exposed the source of her blood flow.”

\*\*\*\*\*

## **PROMISCUITY** ~ Proverbs 2:16-19; Proverbs 5:3-23; Proverbs 7:4-5

**Proverbs 2:16-19** ~ “Wisdom will save you from the immoral woman, from the seductive words of the promiscuous woman. She has abandoned her husband and ignores the covenant she made before God. Entering her house leads to death; it is the road to the grave. The man who visits her is doomed. He will never reach the paths of life.”

**Proverbs 5:3-23** ~ “For the lips of an immoral woman are as sweet as honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil. But in the end, she is as bitter as poison, as dangerous as a double-edged sword...”

**Proverbs 7:4-5** ~ “Love wisdom like a sister; make insight a beloved member of your family. Let them protect you from an affair with an immoral woman, from listening to the flattery of a promiscuous woman.”

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROSTITUTION** ~ In the Bible, there are references to two basic types of prostitutes, common and temple prostitution. Males and females were involved in both types of prostitution. In the nations surrounding Israel, temple prostitution was considered sacred. However, Yahweh, the God of the Israelites, strictly forbade the Israelites to follow these practices. However, they often rebelled and did these practices, sometimes resulting in serious consequences.

**COMMON PROSTITUTION** ~ Exodus 34:15-16; Leviticus 19:29; Joshua 2:1-23, 6:16:22-25; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25-26; Matthew 21:31-32; Judges 16:1; Proverbs 6:26; Proverbs 7:1-27; Hosea 1:1-11; 1 Corinthians 6:15-18

The Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew. The Hebrew word “zonah” typically translates as “prostitute” or a loose woman. In Hebrew oral tradition, a zonah is described as a non-Jewish woman who is intimate with a man that she is prohibited from marrying.

The Hebrew word “tizneh” is often translated as someone who commits fornication, a harlot or a prostitute. In the New Testament, the Greek word “porne” (the root word for pornography) also refers to regular prostitution. In several verses it is used specifically in reference to idolatry practices, sometimes as an individual, at other times as symbolic of a nation.

**Exodus 34:15-16** ~ “Do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, for when they play the harlot (wuzanu) with their gods, and sacrifice to them, they will invite you, and you will eat their sacrifices; and when you take some of their daughters as brides for your sons, their daughters will play the harlot (wuzanu) themselves to their gods and cause your sons to do the same.”

**Leviticus 19:29** ~ “Do not defile your daughter by making her a harlot (notah), or the land will be filled with harlotry (tizneh) and wickedness.”

**Joshua 2:1-23, 6:16, 22-25** ~ In these chapters, we learn the story of a harlot (zonah), Rahab. Even though she was a foreigner, in 2:11 she shows her faith in the Israelite god, “For the Lord your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.” She hides two Hebrew spies who have come to gain intel in preparation of overtaking the city of Jericho. As a reward, she and her entire family are the only ones whose lives were spared. In the following two verses, Rahab, even though she was a prostitute, is used as an example of how one needs both faith and good works to be acceptable in God’s eyes.

**Hebrews 11:31** “It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute (porne) was not destroyed with the people in her city who refused to obey God. For she had given a friendly welcome to the spies.”

**James 2:25-26** “Rahab the prostitute (porne) is another example. She was shown to be right with God by her actions when she hid those messengers and sent them safely away by a different road. Just as the body is dead without breath, so also faith is dead without good works.)

-----  
**Judges 16:1** ~ “One day Samson went to the Philistine town of Gaza and spent the night with a prostitute (zonah).” Samson was a leader, the judge over Israel. He knew full well that prostitution was prohibited. This event led to his decline.

**Proverbs 6:26** ~ “For a prostitute (zonah) will bring you to poverty, but sleeping with another man’s wife will cost you your life.”

**Proverbs 7:1-27** ~ “King Solomon tells a story about staying away from prostitutes (zonah). He ends with the warning, “<sup>24</sup> So listen to me, my sons, and pay attention to my words. <sup>25</sup> Don’t let your hearts stray away toward her. Don’t wander down her wayward path. <sup>26</sup> For she has been the ruin of many; many men have been her victims. <sup>27</sup> Her house is the road to the grave. Her bedroom is the den of death.”

**Hosea 1:1-11** ~ This is an interesting story where God tells the prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute (tizneh) and have children by her. All of this was to be symbolic of God’s punishment, then restoration of Israel for prostituting with idols, etc.”

**Matthew 21:31-32** ~ Jesus is speaking to the Jewish leading priests and elders in the Temple. “Then Jesus explained his meaning: “I tell you the truth, corrupt tax collectors and prostitutes (pornai) will get into the Kingdom of God before you do. For John the Baptist came and showed you the right way to live, but you didn’t believe him, while tax collectors and prostitutes (pornai) did. And even when you saw this happening, you refused to believe him and repent of your sins.”

**1 Corinthians 6:16-18** ~ “<sup>16</sup> And don’t you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute (porne), he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, “The two are united into one.” <sup>17</sup> But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him. <sup>18</sup> Run from sexual sin (porneian)! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality (porne) is a sin against your own body.”

\*\*\*\*\*

**TEMPLE PROSTITUTION** ~ Genesis 38:1-30; Deuteronomy 23:17-18; 1 Kings 14:24; 1 Kings 15:11-14; 2 Kings 23:7; Job 36:14; Hosea 4:14

The Hebrew word “kadesh and kadeshah” refers to male and female temple prostitutes, respectively. This term means “holy or set apart.” Temple prostitution was a common practice in ancient times, especially in temples that worshipped fertility goddesses such as Asherah and Aphrodite. It was believed that these sexual rituals would gain favor from the deity. These rituals were often used to increase a woman’s fertility and also commonly used to invoke an abundant harvest of crops.



The temple prostitutes were sometimes women who dedicated themselves to this “sacred service.” Whereas others were forced to be sex slaves. Sometimes girls were gifted to the temple as a means to gain favor from the deity for success in their personal endeavors.

**Gen 38:1-30** This chapter tells an interesting story full of juicy details from start to finish. I’ll focus on the parts that pertain to our topic of prostitution. The story is about one of Jacob’s twelve sons, Judah, who is one of the main patriarchs in the Hebrew nation. Judah betroths Tamar to his oldest son, who dies, then the second son who dies. He then sends her back to her family to wait until his youngest son is old enough to marry. However, Judah never planned to follow through on his promise because he was afraid his third son would die, too. Years pass and Tamar realizes Judah, who is now widowed, does not intend to follow through on his promise. Tamar takes matters into her own hands and pretending to be a prostitute, she seduces Judah to have sex with her. Judah doesn’t realize this is Tamar, because as was customary for prostitutes, her face was veiled. Things get even juicier when she becomes pregnant with twins and Judah realizes how he was tricked. Note that first the term for regular prostitute is used. Then in the latter part of the story, the term for temple prostitute is used.

**Genesis 38:14-15** “Tarah removed her widow’s garments, covered her face with a veil to disguise herself, and sat at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the way to Timnah. For she saw that although Shelah (the 3<sup>rd</sup> son) had grown up, she had not been given to him as a wife. When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute (zonah, common prostitute) because she had covered her face.”

As the story unfolds, Judah propositions Tarah for sex, not realizing it is her because her face is veiled. They have sex with the promise of a later payment of young goat. Tamar cleverly agrees, if he gives her his signet, cord and staff as surety. The deal is done.

**Genesis 38:21-22** “Now when Judah sends his friend, the Adullamite with the young goat to collect the items he had left with the woman, he could not find her. He asked the men of that place, “Where is the temple prostitute (kadeshah) who was beside the road at Enaim?” “No temple prostitute (kadeshah) has been here, they answered.”

The friend returns and tells Judah he couldn’t find her. Judah says to let her keep the items so he doesn’t become “a laughingstock.” The story continues to unfold and Judah is told in verse 24, “Your daughter-in-law, Tamar, has prostituted (zonah) herself and now she is pregnant.” The story heats up, with juicy tidbits from start to finish, but I don’t want to spoil the story for you. The emphasis I am making here is the use of the two different uses of the words prostitute. As I mentioned, Judah was the patriarch of his tribe, thus well known. I wonder if he tries to hide what he did by pretending he thought she was a temple prostitute, which was more noble than seeking out the services of a roadside prostitute.

-----  
**Deuteronomy 23:17-18** ~ “No daughter or son of Israel is to be a cult prostitute (kadeshah). You must not bring the wages of a prostitute (zonah), whether female or male, into the house of the Lord your God to fulfill any vow, because both are detestable to the Lord your God.

**1 Kings 14:24** ~ “And there were also male cult prostitutes (kadesh) in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations that the Lord drove out before the people of Israel.”

**1 Kings 15:11-14** ~ “<sup>11</sup>Asa did what was pleasing in the Lord’s sight, as his ancestor David had done. <sup>12</sup>He banished the male and female temple prostitutes (kadesh) from the land and got rid of all the idols his ancestors had made. <sup>13</sup>He even deposed his grandmother Maacah from her position as queen mother because she had made an obscene Asherah pole. He cut down her obscene pole and burned it in the Kidron Valley. <sup>14</sup>Although the pagan temples were not removed, Asa’s heart remained completely faithful to the Lord throughout his life.”

**2 Kings 23:7** ~ When Josiah became king of Judah and Jerusalem. “He also tore down the living quarters of the male and female temple prostitutes (kadesh) that were inside the Temple of the Lord, where the women wove coverings for the Asherah pole.” (Asherah was a Canaanite fertility goddess.)

**Job 36:13-14** ~ “The godless in heart harbor resentment; even when He (Yahweh) binds them, they do not cry out for help. They die in their youth; and their life ends among the male cult prostitutes (kadesh = those practicing sodomy or prostitution in religious rituals).

**Hosea 4:11-14** ~ Yahweh sends his prophet, Hosea, to the people of Israel with a strong admonition against them for several of their practices with the promise of a stiff penalty if they don't change their ways. This is the section that relates to prostitution. <sup>11</sup>“Promiscuity, wine and new wine take away understanding. My people consult their wooden idols, and their divining rods inform them. For a spirit of prostitution (zenumnim = adultery, idolatry) leads them astray and they have played the harlot (zonah) against their God. They sacrifice on the mountaintops, and burn offerings on the hills, under oak, poplar, and terebinth, because their shade is pleasant. And so, your daughters turn to prostitution (tiznenah) and your daughters-in-laws to adultery. I will not punish your daughters when they prostitute (tiznehan) themselves or your daughter-in-laws when they commit adultery, because the men themselves go off with prostitutes (zonah) and make sacrifices with cult prostitutes (kadeshah). So, a people without understanding will come to ruin.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **WOMEN FALSELY BELIEVED TO BE PROSTITUTES**

Mary Magdalene: there is not one mention of her being immoral or a prostitute. The following are verses about Mary Magdalene; be wary of what you believe from other sources. There are many false teachings propagated about her.

**Luke 8:1-2** “Soon afterward Jesus began a tour of the nearby towns and villages, preaching and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom of God. He took his twelve disciples with him, along with some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases. Among them were Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons...

**Matthew 27:56, 61; 28:1; Mark 15:40, 47; 16:1; Luke 24:10; John 19:25; 20:1, 11, 16, 18:** All of these are references to Mary Magdalene being at the crucifixion, the tomb of Jesus and his appearing to her there.

-----

There are four accounts of a woman who anoints Jesus' feet with expensive perfume. Not one mentions the woman was a prostitute. Only John names her as Mary, the sister of Lazarus.

**Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9** town of Bethany, home of Simon the leper, an unnamed woman (gyne), fragrant oil (myrou)

**Luke 7:36-50** Possibly town of Nain or nearby Bethany, home of a Pharisee, an unnamed sinner (hamartolos), fragrant oil (myrou)

**John 12:3-8** town of Bethany, home of Lazarus, his sister, Mary, no mention of sin, fragrant oil of nard (myrou)

\*\*\*\*\*

### **RAPE** ~ Deuteronomy 22:25-27; Deuteronomy 22:28-29; Ezekiel 22:6-12

**Deuteronomy 22:25-27** ~ “But if the man encounters an engaged woman in the open country, and he overpowers her and rapes her, only the man must die. Do nothing to the young woman because she committed no sin worthy of death. This case is just like one in which a man attacks his neighbor and murders him. When he found her in the field, the betrothed woman cried out, but there was no one to rescue her.”

**Deuteronomy 22:28-29** “If a man encounters a virgin who is not pledged in marriage, and he overpowers her and rapes her, and they are discovered, the man who raped her must pay the young woman's father

fifty shekels of silver, and she must become his wife because he has violated her. He must not divorce her as long as he lives.”

**Ezekiel 22:6-12** ~ God gives the following message to the prophet, Ezekiel to the citizens in Jerusalem.

“<sup>6</sup>Every leader in Israel who lives within your walls is bent on murder. <sup>7</sup>Fathers and mothers are treated with contempt. Foreigners are forced to pay for protection. Orphans and widows are wronged and oppressed among you. <sup>8</sup>You despise my holy things and violate my Sabbath days of rest. <sup>9</sup>People accuse others falsely and send them to their death. You are filled with idol worshipers and people who do obscene things. <sup>10</sup>Men sleep with their fathers’ wives and force themselves on women who are menstruating. <sup>11</sup>Within your walls live men who commit adultery with their neighbors’ wives, who defile their daughters-in-law, or who rape their own sisters. <sup>12</sup>There are hired murderers, loan racketeers, and extortioners everywhere. They never even think of me and my commands, says the Sovereign Lord.”

\*\*\*\*\*

**SEXUAL IMMORALITY** ~ Matthew 15:16-20; Mark 7:20-22; Acts 15:19-21; Acts 21:25; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 5:9-12; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Corinthians 7:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:6-8; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:17-24; Ephesians 5:3,5; Colossians 3:2-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; 1 Timothy 1:9-10; 1 Peter 4:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; Jude 1:7; Revelation 2:14-16; Revelation 2:20-21; Revelation 9:20-21; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15

In the New Testament, the Greek word “porne” is the root word for the English word pornography. In various Bible versions “porne” is often translated as sexually immoral, fornication, whoredom or harlotry.

**Matthew 15:16-20** ~ “<sup>16</sup>Don’t you understand yet?” Jesus asked. <sup>17</sup>“Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. <sup>18</sup>But the words you speak come from the heart—that’s what defiles you. <sup>19</sup>For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality (porneiai), theft, lying, and slander. <sup>20</sup>These are what defile you. Eating with unwashed hands will never defile you.”

**Acts 15:19-21** ~ One of the obstacles that Jesus and his followers faced had to do with embracing and teaching the non-Jewish people, called Gentiles or Greeks. In these verses, the subject has come up regarding what Jewish laws the new Gentile followers should follow. Of specific concern was circumcision, which separated the Jewish people from all others. The apostles and elders met and the following was stated by Peter, which the others agreed upon.

“<sup>19</sup>And so my judgment is that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. <sup>20</sup>Instead, we should write and tell them to abstain from eating food offered to idols, from sexual immorality (porneiai), from eating the meat of strangled animals, and from consuming blood. <sup>21</sup>For these laws of Moses have been preached in Jewish synagogues in every city on every Sabbath for many generations.”

**Acts 21:25** “As for the Gentile believers, they should do what we already told them in a letter: They should abstain from eating food offered to idols, from consuming blood or the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality (porneian).”

**1 Corinthians 5:1** ~ “I can hardly believe the report about the sexual immorality (porneia) going on among you—something that even pagans don’t do. I am told that a man in your church is living in sin with his stepmother.”

**1 Corinthians 5:9-12** ~ “<sup>9</sup>When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual sin (pornois). <sup>10</sup>But I wasn’t talking about unbelievers who indulge in sexual sin (pornois), or are greedy, or cheat people, or worship idols. You would have to leave this world to avoid people like that. <sup>11</sup>I meant that you are not to associate with anyone who claims to be a believer yet indulges in sexual sin ( pornos), or is greedy, or worships idols, or is abusive, or is a drunkard, or cheats people. Don’t even eat with such people. <sup>12</sup>It isn’t my responsibility to judge outsiders, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning. <sup>13</sup>God will judge those on the outside; but as the Scriptures say, “You must remove the evil person from among you.” (Deuteronomy 17:7; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21)

**1 Corinthians 6:18-20** ~ “Flee sexual immorality (porneiai). Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality (porneion) sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?”

**1 Corinthians 7:1-2** ~ “Now regarding the questions you asked in your letter. Yes, it is good to abstain from sexual relations. But because there is so much sexual immorality (porneias), each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband.” Paul then goes into a discourse regarding marriage (1-16), which I cover in the Marriage, Divorce and Polygamy video and document.

**1 Corinthians 10:6-8** ~ “<sup>6</sup>These things happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did, <sup>7</sup>or worship idols as some of them did. As the Scriptures say, “The people celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged in pagan revelry.” <sup>8</sup>And we must not engage in sexual immorality (porneōmen) as some of them did, causing 23,000 of them to die in one day.” (Referring to Exodus 32:6 and possibly Exodus 25:9)

**2 Corinthians 12:21** ~ Paul is speaking to the new church in Corinth. “I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality (porneia), and lewdness (aselgeia), that they have practiced.”

**Galatians 5:19-21** ~ “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, sexual immorality (porneia), uncleanness, lewdness (aselgeia), idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

**Ephesians 5:3,5** ~ “But among you, as is proper among the saints, there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality (porneia) or of any kind of impurity, or of greed. For of this you can be sure: No immoral ( pornos), impure/lewd (akathartos) or greedy person has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”

**Colossians 3:2-5** ~ “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore, put to death your earthly nature: sexual immorality (porneian), impurity (akatharsian), lust (pathos), evil desires, and greed (pleonexian), which is idolatry (eidololatria).” I thought Paul used an interesting term here, “greed, which is idolatry.” Paul is saying that a greedy person is an idolater because they worship (become attached to or obsessed with) material objects.

**1 Thessalonians 4:3-5** ~ “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality (pornias); that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God”

**Revelation 2:14-16** ~ “<sup>14</sup>But I have a few complaints against you. You tolerate some among you whose teaching is like that of Balaam, who showed Balak how to trip up the people of Israel. He taught them to sin by eating food offered to idols and by committing sexual sin (porneusai). <sup>15</sup>In a similar way, you have some Nicolaitans among you who follow the same teaching.” (John is referring to Numbers chapters 22-24).

**Revelation 2:20-21** ~ “But I have this complaint against you. You are permitting that woman, that Jezebel who calls herself a prophet, to lead my servants astray. She teaches them to commit sexual sin (porneusai) and to eat food offered to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she does not want to turn away from her immorality (porneias).”

**Revelation 9:20-21** ~ “But the people who did not die in these plagues still refused to repent of their evil deeds and turn to God. They continued to worship demons and idols made of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood—idols that can neither see nor hear nor walk! And they did not repent of their murders or their witchcraft or their sexual immorality (porneias) or their thefts.”

**Revelation 21:8** ~ “But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral (pornois), sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”