

# ONE WIFE, OR MANY.

BY PRES. JOSEPH SMITH.

“Ye shall know the *truth*, and the truth shall make you **FREE**.”—Jesus Christ, in John’s Gospel, 8:32.

If there was ever a time when the people calling themselves Latter Day Saints, and The People of God, had need to make inquiry concerning their faith, that time is now. The persecutions of the early days of the church, the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, the flight into the wilderness, the strange growth in the valleys of the mountains, the attitude of the people of the Republic, the action of the Congress, the prosecutions in the Courts of the United States and the consequent fine and imprisonment of many for alleged breaking of the laws of the land, all point to the fact that there is a necessity for a close examination of the Law of the Lord, a rehearing of the Written Word, that the truth may be made manifest, those in the faith confirmed, and those in error be made free.

## IS MARRIAGE OF DIVINE INSTITUTION?

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”—Gen. 1:26.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”—Gen. 1:27.

This is the brief statement of historic revelation in regard to the creation of man. At the close of that work it was commended of him who did it, “and, behold it was very good.”

A more explicit history of the event is given in the second of Genesis, as follows:

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.” . . . “And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.”

Adam accepted the woman the Lord brought to him, and acknowledged her in her condition as wife:

“This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.”—Gen. 2:18, 23, 24.

This was the manner of the instituting of the marriage relation by the Lord God, at the time man was created. There is no mistaking the objects intended to be accomplished by this relationship.

First, companionship:

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone.”—Gen. 2:18.

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Second, replenishing the earth with the measure of man, according to the divine rule given:

"And God blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it."—Gen. 1: 28.

"This command was given in Eden, the marriage having been accomplished there. The parties were Adam and Eve, one man and one woman; one husband and one wife only in wedlock in Eden according to the "image" and "likeness" of God, the expression of his will on earth while man was in his Edenic and pure condition.

The conditions of this marriage were continued after the fall and the banishment from Eden, changed only in this, that the woman's conception was to be multiplied and her desire was to be unto her husband:

"I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."—Gen. 3: 16.

This shows that the design of God in establishing marriage was the companionship of the sexes and the peopling of the earth, and that the number of persons in the relation of wedlock, both in Eden and after the expulsion from the garden, was restricted to two persons, one of either sex.

Of this marriage the Lord said to the church in a revelation given March, 1831, when a mission to the Shakers, who held strange views on marriage, was about to be taken:

"And again, I say unto you, that whoso forbiddeth to marry, is not ordained of God, for marriage is ordained of God unto man; wherefore it is lawful that he should have one wife, and they *twain* shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation; and that it might be filled with the measure of man, according to his creation before the world was made."—Old Ed., Doc. and Cov., Sec. 65: par. 3.

In this revelation the Lord told the church just what the institution of marriage was—one man, one wife—that they *twain* (not more) should be one flesh; that it was done in accordance with man's "creation before the world was made," and was for the purpose that the earth "might be filled with the measure of man according to" that "creation."

This sustains the history given in Genesis, and qualifies the command, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth," found in Genesis, (1: 28), when God blessed man after his creation and *before* the fall. At that time the earth was to be peopled, and God, who created it, provided the means and methods by which it was to be done.

After a time had passed, the inhabitants of the earth became cor-

rupt; men multiplied; daughters were born unto them; "the sons of God [who, it is said, were men holding priesthood] saw that these daughters were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose."—Gen. 6: 1, 2. This, with the other wickedness of man, displeased God, and he determined to destroy men off the earth. In order, however, that the objects of man's creation should not be defeated, God saved Noah and his three sons, with one wife each—no more—by His command. God told Noah to take his wife, and his three sons and their wives into the ark prepared for their safety from the flood, assigning as the reason for choosing Noah:

"For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."—Gen. 7: 1.

Here again the purpose of God was to perpetuate the race of man upon the earth according to the original order; and to do this he chose four men having only *one wife each*, and saved them to people the earth with, in direct keeping with the method adopted at the beginning when marriage, in Eden, was instituted.

This ought to be conclusive, being the testimony of two great facts presented in the material creation and the perpetuation of the race of man after creation in peopling the earth and filling it with the measure of man.

In addition to these two facts there is a third. In the Book of Mormon is given the history of the flight of Lehi from the land of Jerusalem unto the land promised him of God; and in that history Lehi, his sons—Laman, Lemuel, Sam and Nephi, also Ishmael and his family, and one Zoram—were the chosen persons to people the land to which they were going by the command and guidance of God. Here, as in the case of Noah, the provision made by the Almighty, and the rule of their marriage relation, was one man, one wife—a fact so full of force that he who reads should be at no loss to understand that God proposed to see that the rule laid down by example in the beginning should be maintained, so far as His action in providing for filling the earth with mankind was concerned.

This secures a three-fold cord of evidence. First; the creation—one man, one woman, in marriage. Second; the re-peopling of the earth by Noah and his sons, each with one wife only, after the destruction by the flood. Third; the settling of a new land by Lehi and his family, each man with but one wife. The first two evidences being from the Bible history, and the last from the Book of Mormon. And to this may be added the further fact from the Book of Mormon, that the Jaredites, whom God led out to first people America, were monogamists; for when Riplakish "did have many wives and concubines," and as a consequence "did lay that upon men's shoulders which was grievous to be borne," (Ether 4: 5), all of it was sharply

condemned as not "right in the sight of the Lord." For God had ordained from the first that by monogamy, and not polygamy, he would "raise up seed" unto himself. Further proof of this is seen in 1 Nephi 2: 2; 2 Nephi 12: 6, 7; Mosiah 8: 4, 5; Jacob 2: 6, 7; Ether 1: 2; Malachi 2: 13-17, etc., etc.

#### SPIRITUAL EVIDENCES IN SUPPORT OF THE FOREGOING FACTS.

The evidences heretofore given may be called the material facts of the subject, and the following will be given as spiritual precepts, classified.

#### FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

1. "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness."—Gen. 1: 26.

"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."—Gen. 1: 28.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be *one flesh*."—Gen 2: 24.

2. "But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee."—Gen. 6: 18.

"Be fruitful and multiply upon the earth."—Gen. 9: 1, 7.

3. The prophet Malachi brings accusation against Israel, the "burden of the word of the Lord" thus:

"Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did he not make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth."—Mal. 2: 14, 15.

This furnishes from the Old Testament three witnesses of precept, corresponding to the three of fact already given.

#### FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. Jesus being interrogated by the Pharisees, answered them thus:

"Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they *twain* shall be one flesh?"—Matt. 19: 4, 5.

2. Mark relates this transaction thus:

"Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they *twain* shall be one flesh; so then they are no more *twain*, but *one flesh*."—Mark 10: 5-8.

3. Paul reiterates this principle:

"For *two*, saith he, shall be one flesh."—1 Cor. 6: 16.

"To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have *her own* husband."—1 Cor. 7: 2. (See also Eph. 5: 31).

These three evidences from the New Testament agree with both the facts of the Old and its precepts.

#### FROM THE BOOK OF MORMON.

"Wherefore, I must tell you the truth, according to the plainness of the word of God. For behold, as I enquired of the Lord, thus came the word unto me,

saying, Jacob, get thou up into the temple on the morrow, and declare the word which I shall give thee, unto this people." . . . "And were it not that I must speak unto you concerning a grosser crime [than pride], my heart would rejoice exceedingly, because of you. But the word of the Lord burthens me because of your grosser crimes. For behold, thus saith the Lord, This people begin to wax in iniquity; they understand not the Scriptures; for they seek to *excuse themselves* in committing whoredoms, because of the things which were written concerning David, and Solomon his son. Behold, David and Solomon truly had *many wives* and concubines, which thing was *abominable* before me, saith the Lord; wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a *righteous branch* [seed] from the fruit of the loins of Joseph. Wherefore, I, the Lord God, will not suffer that this people shall do *like unto them of old* [in having many wives and concubines]. Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord; For there shall not any man among you have save it be *one wife* and concubines he shall have *none*: For I, the Lord God, delighteth in the *chastity* of women." . . . "Ye know that *these commandments* were given to our father Lehi; wherefore ye have known them before." . . . "Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad examples before them; and the sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you. Behold the Lamanites, your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness and the cursings which hath come upon their skins, are more righteous than you; for they have not forgotten the commandment of the Lord which was given unto our fathers, that they should have save it were *one wife*; and concubines they should have none." . . . "And now this commandment they observe to keep; wherefore, because of this observance in keeping *this commandment*, the Lord God will not destroy them, but will be merciful unto them; and one day they shall become a blessed people." . . . "Arouse the faculties of your soul; shake yourselves, that ye may awake from the slumber of death; and loose yourselves from the pains of hell, that ye may not become angels to the devil, to be cast into that lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death."—Book of Jacob 2: 3, 6, 7, 9, 11.

The following shows the evils resulting from polygamy:

"And now it came to pass that Zeniff conferred the kingdom upon Noah, one of his sons;" . . . "and he did not walk in the ways of his father. For behold, he did not keep the *commandments* of God, but he did walk after the desires of his own heart. And he had *many wives* and concubines, and did *cause* his people to *commit sin* and do that which was *abominable* in the sight of the Lord."—Book of Mosiah 7: 1.

In these precepts, taken from the Book of Mormon, the principle of the marriage relation as laid down in Genesis, Malachi, Matthew, Mark, 1 Corinthians 6: 16; 7: 2; and Ephesians 5: 51, is again clearly stated.

#### AS COMMANDED BY GOD.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife."—Gen. 2:24.

"Let none deal treacherously *against the wife* of his youth."—Mal. 2:15.

"And rejoice with the *wife* of thy youth. Let *her* be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou always ravished with her love."—Solomon. Proverbs 5:18, 19.

#### AS ENDORSED AND RE-ENACTED.

Jesus said:

"For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and cleave to his *wife*; and *they twain* shall be one flesh."—Matt. 19: 5.

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his *wife*; and *they twain* shall be *one flesh*."—Mark 10: 7, 8.

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## IN THE BOOK OF MORMON.

"Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the *word of the Lord*; For there shall not any man among you have save it be *one wife*: and concubines he shall have none."—Book of Jacob 2:6.

"For they have not forgotten the *commandment of the Lord*, which was given unto our fathers, that they should have save it were *one wife*; and concubines they should have none."—Book of Jacob 2:9.

## IN THE DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS.

"Thou shalt love thy *wife* with all thy heart, and shall cleave unto her and *none else*."—Old Ed., sec. 13, par. 7.

"Marriage is ordained of God unto man; wherefore it is lawful that he should have *one wife*, and they *twain* shall be *one flesh*."—Old Ed., sec. 65, par. 3.

The evidences from the Book of Mormon are made more binding upon those to whom it came from the following statements from the Revelations:

"It is because of your dead works that I have caused this last covenant, and this church to be built up unto me; even as in days of old."—Doc. and Cov., Old Ed., sec. 47.

This was given in answer to the inquiry of the church concerning the re-baptism of those seeking admission on their baptism in other churches, and shows that the church was being built up even as it was at the beginning, that is, being *ruled and governed by similar laws and ordinances*, which clearly includes marriage.

The Lord said in a revelation given September, 1832:

"And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all; and they shall *remain under this condemnation* until they repent and remember the *new covenant*, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I *have given* them, not only to say, but to *do* according to that which I *have written*."—Doc. and Cov., Old Ed., sec. 4, par. 8.

In the foregoing revelation to the church it is made quite plain that for lack of obedience to the commands of the Lord found in the *new covenant*, the Book of Mormon and "the former commandments" in Doctrine and Covenants, condemnation was resting upon the inhabitants, the children of Zion, and that it would *continue* to rest upon them until they should remember the things commanded in that New Covenant to "do them" and also remember and *do* what had been revealed to them as a church.

## THE LORD SEEKS A RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE.

It is clear that in instituting the marriage relation in the purity that reigned in Eden, God designed it as an innocent, a pure relation between the sexes, the fruit of which was to be "righteous." The fact that Noah, who was a man having only *one wife*, and was found "righteous," a "just man and perfect in his generations," was chosen as the one through whom God would save the race from extinction, and replenish the earth; and that His command to Noah included but one man and *one woman* in married companionship, is clear proof that such choice and such command were for the purpose of preserving a "righteous" *seed* upon the earth. The object had in view by God in the creation, as stated by the prophet Malachi, was that

He "might seek a godly seed."—Mal. 2:15. The object had in view by God in commanding Lehi to depart from Jerusalem, and the leading of him and his posterity into the land promised to them, Lehi and his wife, and his sons with *one wife* each, and one only, is thus stated in the Book of Jacob, Book of Mormon:

"Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch [seed] from the fruit of the loins of Joseph."—Jacob 2:6, 7.

And God asserts his right to command in these matters, for he says:

"For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise [that is, if he did not in the future *renew* such command] they shall hearken unto these things," [which he had already given.]

In complete harmony with this statement of the object of God in bringing Lehi from Jerusalem, is the revelation given to the church in January, 1831:

"And that ye might escape the power of the enemy, and be *gathered* unto me a *righteous people*, without spot and blameless: wherefore, for this cause I gave unto you the commandment, that ye should go to the Ohio; and there I will give unto you my law."—Doc. and Cov., Old Ed., sec. 12, par. 7.

That law, given the very next month, February, 1831, contains this binding provision:

"Thou shalt love thy *wife* with all thy heart, and shall cleave unto her and *none else*."—Doc. and Cov., Old Ed., sec. 13, par. 7.

From these testimonies we learn that the Bible says that, by the one wife rule, God would "seek a *godly seed*," that the Book of Mormon teaches that, by the one wife rule, God designed to "raise up unto him a righteous branch or "seed;" and that by the same one wife rule, God would in these latter days gather unto Him a "righteous people, without spot and blameless."

#### HAS THE OBJECT FOR WHICH THIS LAW WAS GIVEN BEEN ATTAINED?

From the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ, April 6th, 1830, to June 27th, 1844, a period of fourteen years, the elders preached the gospel—"the New Covenant"—and taught the purity of the marriage relation as adopted and proclaimed in and by the Solemn Assembly of the church held on August 17th, 1835, as follows:

"We declare that we believe that one man should have one wife and one woman but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again." (Doctrine and Covenants, section on Marriage.)

During this period about one hundred and fifty thousand souls obeyed the Word and were admitted into the church. Plural marriage, or having more than one wife at one time, was not known among the teachings of the church.

After the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, plural marriage was often taught, secretly, and on August 29th, 1852, Brigham Young had it proclaimed, publicly, without any action upon it by the Assembly, Quorums or Councils, contrary to the rules and usages of

the church; for the Lord commanded his ministry in the beginning to assemble "to agree upon" his "word" (Rev. Feb. 4th, 1831, in Doc. and Cov.); "for all things must be done in *order* and by *common consent*, by the prayer of faith." (Rev. Sept., 1830, Doc. and Cov., Old Ed., 51:4). The revelations and other documents setting forth "the items of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, for the government of the church," were formally examined, discussed and approved "by the authorities of the church," in "A General Assembly of the church," at Kirtland, Ohio, August 17th, 1835, and became "a law, and a rule of faith and practice to the church," each quorum, separately, passing upon it. (See *Mill. Star*, vol. 15, p. 299.) That Joseph the Seer both taught and practiced this order is seen in the published testimony of the Twelve in *Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, pages 649 and 650, Sept. 15th, 1844, where it reads: "There is a way by which all revelations purporting to be from God, through any man, can be tested. Brother Joseph gave us the plan; says he, when *all* the quorums are assembled and organized in order, let the revelation be presented to the quorums; if it pass one let it go to another; and if it pass that, to another, and so on until it has passed *all* the quorums; and if it pass the whole without running against a snag, you may know it is of God. But if it runs against a snag, then says he, it wants inquiring into; you must see to it."

Pres. Joseph Smith was so particular in guarding the Saints against possible errors, deception, and misrule, that he would not suffer himself nor even an entire quorum (and that quorum the First Presidency or the Twelve) to give to the church rules or usages for its government until such had been presented to, discussed, and adopted by the regularly organized quorums of the church, for he says of such: "These resolutions must needs pass through each quorum separately, beginning at the presidency [of the quorums], and consequently it must first be thrown into the hands of the President of the Deacons and his Council, as equal rights and privileges is my motto; and one man is as good as another, if he behaves as well; and that all men should be esteemed alike, without regard to distinctions of an official nature. The resolutions [were] passed through the President of the Deacons and his Council by their unanimous voice. It was then thrown before the Presidents of the several quorums, and their Council, in the following order, and in the same manner as before; viz., the Teachers, Priests, Bishop of Kirtland, Bishop of Zion, Elders, High Priests, Seventy, High Council of Zion, High Council of Kirtland, the Twelve, and lastly, into the hands of the Presidency of the church, and *all the quorums*, and received their unanimous sanction."—*Mill. Star*, vol. 15, p. 647; also, *Messenger and Advocate*, p. 267, 268.

Pres. Brigham Young, in 1852, also before and since, did not follow these instructions and usages when introducing polygamy and other strange doctrines contrary to the law and usages and teachings of the church as set forth in all its accepted standard books, (and those of the Utah Mormons, up to 1876), and as a consequence the Saints were confused and the church thrown into great disorder and reproach, being in a great measure powerless, and "like the salt that has lost its savor" and "trodden under the feet

of men," as predicted in the Revelation of December 16th, 1833, in Doctrine and Covenants, all of which would have been avoided had the rules and usages taught by the Seer been observed.

Pres. Joseph Smith, his quorum, also no other officer of the church, and no other quorum, nor all the officers and quorums combined, ever had the right or authority to teach or practice contrary to the duly accepted and regularly authorized doctrines and covenants of the church and the rules and usages which the Seer and his fellow ministers in a regular, official, public manner provided and adopted. And whenever and wherever any one or any number of the church violated such doctrines, covenants, rules and usages, they were transgressors, and should have been dealt with as such and the law and order of God and his church honored and maintained.

The official character of Pres. Joseph Smith should be judged by his official ministrations as set forth in the well authenticated, accepted official documents of the church up to June 27th, 1844. His personal, private conduct should not enter into this discussion. They are matters of which but few could know anything, and whatever they were, they can not effect any change, not even the slightest modification of the publicly, regularly adopted laws and order of the church.

It is easy to charge that certain persons taught and did certain things *secretly*, and it may be most difficult, or quite impossible, to disprove such charge, even though it be false. But when a public official, and an eminent one too, is charged with teaching and doing secretly that which is directly contrary to his universal and ever repeated public teachings, contrary to the publicly avowed and regularly endorsed doctrines and usages of the church he represents, and contrary to his official authority, such charges should be sustained only by unimpeachable and disinterested witnesses. And when such charges are well sustained, then *the individual*, and not the church, nor its doctrine, should be held responsible. Put the blame where it belongs. God is no respecter of persons. Every one must answer for their own doings.

Since August 29th, 1852, a period of over thirty-six years, the increase in the factions that have taught plural marriage has been small, expensive, and declining, whether by natural increase or conversion—a most remarkable exhibit when compared with the first fourteen years of the church's history. Why this great falling off? And who is responsible for it?

The teaching of the Bible in history, and precept, is against polygamy and in favor of the one wife principle. This is also the teaching and history of the Book of Mormon. And the direct and positive commands and revelations of Christ to the church during the lifetime of Joseph Smith and the period of the greatest prosperity and increase of the church, are all in favor of the one wife principle.

#### CHANGE TO PLURAL MARRIAGE.

How, and by whom, was this change from the one wife rule to plural marriage made? And when made, by what authority was it done?

Pres. Brigham Young stated, August 29th, 1852, that Joseph Smith gave, privily, a revelation by which plural marriage was commanded. He also presented what he said was "a copy" of that revelation, stating that the original was burned by Emma, Joseph Smith's wife. The presentation of this so-called "copy" by Pres. B. Young, on that day, August 29th, 1852, was not accompanied by essential proofs of its authenticity as a correct copy of an original document, properly placed before the several and entire quorums of the church for examination and acceptance. No evidence proper was given as to when, or why Emma Smith burned the original, or how it came to be in her possession to be burned. No privilege of examination, acceptance or rejection by vote of the people, was given on that or any subsequent day. It was eight years and two months after the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and in the presence of only a small number of those claiming to be Saints. Pres. B. Young, by whom the paper called "a copy" of an original revelation was presented, was known to have been a polygamist for a number of years before this revelation was presented. He stated that the copy had been in his possession for some time. All of this warrants suspicion as to the genuineness of that "copy."

Mrs. Emma Bidamon, the widow of Joseph Smith, affirmed positively, that she never saw, and never burned any such document; and this affirmation she consistently maintained during her life.

This so-called revelation should not be received as from God for the following reasons:

1. The document presented August 29th, 1852, purports to be a copy of an original; but it is not sufficiently identified as a correct copy.

2. Satisfactory proof was not made that there ever was such original; or that such original was not then in existence and could not be produced, which proof should have been made before a copy could be presented.

3. Neither original nor copy was properly presented to the church, either before Joseph Smith's death, or after it. Hence it was and is without any authority from the church.

4. All the revelations given to the church, and accepted by it during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, in which marriage is named, or referred to, are monogamous only, and agree with the teachings of the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

5. The published declarations of the church from 1830 to 1844, founded upon the revelations to the church, are all of them monogamous.

6. The so-called copy of a revelation presented by Pres. B. Young, August 29th, 1852, contradicts, or contravenes all the commands and rules of the law of the Lord concerning marriage as given to the church during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, and is also contrary to the law of the land, which law the church was ever admonished to keep, the language of the command being: "He that keepeth the law of God, hath no need to break the law of the land."—Doc. and Cov., 25: 5, Old Ed.

7. The laws of the land during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, in

all the places where he lived, recognized but one husband and one wife in marriage; and to marry more than one of either was unlawful and punishable as a crime. God, who gave the revelations to the church by which the one wife rule was commanded and enjoined, knew that such laws existed; therefore he could not have commanded the church to "keep the laws of the land," and afterwards give a command requiring the breaking of those laws.

For the foregoing reasons the so-called revelation should be rejected. And for the reasons already given concerning the origin of marriage and the further reasons given below, the doctrine of plural, or polygamous marriage, should be rejected as not having a divine origin, and therefore unlawful:

1. Joseph Smith was the human instrument through whom a dispensation of the gospel was committed to man.

2. Every gospel dispensation—Adam's, Noah's, Christ's on the eastern continent; and the Jaredites and Lehi's and Christ's on the western—were alike monogamic in the institution of marriage.

3. The dispensation committed through Joseph Smith, like each preceding gospel one, was monogamic in its marriage institution.

4. Polygamy—the having more than one wife at the same time—was specifically forbidden to the Church of Christ as established by command of God by Joseph Smith and others in 1830. (*Book of Mormon*, Jacob 2d chapter).

5. Monogamy—the having but one wife at the same time—was instituted in the Church of Christ established in 1830, by direct revelation from Jesus Christ the great Spiritual and Divine Head of the church. Doctrine and Covenants, section 13:[42], paragraph 7. *Ibid*, section 65:[49], paragraph 3. *Ibid*, section 109:[111]. The latter reference is found in all the editions of the Book of Covenants published by the church in Europe and America, except and until the one published in Utah in 1876, from which it is expunged and the so-called revelation on plural marriage put in its stead by Brigham Young, and that, too, without the direction of the Utah Church.

6. Monogamy was adopted, and polygamy declared to be a crime by the church in 1835, in public Assembly; and this action was endorsed by the publication of the article then adopted, in repeated editions of the Church Articles and Covenants from that year until 1876, including the Liverpool edition of 1854.

7. No revelation from God authorizing the abrogation of the monogamic rule, and the substitution of a plural wife system, or polygamy, was ever received, presented to the church and adopted by it during the lifetime of Joseph Smith.

8. Joseph Smith denounced polygamy in February, 1844. (*Times and Seasons*, volume 5, page 423.

And but a few days before his death Joseph sought an interview with William Marks, who was then President of the stake of Nauvoo, President of the High Council of the Church, and a trusted and well beloved friend and adviser, and of that interview concerning individual members of the church who were advocating polygamy, Bro. Marks, in 1860, testified as follows:

"I met with Brother Joseph. He said that he wanted to converse with me on the affairs of the church, and we retired by ourselves. I will give his words verbatim, for they are indelibly stamped upon my mind. He said he had desired for a long time to have a talk with me on the subject of polygamy. He said it eventually would prove the overthrow of the church, and we should soon be obliged to leave the United States, unless it could be speedily put down. He was satisfied that it was a cursed doctrine, and that there must be every exertion made to put it down. He said that he would go before the congregation and proclaim against it, and I must go into the High Council, and he would prefer charges against those in transgression, and I must sever them from the church unless they made ample satisfaction. There was much more said, but this was the substance.

"The mob commenced to gather about Carthage in a few days after, therefore there was nothing done concerning it.

"After the Prophet's death I made mention of this conversation to several, hoping and believing that it would have a good effect; but to my great disappointment, it was soon rumored about that Bro. Marks was about to apostatize, and that all that he said about the conversation with the Prophet was a tissue of lies. From that time I was satisfied that the church would be disorganized, and the death of the Prophet and Patriarch tended to confirm me in that opinion. From that time I was looking for a reorganization of the Church and Kingdom of God. I feel thankful that I have lived to again behold the day when the basis of the church is the revelations of Jesus Christ, which is the only sure foundation to build upon. I feel to invite all my brethren to become identified with us, for the Lord is truly in our midst."

—The True Latter Day Saints' Herald, January, 1860.

9. The existence and teaching of the doctrine of plurality of wives in and by the church at Nauvoo in 1844, was publicly denied by Hyrum Smith, one of the First Presidency, on March 15th, 1844. (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 474).

10. The official organ of the church, the *Times and Seasons*, of April 1st, 1844, contains the following denunciation:

"If any man writes to you, or preaches to you, doctrines contrary to the Bible, the Book of Mormon, or the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, set him down as an impostor." . . . "You need not wait to write to us to know what to do with such men; you have the authority with you,—try them by the principles contained in the *acknowledged word of God*. If they preach, or teach, or practice contrary to that, disfellowship them; cut them off from among you as useless and dangerous branches."—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 490.

11. Polygamy is not taught in any part of the acknowledged word of God, but was suffered, like divorce, (Deut. 24: 1; Matt. 19:7-9); revenge, (Ex. 21: 24; Lev. 24: 20, etc); and "hating" enemies, (Deut. 23: 6, with Matt. 5: 43-48).

And as to the practice of plural marriage, etc., by David and Solomon, Abraham, Jacob and others among the ancient Israelites, it is clearly and sharply repudiated in the Book of Mormon where the Lord says:

"David and Solomon truly had *many wives* and concubines, which thing was *abominable* before me, saith the Lord." . . . "I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do *like unto them of old*. Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken unto the word of the Lord; for there shall not any man among you have save it be *one* wife; and concubines he shall have none."—Jacob 2: 6.

The Holy Scriptures, translated by Joseph Smith the Seer, a most important work which he did between 1831 and 1834, is in strict harmony with the Book of Mormon in respect to the great wicked-

ness into which David and Solomon fell; for that says of Solomon that the Lord commanded thus:

“And if thou wilt walk in my ways to keep my statutes, and my commandments, then I will lengthen thy days, and thou shalt not walk in *unrighteousness as did thy father David*”—1 Kings 3:14.

Of the sins of both David and Solomon the following is said:

“For it came to pass, when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was *not perfect* with the Lord his God, and it became *as the heart of David his father*.” . . . “And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, *as David his father*, and went not fully after the Lord.” . . . “And his [Solomon’s] heart is *become as David his father*; and he *repenteth not* as did David his father, that I may forgive him. Howbeit, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I will make him prince all the days of his life, for David my servant’s sake, *whom I chose because he kept my commandments and my statutes in that day*.”

And to Jeroboam the Lord said:

“And it shall be if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant *did in the day that I blessed him*, I will be with thee and build thee a sure house as I built for David, and give Israel unto thee. And for the *transgression of David*, and also for the people, I have rent the kingdom, and for this I will afflict the seed of David, but not forever.”—1 Kings 11:4, 6, 33, 34, 38, 39.

Afterward the Lord said to Jeroboam by the prophet Ahijah:

“Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to thee, *because he kept not my commandments*. But thou hast not been as my servant David *when he followed me with all his heart only to do right in mine eyes*.”—1 Kings 14:7, 8.

Of king Abijah it says:

“And he walked in all the sins of his father, [Rehoboam], which he had done before him; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, *as the Lord commanded David his father*. Nevertheless for David’s sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem, because David did right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from all that he commanded him, to sin against the Lord, *but repented of the evil all the days of his life*, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite, wherein the Lord *cursed him*.”—1 Kings 15:3, 4, 5.

Of king Asa it says:

“And Asa did right in the eyes of the Lord, *as he commanded David his father*.”—1 Kings 15:11.

By all these texts, as well as by those from the Book of Mormon, we have the best of evidence that David and Solomon became very sinful men, and that their examples in many respects are condemned and should be shunned, and that their polygamous practices were all evil in the sight of God; also that David did truthfully say:

“Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; *they are more than the hairs of my head*.”—Ps. 40:12.

Will the Saints heed these teachings, honor God and bless their souls with life and rest and salvation in keeping them? Men may err and do evil; but “the law of the Lord is perfect.” “Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them.”

Abraham took a plural wife through the *unbelief* of himself and Sarah in the promises of God. (Gen. 15:3-6, with 16:1-5.) And he *put her away* by the command of God. (Gen. 21:12, with Gal.

4:22-31.) All polygamists should do the latter, and thus "do the works of Abraham" which were commanded of the Lord. Isaac had but *one* wife, for he kept "the way of the Lord" as foreshown in Genesis 18:19. Jacob was forced into polygamy by the vile fraud of Laban, (Genesis 29:20-30), Laban being a crafty money-lover, also an idolator. (Gen. 31:19, 30). Jesus condemned the having of two or more wives at the same time when he said:

"Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery."—Matt. 19:9.

For, the wife having been put away unlawfully, she was still the lawful wife of the man; and when he married another—a plural wife—it was unlawful and condemnable Jesus said. Whoever has practiced or taught plural marriage—polygamy—and whoever does so now, does it in violation of the law and order of God both in former and in latter days, and also in violation of the laws of the land which the Saints should obey.

Ye men of Latter Day Israel, the crisis is upon you. "Ye can not serve God and Mammon." By a return to the ways of the Lord in this matter, as those ways have been clearly declared in the Word of the Lord, "rest" and "peace" and "safety" and "favor" will be found.

The sons of Joseph, the Martyred Prophet and Seer, and their fellow Saints, appeal to you that you hearken to the word of the Lord: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls."

Let every person be careful, and read, and ponder well what he is doing; for the day is come when judgment has begun at the house of God. "Choose ye whom ye will serve,"—the Lord unto life, or the flesh unto condemnation.

## THE MINISTRY OF JOSEPH'S SONS.

BY W. W. BLAIR.

That the sons of Joseph Smith, the Seer, were to be the servants of God and be appointed by Him to build up and set in order the church founded by their father and others through the commandments of the Lord, is clearly set forth in the revelations of God and the teachings of Joseph the Seer which the Saints profess to believe. For the Lord said to Joseph and others, December 6th, 1832, in Doctrine and Covenants: "Therefore, thus saith the Lord unto you with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers—for ye are lawful heirs according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God—therefore your life and the priesthood hath remained, and must needs remain through *you and your lineage*, until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began."

By this we are assured that the priesthood held by Joseph Smith the Seer "must needs remain" in his "lineage" "according to the flesh," "until the restoration of all things" promised of God.

And in harmony with this divine provision, the Lord, on January 19th, 1841, said of Joseph the Seer and "his posterity," when provision was being made for a suitable home for the first President of the church, and his successors, in the "Nauvoo House,"—"Let it be built unto my name, and let my name be named upon it, and let my servant Joseph and his house have place therein from generation to generation; for this anointing have I put upon his head, that his blessing [of priesthood authority and calling] shall also be put upon the *head* [first, eldest] of his posterity ["lineage"] after him; and as I said unto Abraham concerning the kindreds of the earth, even so I say unto my servant Joseph, in thee, *and in thy seed*, shall the kindred of the earth be blessed."

This command and promise of God, found in all the editions of the Doctrine and Covenants except that of 1835, is plain and conclusive testimony that the priesthood "anointing" and "blessing" of the "choice Seer" must, by the decree of God, go to, and be found with, "the head of his posterity, *after him*"—his "seed"—and that, too, "according to the flesh" or "lineage" as before seen.

In further proof that the sons of Joseph, according to the will and foreknowledge of God, were to be servants of God and his Saints, and were to take prominent positions in the Lord's work, we give the following testimony of Joseph the Seer, written January 2d, 1844, and published in the *Times and Seasons*, volume 5, page 395, in a letter to John C. Calhoun: "While I have powers of body and mind; while water runs and grass grows; while virtue is lovely and vice hateful; while a stone points out a sacred spot where a fragment of American liberty once was, *I or my posterity* will plead the cause of injured innocence."

In view of these promises, why should Latter Day Saints be surprised that Joseph's sons and their fellow laborers are and have been actively engaged in advocating and carrying forward the work of God as set forth in the sacred books of the church, authorized and officially approved by said church from 1830 to 1844? The Lord, by these special promises, has given to the Saints infallible assurances as to the ministerial work of the "posterity," "lineage" and "seed" of Joseph Smith the Seer. This is the Lord's appointing, and it reveals his choice, his will, his wisdom. And is it not most proper that Joseph's sons be found in the midst of the Saints teaching and earnestly contending for the authentic and regularly approved word and work of God? This they have been and are now doing, asking all to honestly and faithfully investigate the work in which they are engaged, and call on the Lord for wisdom and guidance as to its being of his will and appointment.

Inasmuch as the prophecies and promises we have given are of God, then the Lord has "appointed," and that, too, "through" Joseph the Seer, that his "posterity" should hold his priesthood "after him." The Lord revealed to the church in February, 1831, that the successor of the Seer must be, and would be, appointed of God "through" the Seer Joseph Smith: "But verily, verily I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him."

This was done, by revelation, in a most plain and public manner,

as we have shown. And besides this, the oldest son of Joseph the Seer was anointed and blessed and set apart by prophecy and the laying on of hands by the Seer to the work of the ministry in which he is now engaged. To this add the fact that this son claims to have been called by direct command of God to himself in 1860, and before also, and it may readily be seen why he and his fellows are teaching the Saints everywhere to give earnest heed and faithful obedience to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ as contained in the authentic and regularly approved books and records of the church

LET LYMAN WIGHT BE HEARD.

From the private journal of Lyman Wight, one of the Twelve apostles at the time the Seer was assassinated, we take the following: "Sunday, December 8th, 1850. Bore testimony that Joseph Smith appointed those of his own posterity to be his successor."

In a letter he wrote in July, 1855, from Medina River, Texas, to the *Northern Islander*, a Strangite paper on Beaver Island, brother Wight said: "Now, Mr. Editor, if you had been present when Joseph called on me shortly after we came out of jail [Liberty jail, Missouri, Ed.] to lay hands with him on the head of a youth, and heard him cry aloud, 'You are my successor when I depart,' and heard the blessings poured on his head,—I say had you heard all this, and seen the tears streaming from his eyes—you would not have been led by blind fanaticism, or a zeal without knowledge." . . . "While in jail there were many things spoken by the mouth of our martyred Prophet and Patriarch, and when I see these things taking place just as they were spoken, it cheers my heart and that of the brethren and sisters in this branch also." . . . "Now, Mr. Editor, from what I have written you will discover that what I have done, I have done according to my ordination and calling, having acted in my own place and stewardship, and not in the shoes of any other man. If all had done the same, I think the church would have been in a much higher state of perfection. There was authority enough left [at the death of Joseph, Ed.] to have moved the cause of Zion on, if all the authorities of the church had stepped forward with the many good instructions given by Bro. Joseph, and heart and hand together it could have been carried on in perfect good order. Every man standing in his place, according to his calling and ordination, would have made a firm and sound presidency. And then if one of Bro. Joseph's posterity had stepped forth and done his own work, (and not his father's), as Joseph's was handed down from father to son by lineage, and finished his work, and handed it down by lineage to his posterity, so should his posterity have done his work which the Father gave him to do on earth. Then, and not till then, shall we be a happy kingdom."

Should these promises to Joseph's seed fail, of what use are any of the promises and prophecies found in the books of the church!

"Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled."

—Doctrine and Covenants 1:7.