~FORNICATION (727)

[Hebrew, za nah', Greek, por-nei'a]

- " Under The Law
- · · Forbidden To Christians
- " Symbolic Use
- Illicit sex relations outside of Scriptural marriage. The Hebrew verb za nah', and its related forms convey the idea of harlotry, immoral intercourse, fornication, or prostitution.
- However, about three months later it happened that it was told to Judah; Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot, and here she is also pregnant by her harlotry. At that Judah said; bring her out and let her be burned. (Genesis 38:24)
- Then you will have to take some of their daughters for your sons, and their daughters will be certain to have immoral intercourse with their gods and make your sons have immoral intercourse with their gods. (Exodus 34:16)
- There was a start of the word of Yehowah by Hosea, and Yehowah proceeded to say to Hosea; Go, take to yourself a wife of fornication and children of fornication, because by fornication the land positively turns from following Yehowah. (Hosea 1:2)
- Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, in order, that the land may not commit prostitution and the land actually be filled with loose morals. (Leviticus 19:29)
- The Greek word translated fornication is *por-nei'a*. Regarding the meanings of *por-nei'a*, B. F. Westcott in his book Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (1906, p. 76) says:
- This is a general term for all unlawful intercourse;
- Adultery
- Carry on a legal case with your mother, carry on a legal case, for she is not my wife and I am not her husband. And she should put away her fornication from before herself and her acts of adultery from between her breasts. (Hosea 2:4)

- And to her sons I shall not show mercy, for they are the sons of fornication. (Hosea 2:2)
- However, I say to you that everyone divorcing his wife, except on account of fornication, makes her a subject for adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Matthew 5:32)
- I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery. (Matthew 19:9)
- Unlawful marriage
- Actually fornication is reported among you, and such fornication as is not even among the nations, that a wife a certain man has of his father. (1 Corinthians 5:1)
- Fornication, the common sense as here;
- Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort or greediness not even be mentioned among you, just as it befits holy people. (Ephesians 5:3)
- Bauer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (revised by F. W. Gingrich and F. Danker, 1979, p. 693) **defines** *por-nei'a* **as** prostitution, unchastity, fornication, of every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse.
- *Porneia* is understood to involve the grossly immoral use of the genital organ(s) of at least one human, also there must have been two or more parties, including another consenting human or a beast, whether of the same sex or the opposite sex.
- So too Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them, after they in the same manner as the foregoing ones had committed fornication excessively and gone out after flesh for unnatural use, are placed before us as a warning example by undergoing the judicial punishment of everlasting fire. (Jude 1:7)
- The unlawful act of a rapist is fornication, but, of course, that does not make the person who is forcibly raped also a fornicator.

- When God performed the first human marriage he said; That is why a man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh.
- That is why a man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh. (Genesis 2:24)
- Here the standard set for man and woman was monogamy, and promiscuous sex relationship was ruled out. Also, no divorce and remarriage to another was anticipated.

See Also DIVORCE

- In patriarchal society God's faithful servants hated fornication, whether between single, engaged, or married persons, and it was considered a sin against God.
- Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, used to go out to see the daughters of the land. (Genesis 34:1)
- And Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, a chieftain of the land, got to see her and then took her and lay down with her and violated her. (Genesis 34:2)
- Later Hamor, Shechem's father, went out to Jacob to speak with him. (Genesis 34:6)
- And the sons of Jacob came in from the field as soon as they heard of it; and the men became hurt in their feelings and they grew very angry, because he had committed a disgraceful folly against Israel in lying down with Jacob's daughter, whereas nothing like that ought to be done. (Genesis 34:7)
- In turn they said; Ought anyone to treat our sister like a prostitute? (Genesis 34:31)
- However, about three months later it happened that it was told to Judah; Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot, and here she is also pregnant by her harlotry. At that Judah said; Bring her out and let her be burned. (Genesis 38:24)
- As she was being brought out she herself sent to her father-inlaw, saying; By the man to whom these belong I am pregnant.

And she added; Examine, please, to whom these belong, the seal ring and the cord and the rod. (Genesis 38:25)

- Then Judah examined them and said; She is more righteous than I am, for the reason that I did not give her to Shelah my son.

 And he had no further intercourse with her after that. (Genesis 38:26)
- Now after these things it came about that the wife of his master began to raise her eyes toward Joseph and say; Lie down with me. (Genesis 39:7)
- But he would refuse and would say to his master's wife; Here my master does not know what is with me in the house, and everything he has he has given into my hand. (Genesis 39:8)
- There is no one greater in this house than I am, and he has not withheld from me anything at all except you, because you are his wife. So how could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God? (Genesis 39:9)

" Under The Law

- Under the Mosaic Law, a man committing fornication with an unengaged girl was required to marry the girl and to pay her father the purchase price for brides (50 silver shekels, \$110), and he could not divorce her all his days. Even if her father refused to give him the girl in marriage, the man had to pay the purchase price to the father.
- Now in case a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, and he actually lies down with her, he is to obtain her without fail as his wife for the purchase price. (Exodus 22:16)
- If her father flatly refuses to give her to him, he is to pay over the money at the rate of purchase money for virgins. (Exodus 22:17)
- In case a man finds a girl, a virgin who has not been engaged, and he actually seizes her and lies down with her, and they have been found out. (Deuteronomy 22:28)
- The man who lay down with her must also give the girl's father fifty silver shekels, and she will become his wife due to the fact that he humiliated her. He will not be allowed to divorce her all

his days. (Deuteronomy 22:29)

- However, if the girl was engaged, the man was to be stoned to death. If the girl screamed when she was attacked, she was not to be punished, but if the engaged girl failed to scream, thereby indicating consent, she was also put to death.
- The man who lay down with her must also give the girl's father fifty silver shekels, and she will become his wife due to the fact that he humiliated her. He will not be allowed to divorce her all his days. (Deuteronomy 22:29)
- No man should take his father's wife, that he may not uncover the skirt of his father. (Deuteronomy 22:30)
- No man castrated by crushing the testicles or having his male member cut off may come into the congregation of Yehowah. (Deuteronomy 23:1)
- No illegitimate son may come into the congregation of Yehowah. Even to the tenth generation none of his may come into the congregation of Yehowah. (Deuteronomy 23:2)
- The sanctity of marriage was emphasized by the Law that punished with death a girl who married under the false pretense of being a virgin, having committed fornication secretly.
- If her husband falsely charged her with such a crime, it was regarded as bringing great reproach on her father's house. For his slanderous action, the man was to be disciplined by the judges, perhaps by beating, and fined 100 silver shekels (\$220), the money then being given to the father.
- In case a man takes a wife and actually has relations with her and has come to hate her. (Deuteronomy 22:13)
- And he has charged her with notorious deeds and brought forth a bad name upon her and has said; This is the woman I have taken, and I proceeded to go near her, and I did not find evidence of virginity in her. (Deuteronomy 22:14)
- The father of the girl and her mother must also take and bring forth the evidence of the girls virginity to the older men of the city at the gate of it. (Deuteronomy 22:15)

- And the girl's father must say to the older men, I gave my daughter to this man as a wife, and he went hating her. (Deuteronomy 22:16)
- And here he is charging her with notorious deeds, saying; I have found your daughter does not have evidence of virginity. Now this is the evidence of my daughters virginity. And they must spread out the mantle before the older men of the city. (Deuteronomy 22:17)
- And the older men of that city must take the man and discipline him. (Deuteronomy 22:18)
- And they must fine him a hundred silver shekels and give them to the girl's father, because he brought forth a bad name upon a virgin of Israel, and she will continue to be his wife. He will not be allowed to divorce her all his days. (Deuteronomy 22:19)
- If, though, this thing has proved to be the truth, evidence of virginity was not found in the girl. (Deuteronomy 22:20)
- They must also bring the girl out to the entrance of her father's house, and the men of her city must pelt her with stones, and she must die, because she has committed a disgraceful folly in Israel by committing prostitution in the house of her father. So you must clear away what is bad from your midst. (Deuteronomy 22:21)
- Prostitution of a priests daughter brought disgrace on his sacred office. She was to be killed, then burned as something detestable.
- Now in case the daughter of a priest should make herself profane by committing prostitution, it is her father that she is profaning. She should be burned in the fire. (Leviticus 21:9)
- Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, in order, that the land may not commit prostitution and the land actually be filled with loose morals. (Leviticus 19:29)
- Fornication between married persons (adultery) was a violation of the seventh commandment and merited the death penalty for both parties.

- You must not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
- Neither must you commit adultery. (Deuteronomy 5:18)
- In case a man is found lying down with a woman owned by an owner, both of them must then die together, the man lying down with the woman and the woman. So you must clear away what is bad out of Israel. (Deuteronomy 22:22)
- If a man committed fornication with a servant girl who had been designated for another man, but who had not been redeemed or freed, punishment was to take place, but they were not to be put to death.
- Now in case a man lies down with a woman and has an emission of semen, when she is a maidservant designated for another man, and she has not in any way been redeemed nor has freedom been given her, punishment should take place. They should not be put to death, because she was not set free. (Leviticus 19:20)
- And he must bring his guilt offering to Yehowah to the entrance of the tent of meeting, a ram of guilt offering. (Leviticus 19:21)
- And the priest must make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before Yehowah for his sin that he committed, and his sin that he committed must be forgiven him. (Leviticus 19:22)
- Evidently this was because the woman was not yet free and in full control of her actions, as a free engaged girl would be. The redemption price had not yet been paid, or at least not fully paid, and she was still a bondservant to her master.
- When the mercenary prophet Balaam could not bring a curse upon Israel by divination, he found a way to bring them under God's displeasure by appealing to wrong desire for sexual relations.
- By means of the women of Moab he seduced the Israelites into practicing the filthy phallic worship of the Baal of Peor, for which 24,000 of the sons of Israel died.
- Now Israel was dwelling in Shittim. Then the people started to have immoral relations with the daughters of Moab. (Numbers 25:1)

- And the women came calling the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people began to eat and to bow down to their gods. (Numbers 25:2)
- So Israel attached itself to the Baal of Peor, and the anger of Yehowah began to blaze against Israel. (Numbers 25:3)
- Hence Yehowah said to Moses; Take all the head ones of the people and expose them to Yehowah toward the sun, that the burning anger of Yehowah may turn back from Israel. (Numbers 25:4)
- Then Moses said to the judges of Israel; Each one of you kill his men who have an attachment with the Baal of Peor. (Numbers 25:5)
- But, look! A man of the sons of Israel came, and he was bringing near to his brothers a Midianite woman before Moses eyes and before the eyes of all the assembly of the sons of Israel, while they were weeping at the entrance of the tent of meeting. (Numbers 25:6)
- When Phinehas the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest caught sight of it, he at once got up from the midst of the assembly and took a lance in his hand. (Numbers 25:7)
- Then he went after the man of Israel into the vaulted tent and pierced both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman through her genital parts. At that the scourge was halted from upon the sons of Israel. (Numbers 25:8)
- And those who died from the scourge amounted to twenty-four thousand. (Numbers 25:9)
- Neither let us practice fornication, as some of them committed fornication, only to fall, twenty-three thousand of them in one day. (1 Corinthians 10:8)
- Likely 1,000 heads of the people were killed and hung on stakes and the rest were destroyed by the sword or the plague.
- Hence Yehowah said to Moses; Take all the head ones of the people and expose them to Yehowah toward the sun, that the burning anger of Yehowah may turn back from Israel. (Numbers

· · Forbidden To Christians

- Jesus Christ restored God's original standard of monogamy
- However, I say to you that everyone divorcing his wife, except on account of fornication, makes her a subject for adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Matthew 5:32)
- I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery. (Matthew 19:9)
- And showed the wickedness of fornication by classing it with murder, thievery, wicked reasoning, false testimony, and blasphemy. He pointed out that these come from within a man, from his heart, and defile him.
- For example, out of the heart come wicked reasonings, murders, adulteries, fornications, thieveries, false testimonies, blasphemies. (Matthew 15:19)
- These are the things defiling a man, but to take a meal with unwashed hands does not defile a man. (Matthew 15:20)
- For from inside, out of the heart of men, injurious reasonings issue forth, fornications, thieveries, murders. (Mark 7:21)
- Adulteries, covetings, acts of wickedness, deceit, loose conduct, an envious eye, blasphemy, haughtiness, unreasonableness. (Mark 7:22)
- All these wicked things issue forth from within and defile a man.
 (Mark 7:23)
- Later, the older men of the Christian congregation, comprised of the apostles and older men in Jerusalem, wrote to Christians in about 49 C.E, warning them against fornication, and placing it alongside idolatry and the eating of blood.
- But to write them to abstain from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood.

(Acts of Apostles 15:20)

- To keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication. If you carefully keep yourselves from these things, you will prosper. Good health to you! (Acts of Apostles 15:29)
- As for the believers from among the nations, we have sent out, rendering our decision that they should keep themselves from what is sacrificed to idols as well as from blood and what is strangled and from fornication. (Acts of Apostles 21:25)
- The apostle Paul points out that fornication is one of the works of the flesh, the opposite of the fruitage of the spirit of God, and warns that the practice of fleshly works will prevent an individual from inheriting the Kingdom.
- Now the works of the flesh are manifest, and they are fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct. (Galatians 5:19)
- Idolatry, practice of spiritism, enmities, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, contentions, divisions, sects. (Galatians 5:20)
- Envies, drunken bouts, revelries, and things like these. As to these things I am forewarning you, the same way as I did forewarn you, that those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom. (Galatians 5:21)
- He counsels that the Christian should deaden his body as respects fornication.
- Deaden, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. (Colossians 3:5)
- In fact, he warns that it should not even be a topic of conversation among Christians, who should be holy. Similarly, the Israelites were not to mention the names of the pagan gods not that they would fail to warn their children about these gods, but they would not mention them with any esteem.
- Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort or greediness not even be mentioned among you, just as it befits holy people. (Ephesians 5:3)

- And you are to be on your guard respecting all that I have said to you, and you must not mention the name of other gods. It should not be heard upon your mouth. (Exodus 23:13)
- Fornication is an offense for which an individual may be expelled, disfellowshipped from the Christian congregation.
- In my letter I wrote you to quit mixing in company with fornicators. (1 Corinthians 5:9)
- Not meaning entirely with the fornicators of this world or the greedy persons and extortioners or idolaters. Otherwise, you would actually have to get out of the world. (1 Corinthians 5:10)
- But now I am writing you to quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man. (1 Corinthians 5:11)
- For what do I have to do with judging those outside? Do you not judge those inside. (1 Corinthians 5:12)
- While God judges those outside? Remove the wicked man from among yourselves. (1 Corinthians 5:13)
- Carefully watching that no one may be deprived of the undeserved kindness of God. That no poisonous root may spring up and cause trouble and that many may not be defiled by it. (Hebrews 12:15)
- That there may be no fornicator nor anyone not appreciating sacred things, like Esau, who in exchange for one meal gave away his rights as firstborn. (Hebrews 12:16)
- The apostle explains that a Christian committing fornication sins against his own body, using reproductive members for a perverted purpose.
- He is greatly affected spiritually in an adverse way, brings defilement into God's congregation, and lays himself open to the danger of deadly sexually transmitted diseases.
- Flee from fornication. Every other sin that a man may commit is

- outside his body, but he that practices fornication is sinning against his own body. (1 Corinthians 6:18)
- What! Do you not know that the body of you people is the temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? Also, you do not belong to yourselves. (1 Corinthians 6:19)
- He encroaches on the rights of his Christian brothers.
- For this is what God wills, the sanctifying of you, that you abstain from fornication. (1 Thessalonians 4:3)
- That each one of you should know how to get possession of his own vessel in sanctification and honor. (1 Thessalonians 4:4)
- Not in covetous sexual appetite such as also those nations have which do not know God. (1 Thessalonians 4:5)
- That no one go to the point of harming and encroach upon the rights of his brother in this matter, because Yehowah is one who exacts punishment for all these things, just as we told you beforehand and also gave you a thorough witness. (1 Thessalonians 4:6)
- For God called us, not with allowance for uncleanness, but in connection with sanctification. (1 Thessalonians 4:7)
- (1) bringing uncleanness and disgraceful folly, with reproach, into the congregation.
- Carefully watching that no one may be deprived of the undeserved kindness of God, that no poisonous root may spring up and cause trouble and that many may not be defiled by it. (Hebrews 12:15)
- That there may be no fornicator nor anyone not appreciating sacred things, like Esau, who in exchange for one meal gave away his rights as firstborn. (Hebrews 12:16)
- (2) depriving the one with whom he commits fornication of a clean moral standing and, if that one is single, of being clean when entering into marriage.
- ' (3) depriving his own family of a clean moral record, as well as,

- ' (4) wronging the parents, husband, or fiancé of the one with whom he commits fornication. He disregards, not man, whose laws may or may not condone fornication, but God, who will exact punishment for his sin.
- So, then, the man that shows disregard is disregarding, not man, but God, who puts his Holy Spirit in you. (1 Thessalonians 4:8)

·· Symbolic Use

- Yehowah God spoke of the nation of Israel in covenant relationship to him as a wife.
- For your Grand Maker is your husbandly owner, Yehowah of armies being his name, and the Holy One of Israel is your Repurchaser. The God of the whole earth he will be called. (Isaiah 54:5)
- For Yehowah called you as if you were a wife left entirely and hurt in spirit, and as a wife of the time of youth who was then rejected, your God has said. (Isaiah 54:6)
- When the nation became unfaithful to him, ignoring him and turning to other nations such as Egypt and Assyria for help and entering into alliances with them, Israel was like an unfaithful wife, an adulteress, a prostitute, one carrying on fornication promiscuously.
- But you began to trust in your prettiness and become a prostitute on account of your name and to pour out your acts of prostitution on every passerby, his it came to be. (Ezekiel 16:15)
- At every head of the way you built your height and you began to make your prettiness something detestable and sprawl out your feet to every passerby and multiply your acts of prostitution. (Ezekiel 16:25)
- And you went prostituting yourself to the sons of Egypt, your neighbors great of flesh, and you continued making your prostitution abound in order to offend me. (Ezekiel 16:26)
- And, look! I shall certainly stretch out my hand against you and I shall diminish your allowance and give you to the soulful desire of the women hating you, the daughters of the Philistines, the

- women humiliated on account of your way as regards loose conduct. (Ezekiel 16:27)
- And you went on to prostitute yourself to the sons of Assyria because there was no satisfying of you, and you kept prostituting yourself with them and also did not get satisfaction. (Ezekiel 16:28)
- So you kept making your prostitution abound toward the land of Canaan, toward the Chaldeans, and even in this you did not get satisfaction. (Ezekiel 16:29)
- Likewise, if Christians in a dedicated relationship to God, or professing such a relationship, are unfaithful by engaging in false worship or by being friends of the world, they are called adulteresses.
- Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God. (James 4:4)
- Concerning the symbolic meaning of *por-nei'a* in certain texts, F. Zorell (Lexicon Graecum Novi Testamenti, Paris, 1961, col. 1106) says; Apostasy from the true faith, committed either entirely or partially, defection from the one true God Yahve to foreign gods.
- And it came about that as soon as Jehoram saw Jehu, he immediately said; Is there peace, Jehu? But he said; What peace could there be as long as there are the fornications of Jezebel your mother and her many sorceries? (2 Kings 9:22)
- Raise your eyes to the beaten paths and see. Where is it that you have not been raped? Alongside the ways you have sat for them, like an Arabian in the wilderness, and you keep polluting the land with your acts of prostitution and with your badness. (Jeremiah 3:2)
- And her prostitution occurred because of her frivolous view, and she kept polluting the land and committing adultery with stones and with trees. (Jeremiah 3:9)
- In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing. There, there is fornication on the part of Ephraim. Israel has defiled itself. (Hosea 6:10)

- For God's union with his people was considered like a kind of spiritual matrimony.
- And another, a second angel, followed, saying; She has fallen!
 Babylon the Great has fallen, she who made all the nations drink
 of the wine of the anger of her fornication! (Revelation 14:8)
- With whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, whereas those who inhabit the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication. (Revelation 17:2)
- And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and was adorned with gold and precious stone and pearls and had in her hand a golden cup that was full of disgusting things and the unclean things of her fornication. (Revelation 17:4)
- For because of the wine of the anger of her fornication all the nations have fallen victim, and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the traveling merchants of the earth became rich due to the power of her shameless luxury. (Revelation 18:3)
- Because his judgments are true and righteous. For he has executed judgment upon the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged the blood of his slaves at her hand. (Revelation 19:2)
- Babylon the Great, described in the Bible book of Revelation as a harlot, is a symbol of something religious. Her various sects, Christian and pagan, have claimed to be organizations of true worship.
- But she has consorted with the rulers of this world for power and material gain, and with her the kings of the earth committed fornication. Her unclean, filthy course of fornication has been detestable in God's sight and has caused great bloodshed and distress in the earth.
- And one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying; Come, I will show you the judgment upon the great harlot who sits on many waters. (Revelation 17:1)
- With whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, whereas those who inhabit the earth were made drunk with the

wine of her fornication. (Revelation 17:2)

- And he carried me away in the power of the spirit into a wilderness. And I caught sight of a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored wild beast that was full of blasphemous names and that had seven heads and ten horns. (Revelation 17:3)
- And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and was adorned with gold and precious stone and pearls and had in her hand a golden cup that was full of disgusting things and the unclean things of her fornication. (Revelation 17:4)
- And upon her forehead was written a name, a mystery. Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth. (Revelation 17:5)
- And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the holy ones and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. Well, on catching sight of her I wondered with great wonderment. (Revelation 17:6)
- For because of the wine of the anger of her fornication all the nations have fallen victim, and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the traveling merchants of the earth became rich due to the power of her shameless luxury. (Revelation 18:3)
- For her course she will suffer the judgment of God on those practicing fornication, namely, destruction.
- And the ten horns that you saw, and the wild beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire. (Revelation 17:16)
- That is why in one day her plagues will come, death and mourning and famine, and she will be completely burned with fire, because Yehowah God, who judged her, is strong. (Revelation 18:8)
- And the kings of the earth who committed fornication with her and lived in shameless luxury will weep and beat themselves in grief over her, when they look at the smoke from the burning of her. (Revelation 18:9)