



"The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below."

Answering Your Questions - (Yoga, Two Witnesses, Prosperity Gospel, Unbelievers, and More)

119 Ministries receives thousands of emails a year. And as you would expect, many of those emails contain questions. Quite often, we repeatedly receive various forms of the same questions. Ideally, we would like to have a teaching available for every question we receive, however, some questions can be answered rather briefly, and do not require a regular length teaching to serve as a response. That is the purpose of this teaching series, to offer an easily available vehicle to answer your common questions.

In this teaching series, we will read a collection of hand-picked questions that we have received via email. Then, for whatever it is worth, we will offer a brief response, hopefully leading those interested in the right direction to find the answers that they are seeking.

Before we begin, this teaching contains topics that may not be appropriate for younger viewers. Please use discretion.

So, let's get started. First question:

Hi! I know that yoga is related to other religions, so is it wrong to attend yoga classes and if so, can I still do yoga at home for exercise?

Yoga is becoming increasingly popular and has been for some time. A survey conducted by Yoga Alliance and Yoga Journal reported that the number of Americans doing yoga has grown to 36 million as of 2016, up from 20.4 million in 2012.

So what is Yoga?

Yoga is a physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in ancient India. The word yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root *yuj*, meaning “to yoke,” or “to unite”. This is because Yoga is a religious practice; its goal is to unite the person’s soul to the eternal soul of the universe. They describe this

unification with the phrase, "Atman is Brahman." Thus, Yoga by definition is spiritual exercise. It includes a variety of activities, including postures (*asanas*), breathing techniques (*pranayama*), meditation (*dhyana*), and lifestyle practices.

The foundation for successful Yoga practice begins with application of basic ethical principles called *yamas* or "restraints." These include non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, sexual restraint, and non-possessiveness.

So, is it wrong for someone in the Biblical faith to practice Yoga?

Although yoga is not a religion in and of itself, it is connected to religion, and stems historically from Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Both Buddhists and Hindus chant the sacred mantra 'Om' during their meditation. 'Om' is said to echo the sound of harmony in the universe. Because Yoga contains religious elements and it is an implementation of eastern spirituality, it is reasonable to question the compatibility of Yoga with the Biblical faith.

According to the Torah we are to not practice religious philosophies or idolatry (Deuteronomy 12:30-31, 1 Corinthians 10:14, Jeremiah 10:2-5). There is meaning behind some of the stretches and some of the stretches are actually prayers to Surya. Thus, it is very easy to cross a line if not careful.

One could argue that the religious elements could be stripped out, but then it is not yoga, just stretching.

It should also be mentioned that there are well-meaning Christians who might CALL something that they are doing Yoga, but it actually is just stretching. Some Christians who do stretches that don't involve all the distinct practices associated with "Yoga," still call it "Yoga" even though it isn't. So even if someone says that they are practicing Yoga, that might not actually be the case. It's like how people in the south call all soda "coke."

Stretches in of themselves are not incompatible with the Torah, but all of the religious and eastern philosophical baggage would certainly be of high concern.

It might be asked, but I don't mean it that way in my heart, does it still count? Well would you pray the Islamic shahada, even if you don't mean it? That is the decision that needs to be made.

Even if one could practice Yoga without engaging in its religion or philosophy, there are still some reasons for concern.

For example, there are those in the faith that understandably have deep concerns about Yoga and it could cause friction or tension between those attempting to practice a Torah-compatible version of Yoga.

The practice of Yoga is filled with Torah breaking landmines. A believer may try to navigate through those landmines, and practice Yoga while still keeping the Torah, but a better approach may be to simply take a stretching class instead.

The conclusion of the matter is that Yoga is a form of prayer from another religion that is being practiced. Technically, Christian yoga is an oxymoron, it would be like saying Christian paganism.

As an Ex-Jehovah's Witness, I have heard of the misuse of the two witness rule among Jehovah's

Witnesses. What is the true way to apply this teaching from the Bible?

119 Ministries does not share the same doctrine as Jehovah's Witnesses; however, we will attempt to answer the question the best that we are able. Jehovah's Witnesses say that a person who is accused of misconduct may not be disciplined or disfellowshipped unless there are at least two witnesses--two people who witnessed the misconduct." This two-witness doctrine is derived from Biblical concepts.

In the Torah, in the absence of a confession, two to three witnesses were required to determine guilt in a criminal accusation. This is considered a foundational investigative practice for the Torah-based judicial process.

Deuteronomy 19:15

A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.

Deuteronomy 17:6

On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.

We also see this presented in the New Testament in similar contexts.

1 Timothy 5:19

Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.

Matthew 18:16

But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

Hebrews 10:28

Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

Obviously, while there are similarities, our society does not live in a Torah-based judicial system. The spirit behind the command to have two or three witnesses is to protect innocent people from false accusations. However, having this high standard of evidence means that sometimes a guilty person may get away with his crimes, because there are not enough witnesses to convict him. The Scriptures place a higher priority on protecting the innocent from false accusations than making sure every guilty person gets punished. We are not aware of how Jehovah Witnesses have misused this doctrine. However, in regards to accusations against an elder, two to three witnesses should establish a matter if we are to follow Biblical protocol for fellowship. However, as it relates to criminal proceedings, we do not have a Torah-based judicial system and criminal matters would be left up to the state.

Do you all happen to have anything about what scripture says regarding this Prosperity Gospel that preaches that "God wants you to be rich/wealthy"? Please let me know, thank you.

The Prosperity Gospel teaches that we can use God to achieve personal wealth. Meaning, if we follow God the right way by saying or doing certain things then God's will is to bless us with finances or

material goods. The prosperity gospel movement closely resembles some of the destructive greed sects that infiltrated believers in the first century. For example, we see it mentioned in 1 Timothy.

1 Timothy 6:5

and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

1 Timothy 6:9-11

But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.

A favorite term of prosperity gospel teachers is “positive confession.” You may have also heard it said as “name it and claim it.” This is the idea that we can speak things into existence. God, in effect, becomes our personal genie and grants us our wishes. Prosperity teachers claim that what you say determines everything that happens to you. Confessions, especially the favors you demand of God, must all be stated positively and without wavering. Then God is required to answer. Thus, God’s ability to bless us supposedly hangs on our faith. However, James says the exact opposite.

James 4:13-16

Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”— yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.’ As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

The prosperity gospel says that God's will is to give us all of the material things we desire, but our Messiah's teachings clearly conflict with this idea.

Matthew 6:19

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,

This is not to say that the acquisition of wealth is inherently wrong. However, the purpose of our faith is not to use God for financial blessing, but for God to use us to glorify him. Yeshua does not say that we will be comfortable and happy, but that we will endure trials and suffering in this life (John 16:33).

Is being a lesbian, gay, or bi-sexual a sin?

Yes. Leviticus 18:22 prohibits sexual relations between two men. While Leviticus 18 does not explicitly mention lesbianism, Paul does in Romans 1:

Romans 1:26-27

For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with

men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

So, the practice of both male and female homosexuality are prohibited by the Scriptures.

Can you please tell me the Bible definition of “unbeliever?”

An unbeliever would be someone who does not believe or follow the one true God - YHWH.

How can a person whose spouse is found to have committed adultery beyond reasonable doubt marry again if there is no divorce law in the country where the married couple lives, like in the Philippines?

Unfortunately, we do not live in a Torah-based society and thus Biblical marriage / divorce / remarriage cannot always occur. We do have to follow the laws in the land we live in. So, if there is no way to legally obtain a divorce, then there wouldn't be a way to remarry. For more on this, please see our teaching series titled "[One Flesh](#)."

How do you categorize a person who professes that his/her GOD is not the GOD of the Christians nor of the Jews, but ONLY the GOD of Muslim people, a believer or unbeliever of YHWH?

A follower of Allah the Muslim god would be an unbeliever because they do not believe or follow YHWH. Along the same lines, sometimes we are asked whether Allah of the Qur'an is the same as YHWH in the Christian Bible. The answer would be a definitive no. You can tell what god you follow based on what instructions you follow. The commandments, or Torah, of YHWH are different than the commandments found in the Qur'an, thus they cannot be the same.

How important is the Siddur in my efforts to obey and glorify God? If it is important, how do I learn how to use it. I am 79 years old and needless to say as a Christian who has never used the Siddur I find it very challenging.

The Siddur is a Jewish book that contains a set order of daily prayers. The meaning of the word is derived from “order.” The order of prayers known to us today was formally fixed over many centuries.

God does not command us to use a Siddur to pray, so we do not think the Siddur is important in our efforts to obey and glorify God. Additionally, since the Siddur is an extrabiblical writing, we would urge that a believer use discernment and test the doctrines expressed by the Siddur to make sure that they align with the Scriptures.

There's a thing going around saying that Leviticus 18:22 and others did not refer to homosexuality until 1983. The claim is that it actually was referring to pedophilia, not homosexuality. That does appear to be the case in a 19th century German bible and supposedly a 16th Century Swedish one I think. When I brought up a few points, a United Methodist article talking about this came up. It's a discussion on the Greek word used, which means they weren't even going back to check the Hebrew. Is there any legitimacy to this claim?

The main claim in the United Methodist article is that these older Bible translations indicate that these verses prohibit only pederasty, not homosexuality. Supposedly, it was only later changed “because of what was happening in culture in the 1970s” (whatever that means).

Instead of looking at what old Bible translations from the 1600s apparently said, a better approach is to examine the actual Hebrew and Greek source texts themselves. The verse reads:

Leviticus 18:22

You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.

The Hebrew word for "male" is zakar. Zakar means a human or animal of the male sex, and it is used to describe males of all ages. It is a basic term used for the male sex when sexual distinctions are in view (TWOT. “גְּזָרָה”).

Since the term encompasses males of all ages, there would need to be a very good contextual reason to limit it to meaning only a male child. Contextually, however, it is very clear that the verse means to prohibit consensual male-male sex, not just homosexual rape between an adult male and male child. For instance, both parties are held accountable for the sin (Leviticus 20:13), indicating that the text considers this to be an act between consenting individuals. Regarding this verse, Hebrew scholar Roy Gane writes, “The language is devastatingly untechnical, leaving no room for ambiguity” (Roy Gane, Leviticus-Numbers (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 321).

What about the Greek term? It also simply denotes members of the male sex regardless of age. Interestingly, it's the same term used in Romans 1:27!

Romans 1:27

and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

So, the Greek term does not really indicate anything different from the Hebrew. Again, there would need to be a good contextual reason to limit the term to meaning only a male child, but no such reason has been provided.

That's all of the questions that we have for this part of the series. If this series and presentation format interested you, there are many more questions we will be covering in the subsequent parts of this teaching series. As always, if you have questions for 119 Ministries, please use the Contact Us page offered on our website, <http://119ministries.com/contact-us>. And if you do contact us, thank you for your patience as our team works to respond.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching.

Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom!

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

EMAIL: Info@119ministries.com

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/119Ministries

WEBSITE: www.TestEverything.net & www.ExaminaloTodo.net

TWITTER: www.twitter.com/119Ministries#