

broken, only 48 years of age (*Hist. of the Church*, Vol. V., pp. 393-8). The prophecy was fulfilled to the letter, and, incidentally, the Lord demonstrated to the world that He recognized the Church in the Valleys of the Mountains as His people; for it was because of his attitude towards the Saints there that he sealed his own doom.

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### SECTION 132.

*Revelation on the Eternity of the Marriage Covenant, including Plurality of Wives. Given through Joseph, the Seer, in Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, July 12th, 1843.*

**V**ERILY, thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand, to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines:

2. Behold! and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching this matter:

This Revelation is dated the 12th of July, 1843. William Clayton, who was Temple Recorder and private clerk of the Prophet Joseph at that time, relates the following:

"On the morning of the 12th of July, 1843, Joseph and Hyrum Smith came into the office of the upper story of the 'Brick-store,' on the bank of the Mississippi River. They were talking of the subject of plural marriage, [and] Hyrum said to Joseph, 'If you will write the Revelation on celestial marriage, I will take and read it to Emma, and I believe I can convince her of its truth, and you will hereafter have peace.' Joseph smiled and remarked, 'You do not know Emma as well as I do.' Hyrum repeated his opinion, and further remarked, 'The doctrine is so plain, I can convince any reasonable man or woman of its truth, purity, and heavenly origin,' or words to that effect. \* \* \* Joseph and Hyrum then sat down, and Joseph commenced to dictate the Revelation on Celestial Marriage, and I wrote it, sentence by sentence, as he dictated. After the whole was

written, Joseph asked me to read it through slowly and carefully, which I did, and he pronounced it correct" (*Hist. Rec.* pp. 225-6).

This was not the first mention of the subject among the Saints. Sarah Ann Kimball and many others knew of it in 1842, and Joseph B. Noble heard of it in the fall of 1840. Orson Pratt says that the Prophet Joseph, in the forepart of 1832, while he was living at the house of Father Johnson at Hiram, Ohio, told Church members that he had enquired of the Lord concerning this doctrine, and received the answer that it was true, but that the time to practice it had not come (*Discourse by Orson Pratt, Salt Lake City, October 7th, 1869*). Consequently, the Law of the Church remained as stated in Doctrine and Covenants 42: 22, and as it is to-day, "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shall cleave unto her and none else."

The Revelation is divided into two parts. The first, comprising vv. 3-33, deals mainly with the principle of celestial marriage, or marriage for time and all eternity; the second, comprising the remaining verses, deals with plural marriage. The doctrine of celestial marriage remains in force, not having been abrogated; the practice of plural marriage was abandoned by the acceptance by the Church, in Conference assembled October 6th, 1890, of the *Manifesto* of President Woodruff.

The Section 132 contains (1) an introductory statement (1-2); (2) a reminder to the Prophet that knowledge demands obedience (3-6); (3) a definition of the celestial law (7-14), and (4) how the law applies to marriage covenants (15-20); (5) a demand for obedience (21-7); (6) the Law of the Priesthood (28-33); (7) the doctrine of plural marriage (34-40); (8) a declaration that plurality of wives is not adultery (41-9); (9) that it is a sacrifice (50-7); (10) that it is a law of the Priesthood (58-66).

### 1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

1-2. From this introductory statement it is evident that the Prophet had made the question of marriage a subject of earnest prayer, as he did with matters concerning which he was perplexed and desired to know the truth. He did

not understand how the Patriarchs, and David and Solomon could find favor with the Lord, while living in a manner contrary to certain modern moral standards, and he asked the Lord for light. Elder B. H. Roberts (*Hist. of the Church*, Vol. V., Intr., p. 29) suggests that it was in the year 1831, when the Prophet was studying the lives of the Patriarchs in the Old Testament, in the course of his Bible revision, that he was led to offer the prayer referred to in the first verse, and received the answer contained in this Section, though it was not then committed to writing.

3. Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same;

4. For behold! I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then ye are damned; for no one can reject this covenant, and be permitted to enter into my glory;

5. For all who will have a blessing at my hands, shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world:

6. And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fullness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fullness thereof, must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.

## 2. KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS OBEDIENCE.

3-6. The truth is here emphasized that when the Lord reveals a law, man must obey it. Knowledge entails this responsibility. God may, as Paul expresses it, "wink at" the time of ignorance (Acts 17: 30), but when the ignorance is removed, obedience is expected.

3. *Prepare thy heart*] That is the first step. God demands the obedience that comes from the "heart." He demands obedience as a result of affection.

4. *A new and everlasting covenant*] The marriage covenant had, for many centuries, been considered valid only "till death doth us part"; now a new covenant was about to be revealed, which would cover both eternity and time. It would be everlasting as well as new. It is new; and yet, it is as old as the gospel; it is as old as the plan of salvation adopted in the Council of Heaven, before the foundations of the world were laid (v. 5). It is part of that plan, that covenant, of which Jesus Christ is the Representative and Mediator.

*If ye abide not that covenant \* \* \* damned*] That is to say, when the eternity of the marriage covenant has been revealed, those who reject that revelation and neglect to enter married life through the holy Priesthood, in which alone the authority to seal for eternity is vested, will be "damned." Their damnation will consist in not being permitted to enter into "my," that is, celestial glory.

This verse has sometimes been supposed to refer to plural marriage. But that does not appear to be the case. It refers to celestial marriage—marriage for eternity.

6. *For the fulness of my glory*] The eternal marriage covenant is precedent to increase, to eternal posterity, and as our Lord is the Head of the race, man's posterity, ever increasing, means to Him eternal glory, power, and dominion. Isaiah had this in view, when he said, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand" (Is. 53: 10). The redeemed are his seed, for they belong to Him. By not entering into an eternal marriage covenant, according to celestial law, we neglect to contribute our share to the fulness of the glory of our blessed Lord and Redeemer, because there can be no eternal increase outside that law. What difference is there between deliberately taking a course that ends in no further increase in eternity, and the course taken by many who already in this life are guilty of what has been called "race suicide"?

7. And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these:—All covenants, contracts, bonds,

obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made, and entered into, and sealed, by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time, on whom this power and the keys of this Priesthood are conferred), are of no efficacy, virtue or force, in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end, have an end when men are dead.

8. Behold! mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion.

9. Will I accept of an offering, saith the Lord, that is not made in my name!

10. Or, will I receive at your hands that which I have not appointed!

11. And will I appoint unto you, saith the Lord, except it be by law, even as I and my Father ordained unto you, before the world was!

12. I am the Lord thy God, and I give unto you this commandment, that no man shall come unto the Father but by me, or by my word, which is my law, saith the Lord;

13. And everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me, or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God;

14. For whatsoever things remain, are by me; and whatsoever things are not by me, shall be shaken and destroyed.

## 3. THE CELESTIAL LAW.

7-14. The celestial law is here explained. All covenants, agreements, promises, etc., not entered into for eternity are of no force after death. Only the covenants that are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, through one who holds divine authority, remain in force after death.

7. *Him who is anointed*] Refers to the President of the Church, who holds the keys of the kingdom of God on Earth.

*But one \* \* \* at a time*] Only one man at a time holds this authority. He may delegate others to act for him, but he remains responsible for the administration of the kingdom. For "mine house is a house of order" (v. 8).

13. *Everything that is in the world \* \* \* shall not remain*] The important truth is here taught that all institutions in this world, not founded on divine law but erected by human ingenuity, cease to exist on this side of the veil. Man-made governments are obliterated, as are the sand castles children build on the tide-swept beach. Man-made religions and churches are swallowed up in death. Not a trace of them will be seen on the shores of eternity. Social customs and habits not sanctioned by God, will not continue. On the other hand, all institutions founded on the Word of God will remain throughout all eternity. The Church will remain. The family will remain. All the organizations of which God is the author are eternal (v. 14).

15. Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me, nor by my word; and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world, and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world;

16. Therefore, when they are out of the world, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are minister-

ing servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory;

17. For these angels did not abide my law, therefore they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity, and from henceforth are not Gods, but are angels of God, for ever and ever.

18. And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife, and make a covenant with her for time and for all eternity, if that covenant is not by me, or by my word, which is my law, and is not sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, through him whom I have anointed and appointed unto this power—then it is not valid, neither of force when they are out of the world, because they are not joined by me, saith the Lord, neither by my word; when they are out of the world, it cannot be received there, because the angels and the Gods are appointed there, by whom they cannot pass; they cannot, therefore, inherit my glory, for my house is a house of order, saith the Lord God.

19. And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power, and the keys of this Priesthood; and it shall be said unto them, ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—then shall it be written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that he shall commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity, and shall be of full force when

they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the Gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fullness and a continuation of the seeds for ever and ever.

20. Then shall they be Gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be Gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them.

#### 4. THE CELESTIAL LAW APPLIED TO MARRIAGE.

15-20. From the preceding paragraphs (7-14) it follows that a marriage contract, entered into by worldly authority alone, ends at death. It is binding and perfectly legal and honorable as far as this life is concerned, but it is dissolved by the grim reaper's work. Nor is it sufficient for a man and a woman to make a private contract on the supposition that such an agreement will be binding for eternity (v. 18). The covenant must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, through him who is divinely authorized to do so. Then it is valid for eternity. Then it is a celestial marriage (v. 19).

Note the incomprehensible and immeasurable glory and exaltation that are the attendants in eternity on celestial marriage, provided the contracting parties live worthy and pure lives.

16. *Appointed angels*] Those who do not enter their family relations under the celestial law remain single in eternity; for there "they neither marry, nor are given in marriage." They are appointed *angels*; that is, "messengers," with the special duty to minister to those who, under the celestial law, are worthy of a greater exaltation.

"He [God] has revealed to us \* \* \* that marriage is destined for eternity as well as time—that the marriage covenant between male and female must be entered into in this life, and the ordinance performed here by those whom God has appointed and ordained to hold the keys and authority to seal on earth that it may be sealed in heaven; for



in heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage; no such thing can be attended to there. Now, persons among the Latter-day Saints who do not enter into this covenant of marriage, but prefer to lead a single life, can not enjoy all that fulness of exaltation which will be possessed by those who have this covenant sealed upon them. They might not have forfeited the blessing of celestial glory altogether, but they have forfeited the right to have wives by which only they could have a posterity in the eternal worlds. Who will be the subjects in the kingdom which they will rule who are exalted in the celestial kingdom of our God? Will they reign over their neighbor's children? Oh, no! Over whom will they reign? Their own children, their own posterity will be the citizens of their kingdoms; in other words, the Patriarchal order will prevail there to the endless ages of eternity, and the children of each Patriarch will be his, while eternal ages roll on" (Orson Pratt, *Jour. of Dis.* Vol. XV., p. 319).

19. *And it shall be said \* \* \* the next resurrection]* To those who live before the first resurrection, it will be said that they shall come forth in that resurrection; to those who live after the first, in the Millennium, the promise will be given that they shall come forth in the next resurrection. Those who live on earth after the first resurrection will have an equal chance with those who live before that event.

20. *Then shall they be gods]* What a wonderful Revelation this is, when compared with the narrow ideas held in the world! Children of kings are princes and princesses, associating on terms of equality with their royal parents, and having a good chance of becoming kings and queens themselves. But when we say that the privilege of God's children is to associate with Him in the eternal mansions, and that they may become gods, then the world does not understand us, and many deem us guilty of blasphemy. They seem to think that they honor God by supposing that His children are infinitely inferior to Him. What kind of father is He, then, that He should feel it an honor to be the progenitor of an inferior offspring? Is there a king on earth that would feel honored by having degenerates and beggars for children? Do not fathers and mothers rejoice in the progress of their children? Is it not their ambition to edu-

cate and train their loved ones, until these shall reach the highest possible degree of intelligence and efficiency? Surely, we can do no greater honor to God, our Father, than to admit the divine possibilities which He has implanted in His offspring, and which will be developed under His tuition in this life and hereafter, until His children are perfect as He is perfect. Says President Brigham Young:

“Man is made an agent to himself before his God; he is organized for the express purpose that he may become like his Master. You recollect one of the Apostle’s sayings, that when we see Him, we shall be like him; and again, ‘We shall become gods, even the sons of God.’ Do you read anywhere that we shall possess all things? Jesus is the elder brother, and all the brethren shall come in for a share with Him \* \* \* We are created, we are born, for the express purpose of growing up from the low estate of manhood, to become gods, like unto our Father in heaven” (*Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. III., p. 93).

21. Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye abide my law, ye cannot attain to this glory;

22. For strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world, neither do ye know me.

23. But if ye receive me in the world, then shall ye know me, and shall receive your exaltation, that where I am, ye shall be also.

24. This is eternal lives, to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. I am he. Receive ye, therefore, my law.

25. Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths, and many there are that go in thereat; because they receive me not, neither do they abide in my law.

26. Verily, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife according to my word, and they are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, according to mine appointment, and he or she shall commit any sin or transgression of the new and everlasting covenant whatever, and all manner of blasphemies, and if they

commit no murder, wherein they shed innocent blood—yet they shall come forth in the first resurrection, and enter into their exaltation; but they shall be destroyed in the flesh, and shall be delivered unto the buffetings of Satan unto the day of redemption, saith the Lord God.

27. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which shall not be forgiven in the world, nor out of the world, is in that ye commit murder, wherein ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant, saith the Lord God; and he that abideth not this law, can in no wise enter into my glory, but shall be damned, saith the Lord.

#### 5. OBEDIENCE REQUIRED.

21. *Except ye abide my law \* \* \* glory]* To “abide my law” means to “conform to,” and then to remain obedient to, that law, in all its requirements. Celestial glory cannot be obtained except through obedience to celestial law. That is reasonable. If, in any country, an alien desire to obtain the highest possible honor and advantage that can be conferred on a naturalized citizen, he must submit to the laws and rules of the country. The same is true of the celestial kingdom of our God.

24. *This is eternal lives]* “Lives” here and in v. 22 means posterity in the Hereafter. To *know* God and our Lord Jesus Christ is to be on the road to exaltation, and this includes eternal increase. But to *know* God is not merely to have heard of Him. It is “to walk” with Him, as Enoch did; it is to “believe,” or “live by” Him, as Abraham did; it is to be familiar with Him, as a child with its father.

This verse is not a quotation of John 17: 3, where our Lord teaches His disciples that His mission was to give eternal *life* to those whom the Father had given Him, “in order that they may know” the true God and His Son. Earthly life is too short for that study. This is a new Revelation, in which we are taught that eternal increase,

or "lives," is part of the glory of eternal life; but the language closely resembles that of John, as is frequently the case in these Revelations—a fact which shows the influence of the beloved disciple upon the thought of the Prophet Joseph.

25. *The way that leadeth to the deaths*] The parallel passage, Matt. 7: 13, has "destruction" for "deaths." In this paragraph "deaths" stands for the opposite of "lives" in vv. 22 and 24. It is the end of eternal increase. Note that there are only two gates and two roads. One gate is broad and one is strait; one road is wide and one is narrow; there is no middle road; few find the strait gate and the narrow way; many enter the broad gate and walk on the wide way.

The illustration seems to be drawn from a mansion having a large portal at which many enter, and a narrow entrance known only to a few.

26. *Any sin or transgression*] In this paragraph, the great and glorious truth is revealed that the adversary has no permanent power over those who have entered the new and everlasting marriage covenant, under the celestial law, unless he can prevail upon them to shed innocent blood. He may, possibly, lead them into temptation and cause them to do wrong; even to blaspheme. In that case they will be destroyed in the flesh and left to the buffetings of Satan till the day of redemption. But they will come forth in the first resurrection and enter into their exaltation. Paul teaches the same truth when he urges the Corinthians to separate from them a certain licentious member and deliver him to Satan, "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1. Cor. 5: 5). The destruction here referred to is aimed at the "flesh," which means the carnal lusts, and not the body; and the purpose of it is the salvation of the spirit (Comp. I. Tim. 1: 20).

*Blasphemies*] A blasphemy is an indignity offered to God in words or acts, and in the Scriptures it means also "heresies." Hymeneus and Alexander, whom Paul "de-

livered to Satan (I. Tim. 1: 20), were "blasphemers," but their "blasphemy" seems to have consisted in teaching the false doctrine that the resurrection had already taken place (II. Tim. 2: 17).

27. *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*] This unpardonable sin is explained to mean "murder, wherein ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant." Verily, few will belong to this class. Judas is called "a devil" (John 6: 70 and "the son of perdition" (John 17: 12). Some of those who have been instrumental in shedding the blood of the martyrs, from Stephen, who was stoned in Jerusalem, to Joseph and Hyrum, who were slain at Carthage, may ultimately be found among those who come under this condemnation. God alone is their judge.

28. I am the Lord thy God, and will give unto thee the law of my Holy Priesthood, as was ordained by me, and my Father, before the world was.

29. Abraham received all things, whatsoever he received, by revelation and commandment, by my word, saith the Lord, and hath entered into his exaltation, and sitteth upon his throne.

30. Abraham received promises concerning his seed, and of the fruit of his loins,—from whose loins ye are, namely, my servant Joseph,—which were to continue so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham and his seed, out of the world they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the sea shore, ye could not number them.

31. This promise is yours, also, because ye are of Abraham, and the promise was made unto Abraham; and by this law is the continuation of the works of my Father, wherein he glorifieth himself.

32. Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham; enter ye into my law, and ye shall be saved.

33. But if ye enter not into my law ye cannot re-

ceive the promise of my Father, which he made unto Abraham.

#### 6. THE LAW OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

28-33. The celestial law, an explanation of which has been given in vv. 7-20, is here called, "The law of my Holy Priesthood." It was ordained by God before the world was (v. 28). In accordance with that law, Abraham received "all things" by revelation and commandment. Among the things received were promises concerning his seed—that his children should continue in this world and in the next, as innumerable as the stars (v. 30). This law is celestial, because by obedience to it, the works of God, the Father, continue, to His glory (v. 31).

29. *Hath entered into his exaltation*] This is said of Abraham. He has already ascended his throne. When this took place is not stated, but it evidently occurred after our Lord ascended in glory. If Abraham is exalted and occupies a throne, others must enjoy a similar privilege.

30. *Innumerable*] Abraham's children were to be innumerable. If we believe in an eternal increase, under the Celestial Law this promise is intelligible, for then there is no end to the increase.

34. God commanded Abraham, and Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham to wife. And why did she do it? Because this was the law, and from Hagar sprang many people. This, therefore, was fulfilling, among other things, the promises.

35. Was Abraham, therefore, under condemnation? Verily, I say unto you, Nay; for I, the Lord, commanded it.

36. Abraham was commanded to offer hisson Isaac; nevertheless, it was written, thou shalt not kill. Abraham, however, did not refuse, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness.

37. Abraham received concubines, and they bare him children, and it was accounted unto him for right-

eousness, because they were given unto him, and he abode in my law, as Isaac also, and Jacob did none other things than that which they were commanded; and because they did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones, and are not angels, but are Gods.

38. David also received many wives and concubines, as also Solomon and Moses my servants; as also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin, save in those things which they received not of me.

39. David's wives and concubines were given unto him, of me, by the hand of Nathan, my servant, and others of the prophets who had the keys of this power; and in none of these things did he sin against me, save in the case of Uriah and his wife; and, therefore he hath fallen from his exaltation, and received his portion; and he shall not inherit them out of the world; for I gave them unto another, saith the Lord.

40. I am the Lord thy God, and I gave unto thee, my servant Joseph, an appointment, and restore all things: ask what ye will, and it shall be given unto you according to my word:

#### 7. PLURAL MARRIAGE.

34-40. In the preceding sections, this Revelation deals with celestial marriage—marriage for eternity. In this section and those following, plural marriage is the subject; and it is first shown that some of the greatest characters in the Old Testament had wives and concubines.

34. *Because this was the law*] Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham in accordance with law. It is known now that, according to the Code of Hammurabi, which, in many respects, resembles the later Mosaic law, if a man's wife was childless, he was allowed to take a concubine and bring her into his house, though he was not to place her upon an

equal footing with his first wife; or the first wife might give her husband a maidservant. This was the law in the country from which Abraham came.

37. *Isaac also*] There is no other record of any plural marriage of this Patriarch, but, aside from this Revelation, the probability is that he followed the custom of his age. How is it, on any other supposition, to be explained that Jacob accepted Laban's arrangement without protest? Where, if not in his home, had he learned that plural marriage was not at that time unlawful?

*Have entered into their exultation* See verse 29.

40. *Restore all things*] The mission of the Prophet Joseph was that of a restorer of all things in accordance with the divine plan of redemption.

41. And as ye have asked concerning adultery—verily, verily I say unto you, if a man receiveth a wife in the new and everlasting covenant, and if she be with another man, and I have not appointed unto her by the holy anointing, she hath committed adultery, and shall be destroyed.

42. If she be not in the new and everlasting covenant, and she be with another man, she has committed adultery;

43. And if her husband be with another woman, and he was under a vow, he hath broken his vow, and hath committed adultery,

44. And if she hath not committed adultery, but is innocent, and hath not broken her vow, and she knoweth it, and I reveal it unto you, my servant Joseph, then shall you have power, by the power of my Holy Priesthood, to take her, and give her unto him that hath not committed adultery, but hath been faithful; for he shall be made ruler over many;

45. For I have conferred upon you the keys and power of the Priesthood, wherein I restore all things, and make known unto you all things in due time.



46. And verily, verily I say unto you, that whatsoever you seal on earth, shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever you bind on earth, in my name, and by my word, saith the Lord, it shall be eternally bound in the heavens; and whosoever sins you remit on earth shall be remitted eternally in the heavens; and whosoever sins you retain on earth, shall be retained in heaven.

47. And again, verily I say, whomsoever you bless, I will bless, and whomsoever you curse, I will curse, saith the Lord; for I, the Lord, am thy God.

48. And again, verily I say unto you, my servant Joseph, that whatsoever you give on earth, and to whomsoever you give any one on earth, by my word, and according to my law, it shall be visited with blessings, and not cursings, and with my power, saith the Lord, and shall be without condemnation on earth, and in heaven;

49. For I am the Lord thy God, and will be with thee even unto the end of the world, and through all eternity; for verily, I seal upon you your exaltation, and prepare a throne for you in the kingdom of my Father, with Abraham your father.

#### 8. PLURAL MARRIAGE IS NOT ADULTERY.

41-9. The Prophet, in his prayer on this subject, had asked the Lord for information concerning the ground on which the Patriarchs were justified in their domestic relations, and the answer was the definition of adultery here given. Plural marriage, the Revelation says, in substance, is not adultery, but to violate the marriage covenant is to commit that sin, the penalty being destruction (vv. 41, 52); but God Himself will execute that judgment (v. 54).

50. Behold, I have seen your sacrifices, and will forgive all your sins; I have seen your sacrifices, in obedience to that which I have told you; go, therefore, and I make a way for your escape, as I accepted the offering of Abraham, of his son Isaac.

51. Verily, I say unto you, a commandment I give unto mine handmaid, Emma Smith, your wife, whom I have given unto you, that she stay herself, and partake not of that which I commanded you to offer unto her; for I did it, saith the Lord, to prove you all, as I did Abraham; and that I might require an offering at your hand, by covenant and sacrifice;

52. And let mine handmaid, Emma Smith, receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me; and those who are not pure, and have said they were pure, shall be destroyed, saith the Lord God;

53. For I am the Lord thy God, and ye shall obey my voice; and I give unto my servant Joseph, that he shall be made ruler over many things, for he hath been faithful over a few things, and from henceforth I will strengthen him.

54. And I command mine handmaid, Emma Smith, to abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else. But if she will not abide this commandment, she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord; for I am the Lord thy God, and will destroy her, if she abide not in my law;

55. But if she will not abide this commandment, then shall my servant Joseph do all things for her, even as he hath said; and I will bless him and multiply him, and give unto him an hundred-fold in this world, of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, houses and lands, wives and children, and crowns of eternal lives in the eternal worlds.

56. And again, verily I say, let mine handmaid forgive my servant Joseph his trespasses, and then shall she be forgiven her trespasses, wherein she has trespassed against me, and I, the Lord thy God, will bless her, and multiply her, and make her heart to rejoice.

57. And again, I say, let not my servant Joseph put his property out of his hands, lest an enemy come

and destroy him; for Satan seeketh to destroy; for I am the Lord thy God, and he is my servant; and behold! and lo, I am with him, as I was with Abraham, thy father, even unto his exaltation and glory.

#### 9. PLURAL MARRIAGE A SACRIFICE.

50-7. A very common impression in the world is this that plural marriage was instituted for the gratification of carnal lusts. Nothing is further from the truth. To Joseph Smith obedience was a "sacrifice" (v. 50), and it was no less a trial to others. Brigham Young tells us his feelings, in these words:

"Some of these my brethren know what my feelings were at the time Joseph revealed the doctrine; I was not desirous of shrinking from any duty, nor of failing in the least to do as I was commanded, but it was the first time in my life that I have desired the grave, and I could hardly get over it for a long time. And when I saw a funeral, I felt to envy the corpse, its situation, and to regret that I was not in the coffin, knowing the toil and labor that my body would have to undergo; and I have to examine myself, from that day to this, and watch my faith, and carefully meditate, lest I should be found desiring the grave more than I ought to do" (*Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. III., p. 266).

Brigham Young also says:

"I did not ask Him [God] for the Revelation upon this subject. When that Revelation was first read to me by Joseph Smith, I plainly saw the great trials and the abuse of it that would be made by many of the Elders, and the trouble and the persecution that it would bring upon this whole people. But the Lord revealed it, and it was my business to accept it" (*Ibid.*, Vol. XI., p. 268).

Heber C. Kimball's experience was very remarkable. He and his wife had been sealed to each other for time and eternity, before the Prophet told him that the Lord required him to take another wife, an English lady, named Sarah Noon. Helen Mar Kimball Whitney tells the story. She says her father, after having received this command, would walk the floor till nearly morning, and sometimes

the agony of his mind was so terrible that he would wring his hands and weep like a child, and beseech the Lord to be merciful and reveal the principle to his wife. This prayer was heard. Mrs. Kimball had a vision, and "with a countenance beaming with joy, for she was filled with the Spirit of God, she returned to my father, saying, 'Heber, what you kept from me, the Lord has shown me'" (Orson F. Whitney's *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, pp. 335-8).

Benjamin F. Johnson testifies that the Prophet Joseph, on the 1st of April, 1843, came to his house, at Ramus, Ill., and revealed to him the doctrine, and then asked him for his sister. Johnson says: "I looked him calmly in the face and told him that I believed him to be a good man and wished to believe it still and would try to; and that I would take for him a message to my sister, and if the doctrine was true, all would be well, but if I should afterwards learn that it was offered to insult or prostitute my sister, I would take his life.' With a smile he replied, 'Benjamin, you will never see that day, but you shall live to know that it is true and rejoice in it'" (*Hist. Record*, p. 221).

These quotations show how the doctrine at first was received by Joseph's most intimate friends. To them obedience was a sacrifice, as it was to the Prophet. For they were good men, who loved their wives with pure and undivided affection. It was no doctrine for libertines, who hate the restraints and responsibilities of a law-protected marriage and care only for the gratification of their desires. Some libertines have joined the Church under the mistaken impression that "Mormonism" was a religion adapted to a carnal state, but they quickly discovered that plural marriage multiplied both their responsibilities and their burdens, and thus placed the strongest possible restrictions on licentiousness, and they became bitter opponents for that very reason.

Special instructions are given to Mrs. Emma Smith (vv. 51-6). She did never accept the doctrine with the full understanding of it that some of the other sisters—Eliza R. Snow and Vilate Kimball, for instance—had. A few

days after the Revelation had been read to her, she coaxed her husband to give her the written copy, and, as another identical copy had been made, there was no objection to granting the request. Emma destroyed the document handed to her. Afterwards she repented and even went so far as to consent to the marriage of the Partridge girls to Joseph. But, finally, if a statement by her son, Joseph, can be accepted as true, she denied that the Prophet ever taught or practiced plural marriage (See Andrew Jenson, *Hist. Rec.*, pp. 219-34; also *Hist. of the Church*, Intr. to Vol. V). It is evident that the failure of Emma to give heed to this Revelation caused her to lose the Spirit of the gospel.

52. *All those that have been given unto my servant Joseph*] Although the Revelation, in its main outlines, was given to the Prophet as early as 1832, or 1831, it is plain from this expression that some of the details were not filled in before the date on which it was committed to writing, for plural wives had not been given in 1832.

58. Now, as touching the law of the Priesthood, there are many things pertaining thereunto.

59. Verily, if a man be called of my Father, as was Aaron, by mine own voice, and by the voice of him that sent me; and I have endowed him with the keys of the power of this Priesthood, if he do anything in my name, and according to my law, and by my word, he will not commit sin, and I will justify him.

60. Let no one, therefore, set on my servant Joseph; for I will justify him; for he shall do the sacrifice which I require at his hands, for his transgressions, saith the Lord your God.

61. And again, as pertaining to the law of the Priesthood: If any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent; and if he espouses the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery, for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else:

62. And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him, therefore is he justified.

63. But if one or either of the ten virgins, after she is espoused, shall be with another man; she has committed adultery, and shall be destroyed; for they are given unto him to multiply and replenish the earth, according to my commandment, and to fulfill the promise which was given by my Father, before the foundation of the world; and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified.

64. And again, verily, verily I say unto you, if any man have a wife, who holds the keys of this power, and he teaches unto her the law of my Priesthood, as pertaining to these things, then shall she believe, and administer unto him, or she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord your God, for I will destroy her; for I will magnify my name upon all those who receive and abide in my law.

65. Therefore, it shall be lawful in me, if she receive not this law, for him to receive all things, whatsoever I, the Lord his God, will give unto him, because she did not administer unto him according to my word; and she then becomes the transgressor; and he is exempt from the law of Sarah, who administered unto Abraham according to the law, when I commanded Abraham to take Hagar to wife.

66. And now, as pertaining to this law, verily, verily I say unto you, I will reveal more unto you, hereafter; therefore, let this suffice for the present. Behold, I am Alpha and Omega. Amen.

#### 10. PLURAL MARRIAGE AND THE LAW OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

58-66. The truth is here reiterated, that whatever is done in the name of God, according to His law and by His direc-

tion, cannot be sin. What human law regards as a crime may, or may not, from the Divine point of view, be a sin. Sometimes the Innocent dies on Calvary, because criminals have acted as judge and jury

#### GENERAL NOTES.

As has been stated in the introductory notes, the doctrine of plural marriage was made known to the Prophet in 1831, or 1832, although the Revelation on the subject was not committed to writing until the year 1843. It should be noted that even then it was not given to the *Church*. This step was taken on the 29th of August, 1852, when the Revelation was read to a General Conference in the "Old Tabernacle," Salt Lake City, and accepted by the assembly as a revelation from God and part of the law of the Church. In voting for the Revelation, the Saints firmly believed that they were only exercising their legal right as American citizens. They believed that, as a majority, they had the indisputable constitutional right to regulate their domestic affairs, within the boundaries of their own territory, and that the Supreme Court of the United States would uphold this view, even if Congress should be of a different opinion. And they were strengthened in their position by the fact that not until ten years after the action taken by the Church in 1852 was any effort made by Congress to stamp plural marriage as illegal.

The first Congressional enactment against plural marriage passed in 1862, remained a dead letter for twenty years. By that time, the anti-Mormons had evidence that the Supreme Court would uphold legislation of that kind, and laws more drastic than the first were passed by Congress. The Church leaders appealed to the Supreme Court, as was their prerogative. For years there was a legal conflict. At last, when the Supreme Court had declared the anti-polygamy laws constitutional and there was no prospect that there would be a reversal of this decision, the Church loyally and gracefully accepted it. President Wilford Woodruff issued his Manifesto against the practice of plural marriage, and this was accepted by a unanimous

vote of the General Conference assembled in Salt Lake City, Oct. 6th, 1890.

This is the full text of the Manifesto:

"Press dispatches having been sent for political purposes, from Salt Lake City, which have been widely published, to the effect that the Utah Commission, in their recent report to the Secretary of the Interior, allege that plural marriages are still being solemnized and that forty or more such marriages have been contracted in Utah since last June or during the past year, also that in public discourses the leaders of the Church have taught, encouraged and urged the continuance of the practice of polygamy,

"I, therefore, as President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, do hereby, in the most solemn manner, declare that these charges are false. We are not teaching polygamy or plural marriage, nor permitting any person to enter into its practice, and I deny that either forty or any other number of plural marriages have during that period been solemnized in our temples or in any other place in the Territory.

"One case has been reported, in which the parties allege that the marriage was performed in the Endowment House, in Salt Lake City, in the spring of 1889, but I have not been able to learn who performed the ceremony; whatever was done in this matter was without my knowledge. In consequence of this alleged occurrence the Endowment House was, by my instructions, taken down without delay.

"Inasmuch as laws have been enacted by Congress forbidding plural marriages, which laws have been pronounced constitutional by the court of last resort, I hereby declare my intention to submit to those laws, and to use my influence with the members of the Church over which I preside to have them do likewise.

"There is nothing in my teachings to the Church or in those of my associates, during the time specified, which can be reasonably construed to inculcate or encourage polygamy, and when any Elder of the Church has used language which appeared to convey any such teaching, he has been promptly reprov'd. And I now publicly declare that my advice to the Latter-day Saints is to refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the law of the land.

WILFORD WOODRUFF,

President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

After the Manifesto had been read to the Conference, President Lorenzo Snow offered the following:

"I move, that, recognizing Wilford Woodruff as the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the only man on the earth at the present time who holds the keys of the sealing ordinances, we consider him fully authorized by virtue of his position to issue the manifesto which has been read in our hearing and which is dated Sept. 21th, 1890, and that as a Church in General Conference assembled, we accept his declaration concerning plural marriages as authoritative and binding."

The vote to sustain the foregoing motion was unanimous.

By this action the Church voted to conform to the laws of the land as interpreted by the highest tribunal, and to leave the issue with God. Since that conference, and, in fact, for some time previous to the acceptance of the Manifesto, no



plural marriage has been performed anywhere with the sanction of the Church, or the approbation of the First Presidency, or anyone representing them, as was fully proved during the so-called Smoot investigation in the United States Senate, which commenced January 16, 1904.

"I want to say to this congregation, and to the world, that never at any time since my presidency in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have I authorized any man to perform plural marriage, and never since my presidency of the Church has any plural marriage been performed with my sanction or knowledge, or with the consent of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and therefore such unions as have been formed unlawfully, contrary to the order of the Church, are null and void in the sight of God, and are not marriages" (President Joseph F. Smith, at the General Conference of the Church, Oct. 4th, 1918).