

Doctrine of the Concubine

1. During the Old Testament economy a concubine was a female slave or mistress with whom a man was socially and lawfully permitted to have sexual intercourse.
2. The Mosaic Law protected concubines, so they could not be sold if they were no longer pleasing to the man. The Law of Moses also recognized the rights of concubines and guarded them from various form of abuse and injustice.
 - *Exodus 21:7 And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do. 8 If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her. 9 And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters. 10 If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. 11 And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.*
 - *Deuteronomy 21:10 When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive, 11 And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife; 12 Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails; 13 And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife. 14 And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.*
3. The first mention of a concubine occurs in Genesis 22:24 where Reumah is described as the concubine of Nahor, Abraham's brother.
 - *Genesis 22:24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.*
4. To their eternal shame and temporal regret many of the saints in the Old Testament had female slaves.
 - Abraham. *Genesis 25:6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.*
 - Jacob. *Genesis 35:22 And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:*
 - Eliphaz. *Genesis 36:12 And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife.*

- Gideon. Judges 8:31 And his concubine that was in Shechem, she also bare him a son, whose name he called Abimelech.
 - Saul. *2 Samuel 3:7 And Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah: and Ish-bosheth said to Abner, Wherefore hast thou gone in unto my father's concubine?*
5. On the basis of these saints having concubines Joseph Smith (1805-1844) instituted the practice of polygamy among the Mormons basing the wicked institution on the doctrine of celestial marriages.

Special Note.

While a Mormon might be excommunicated for practicing polygamy today, the command to engage in plural marriage is still included in modern editions of the Doctrine and Covenants. Section 132:4 declares: *"For behold, I reveal unto you a new and everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory."*

According to the introduction to volume 5 of the Documentary History of the Church (DHC), the revelation was written down in order to convince Smith's wife, Emma, of its authenticity.

When exactly this "revelation" came to Joseph Smith is somewhat confusing. According to the same volume (5:501), Joseph Smith was given this revelation on July 12, 1843. However, the heading of section 132 states it was only recorded on that date for, "this revelation had been known by the Prophet since 1831." It would seem that the latter would be more correct since D&C 132:52 records a warning to Smith's wife, Emma, to "receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph."

Emma never liked the idea of polygamy, and despite a warning in verse 54 saying she would be destroyed if she did "not abide this commandment," she lived a full life. Her husband, on the other hand, would be dead within a year.

6. Following the social practice of her day, Sarai gave Hagar, her Egyptian maidservant, to Abram as a concubine so he could father children by her (Genesis 16:2-3). This was not in accord to the known will of God (cf. Genesis 12:7). The consequences of this sinful act are still reverberating down through the centuries to the present hour in the form of the Israeli and Arab conflict.
7. By the time of the monarchy in Israel, the practice of keeping concubines apparently was reserved for the kings only. Solomon is especially remembered for his many concubines.
- *1 Kings 11:3 And he [Solomon] had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.*

8. Many of the concubines were foreign women. They successfully led Solomon to his spiritual downfall, because they brought their pagan religions, which introduced idolatry into the land.
 - *1 Kings 11:1 But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; 2 Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. 3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. 4 For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6 And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. 7 Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. 8 And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. 9 And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, 10 And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. 11 Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. 12 Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. 13 Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.*