

~HARLOT (363)

[Hebrews, *zoh-nah'*, Greek, *por'ne*]

.. A Prostitute

.. Figurative Use

.. A Prostitute

- The term is usually applied to a female who engages in sex relations outside the marriage bond, especially if she customarily does this for some form of hire.
- In fact, the Greek term *por'ne*, harlot, fornicatrix, prostitute comes from a root meaning sell.
- 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) Footnote
- The Hebrew term *zoh-nah'*, harlot, prostitute, comes from the root verb *za-nah'*, meaning play the harlot, have immoral intercourse, commit prostitution, fornicate.

See Also PROSTITUTE

- From the beginning, harlotry was condemned by God. The perfect marriage standard was established in Eden by God himself at the marriage of Adam and Eve, when He stated;
- 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)
- Though God condemned harlotry, he did permit concubinage and polygamy, even among his servants, until his due time to reestablish the perfect marriage standard through Jesus Christ.
- Jesus quoted the above words of his Father, and the apostle Paul pointed out that this rule was binding on the Christian congregation. He showed that a Christian who violates this rule joins himself to a harlot, as one body.

- In reply he said; Did you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female. (**Matthew 19:4**)
- And said; For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh? (**Matthew 19:5**)
- So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man put apart. (**Matthew 19:6**)
- They said to him; Why, then, did Moses prescribe giving a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her? (**Matthew 19:7**)
- He said to them; Moses, out of regard for your hardheartedness, made the concession to you of divorcing your wives, but such has not been the case from the beginning. (**Matthew 19:8**)
- I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery. (**Matthew 19:9**)
- What! Do you not know that he who is joined to a **harlot** is one body? For, The two, says he, will be one flesh. (**1 Corinthians 6:16**)
- The early view of **harlotry** among God's servants is illustrated in the case of Judah the great-grandson of Abraham. While living as an alien resident in Canaan, where **harlotry** was tolerated, the family head Judah had relations with his son Er's widow Tamar, who was disguised as a **harlot**.
- When it was discovered that Tamar was pregnant from the act, it was reported to Judah; Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot, and here she is also pregnant by her **harlotry**.
- Judah then ordered her to be burned, that is, first put to death, then burned as detestable because she was considered to be espoused to Judah's son Shelah.
- On discovering the full facts, Judah did not excuse himself for his act with a supposed harlot, but he said regarding Tamar; She is more righteous than I am, for the reason that I did not give her to Shelah my son.

- He excused Tamar for thus acting to have offspring from Judah after Judah had failed to give her to his son Shelah in order, that brother-in-law marriage might be performed toward her.
- In time Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. ([Genesis 38:6](#))
- But Er, Judah's firstborn, proved to be bad in the eyes of Yehowah, hence Yehowah put him to death. ([Genesis 38:7](#))
- In view of that Judah said to Onan; Have relations with your brother's wife and perform brother-in-law marriage with her and raise up offspring for your brother. ([Genesis 38:8](#))
- But Onan knew that the offspring would not become his, and it occurred that when he did have relations with his brother's wife he wasted his semen on the earth so as not to give offspring to his brother. ([Genesis 38:9](#))
- Now what he did was bad in the eyes of Yehowah, hence he put him also to death. ([Genesis 38:10](#))
- So Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-Law; Dwell as a widow in the house of your father until Shelah my son grows up. For he said to himself; He too may die like his brothers. Accordingly Tamar went and continued to dwell at her own father's house. ([Genesis 38:11](#))
- Thus the days became many and the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died, and Judah kept the period of mourning. After that he went up to the shearers of his sheep, he and Hirah his companion the Adullamite, to Timnah. ([Genesis 38:12](#))
- Then it was told to Tamar; Here your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep. ([Genesis 38:13](#))
- With that she removed the garments of her widowhood from her and covered herself with a shawl and veiled herself and sat down at the entrance of Enaim, which is along the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah had grown up and yet she had not been given as a wife to him. ([Genesis 38:14](#))
- When Judah caught sight of her, he at once took her for a **harlot**, because she had covered her face. ([Genesis 38:15](#))

- So he turned aside to her by the road and said; Allow me, please, to have relations with you. For he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. However, she said; What will you give me that you may have relations with me? (**Genesis 38:16**)
- To this he said; I myself shall send a kid of the goats from the herd. But she said; Will you give a security until you send it? (**Genesis 38:17**)
- And he continued; What is the security that I shall give you? To which she said; Your seal ring and your cord and your rod that is in your hand. Then he gave them to her and had relations with her, so that she became pregnant by him. (**Genesis 38:18**)
- After that she got up and went and removed her shawl off her and clothed herself with the garments of her widowhood. (**Genesis 38:19**)
- And Judah proceeded to send the kid of the goats by the hand of his companion the Adullamite in order to get back the security from the hand of the woman, but he never found her. (**Genesis 38:20**)
- And he went inquiring of the men of her place, saying; Where is that temple prostitute in Enaim along the road? But they kept saying; No temple prostitute has ever been in this place. (**Genesis 38:21**)
- Finally he returned to Judah and said; I never found her and, besides, the men of the place said; No temple **prostitute** has ever been in this place. (**Genesis 38:22**)
- So Judah said; Let her take them for herself, in order, that we may not fall into contempt. At any rate, I have sent this kid, but you, you never found her. (**Genesis 38:23**)
- 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-in-law, 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](#))
- **Harlotry** was condemned by the Law of God to Israel, although harlots existed in the land. ([Proverbs Chapter 7](#)) The Law strictly **forbade prostitution** of an Israelite girl.
- 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](#))
- 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](#))
- Any Israelite girl who had committed fornication and who later married under the fraudulent claim of being a virgin was to be stoned to death.
- 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](#))
- The payment that was obtained as the hire of a **harlot** was a disgusting thing and was unacceptable as a contribution to the sanctuary of Yehowah. This was in contrast with pagan practices wherein temple harlots were often a source of revenue.
- You must not bring the hire of a **harlot** or the price of a dog into the house of Yehowah your God for any vow, because they are something detestable to Yehowah your God, even both of them. ([Deuteronomy 23:18](#))

- Rahab, a **harlot** of the pagan city of Jericho, displayed a right heart toward Yehowah and acted to assist the Israelite spies sent out by Joshua. For her faith, and works in harmony therewith, her life was spared.
- She later joined in honorable marriage with Salmon of the tribe of Judah and became an ancestress of Jesus Christ. ([Joshua Chapter 2](#))
- And to the two men who had done the spying on the land, Joshua said; Go into the house of the woman, the **prostitute**, and bring out of there the woman and all who belong to her, just as you have sworn to her. ([Joshua 6:22](#))
- So the young men who had done the spying went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all who belonged to her, yes, all her family relationship they brought out, and they proceeded to set them down outside the camp of Israel. ([Joshua 6:23](#))
- And they burned the city with fire and everything that was in it. Only the silver and the gold and the articles of copper and iron they gave to the treasure of Yehowah's house. ([Joshua 6:24](#))
- And Rahab the **prostitute** and the household of her father and all who belonged to her, Joshua preserved alive, and she dwells in the midst of Israel down to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent out to spy on Jericho. ([Joshua 6:25](#))
- The book of the history of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham: ([Matthew 1:1](#))
- Salmon became father to Boaz by Rahab. Boaz became father to Obed by Ruth. Obed became father to Jesse. ([Matthew 1:5](#))
- In the same manner was not also Rahab the **harlot** declared righteous by works, after she had received the messengers hospitably and sent them out by another way? ([James 2:25](#))
- When Jesus Christ was on earth, he scathingly denounced the unbelieving chief priests and older men of influence, declaring that tax collectors and **harlots** were going ahead of them into the Kingdom of God.

- Now after he went into the temple, the chief priests and the older men of the people came up to him while he was teaching and said; By what authority do you do these things? And who gave you this authority? (**Matthew 21:23**)
- Which of the two did the will of his father? They said; The latter. Jesus said to them; Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and the **harlots** are going ahead of you into the kingdom of God. (**Matthew 21:31**)
- For John came to you in a way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. However, the tax collectors and the **harlots** believed him, and you, although you saw this, did not feel regret afterwards so as to believe him. (**Matthew 21:32**)
- These despised persons were right-hearted ones who received forgiveness through faith in Christ. Nevertheless, they had to clean up first from their **harlotry**, for those continuing to practice such immorality cannot inherit 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**)
- For you know this, recognizing it for yourselves, that no fornicator or unclean person or greedy person, which means being an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of the Christ and of God. (**Ephesians 5:5**)

•• Figurative Use

- The term **harlot** is also used figuratively to apply to a **professed worshiper of Yehowah, or to an organization or a nation that claims to worship him but that actually gives affection and worship to other gods.** Jerusalem became a **harlot** in this sense.

- In fact, she went so far that she did what was not normal for **harlots**, namely, instead of receiving pay, she paid pagan nations to practice **harlotry** with her. (**Ezekiel Chapter 23**)
- To all prostitutes they are accustomed to give a present, but you, you have given your presents to all those passionately loving you, and you offer a bribe to them to come in to you from all around in your acts of prostitution. (**Ezekiel 16:33**)
- And in your case the opposite thing takes place from that of other women in your acts of **prostitution**, and after your style no prostitution has been committed, even in your giving hire when no hire has been given to you, and so it occurs in the opposite way. (**Ezekiel 16:34**)
- Where Samaria, representing Israel, and Jerusalem, representing Judah, are likened to **prostitutes**.
- Revelation symbolically depicts a **harlot** who rides on a scarlet-colored wild beast and has as a name on her forehead Babylon the Great, the **mother** of the **harlots** and of the disgusting things of the earth. With her the kings of the earth committed fornication.
- 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**)

See Also BABYLON THE GREAT

See Also FORNICATION