

in all cases, but in some commanded. Here, for example, is the law (Deut. 25: 5-10.) If brethren dwell together, and one of them die and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her. And it shall be that the first-born which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel, etc.

"This law must certainly be looked upon as an exception from the general law (Lev. 18: 16,) and the reason of it appears in the law itself, namely, 'To preserve inheritances in the families to which they belonged.'

As there was no law against a plurality of wives, there was nothing to exempt a married man from the obligation of marrying his brother's widow.

For, let us suppose that not only the surviving brother, but all the near kinsmen, to whom the marriage of the widow and the redemption of the inheritance belonged, were married men—if that exempted them from the obligation of this law—as they could not redeem the inheritance unless they married the widow (Ruth 4: 5)—the widow be tempted to marry a stranger—to put herself and the inheritance into his hands—and the whole reason assigned for the law itself, that of raising up seed to the deceased, to preserve the inheritance in his family, that his name be not put out of Israel—fall to the ground. For which weighty reasons, as there was evidently no law against a plurality of wives, there could be no exemption of a man from the positive duty of this law because he was married. As we say, Ubi cadit ratio, ibi idem jus."

I will now hasten to the examination of a notion, which I fear is too common among us, and on which what is usually said and thought on the subject of a plurality of wives, is for the most part built; I mean that of representing Christ as appearing in the world, as "a new lawgiver, who was to introduce a more pure and perfect system of morality, than that of the law which was given by Moses."—This horrible blasphemy against the holiness and perfection of God's law, as well as against the truth of Christ, who declared that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it—this utter contradiction both of the law and the Gospel—was the foundation on which the heretic Socinus built all his other abominable errors.

Christ most solemnly declared—that heaven and earth could sooner pass, than one jot or tittle pass from the law—Think not, said He, that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. So far from abrogating the law, or rule of life, which had been delivered by the hand of Moses, or setting up a new law in opposition to it—He came into the world to be subject to it in all things, and so to fulfil the whole righteousness of it. Matt. 3: 15. To magnify and make it honorable. Is. 42: 21. even by His obedience unto death. Speaking in the spirit of prophecy (Ps. 40: 8.) He says—Lo—I come—in the volume of the book it is written of me—I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within my heart. And in His public ministry, how uniformly doth He speak the same thing?

If we attend to our Savior's preaching, and especially to that heavenly discourse delivered from the Mount, we shall find him a most zealous advocate for the law of God, as delivered by Moses. We shall find Him stripping it of the false glosses, by which the Jewish rabbles had obscured or perverted its meaning, and restoring it to that purity and spirituality by which it reacheth even to the thoughts and intents of the heart. For instance, when He is about to enter upon a faithful exposition of the moral law, lest his hearers should imagine, that what He was about to say, was contrary to the law of the Old Testament, being so different from the teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees, He prefaces His discourse with those remarkable words—Matt. 5: 17-20. Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil; for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Let us take a nearer and more critical view of those passages of the Gospels, in which Christ is supposed to condemn the plurality of wives as adultery. The first which I shall take notice of, as introductory to the rest, is Matt. 5: 31, 32. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his

wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.

The next scripture to be farther considered, is Matt. 19: 9. I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife (except it be for fornication) and shall marry another, committeth adultery, and whoso marrieth her which is put away, committeth adultery.

Christ was surrounded at this time by a great multitude of people, who, in principle, as living under the law of the Old Testament, were polygamists, and, doubtless, numbers of them were so in practice—many there must have been among this great multitude of Jews, who had either married two wives together, or having one, took another to her, and cohabited with both. Had our Lord intended to have condemned such practices, he would scarcely have made use of words which did not describe their situation, but of words that did. It is very plain that—He that putteth away his wife, by giving her a bill of divorcement—could have nothing to do with the man who took two wives together, or one to another, and cohabited alike with both. But we are apt to construe scripture, by supposing persons to whom particular things are said, were in the circumstances then, in which we are now; but it was far otherwise: they had no municipal laws against a plurality of wives, as we have. So far from it, their whole law, (as has been abundantly proved) allowed it. Which said law, and every part thereof, was, at the time Christ spake what is recorded in Matt. 19: 9, in as full force and efficacy, as at the moment after Moses had delivered it to the people. He therefore could no more state a plurality of wives as adultery by the law of Israel, than I can state it as high treason by the laws of England.

Can it be imagined that Christ, so remarkable for his precision, so thoroughly accurate in all He said on every other point, should use so little in this, as not to make Himself understood by His hearers? Nay—that He should observe so little precision, as not to describe an offense, which we are to suppose Him to condemn? The most flagrant instances, the most obvious and palpable definitions of a plurality of wives cannot be understood from what He says.—He that putteth away his wife, by bill of divorcement, and marrieth another—does not describe a man's taking two wives together, and cohabiting with both; nor—a man's having a wife, and taking another to her, and cohabiting with both. Such was the Old Testament plurality of wives, not the putting away one in order to take another.

Now, if a plurality of wives was unlawful, and of course null and void before God, then was not Christ legally descended of the house and lineage of David, but from a spurious issue, not only in the instances abovementioned, but also in others which might be mentioned. So that when Christ is supposed to condemn a plurality of wives as adultery, contrary to the institution of marriage, and to the seventh commandment, He must at the same time be supposed to defeat his own title to the character of the Messiah, concerning whom God had sworn to David, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne. See Acts 2: 30. with Ps. 132: 11."

The lawfulness of a plurality of wives must of course be established, or the whole of Christianity must fall to the ground, and Christ not be He that was to come, but we must look for another. Matt. 11: 3."

The learned Selden has proved, in his *Uxor Hebraica*, that a plurality of wives was allowed, not only among the Hebrews, but among most other nations throughout the world; doubtless among the inhabitants of that vast tract of Asia, throughout which the Gospel was preached by the great apostle of the Gentiles, where so many Christian churches were planted, as well as in the neighboring states of Greece: yet in none of Paul's epistles, nor in the seven awful epistles which St. John was commanded to write to the seven churches in Asia, is a plurality of wives found amongst the crimes for which they were reproved. Every other species of commerce between the sexes, is distinctly and often mentioned; this not once, except on the woman's side, as Rom. 7: 3; but had it been sinful and against the law on the man's side, it is inconceivable that it should not have been mentioned on both sides equally.

"Grotius observes, 'Among the Pagans, few nations were content with one wife; and we do not find the apostle making this any bar to church-

membership. It can hardly be supposed, that if a plurality of wives were sinful, that is to say, an offense against the law of God, the great apostle should be so liberal and so particular, in his epistle to the Corinthians, in the condemnation of every other species of illicit commerce between the sexes, and yet omit this in the black catalogue, chap. 6: 9, &c., or that he should not be as zealous for the honor of the law of marriage, and of the seventh commandment, which was evidently to maintain it, as Ezra was for that positive law of Deut. 7: 3. against the marrying with heathens. Ezra made the Jews put away the wives which they had illegally taken, and even the very children which they had by them; how is it that Paul, if a plurality of wives was sinful, did not make the Gentile and the Jewish converts put away every wife, but the first, and annul every other contract?"

"No man could have a fairer opportunity to bear his testimony against a national sin, than the Baptist had; for it is said (Matt. 3: 5.) Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan; and among the numbers who were baptized, of him in Jordan, confessing their sins (ver. 6.) there were many harlots (chap. 21: 32.) So that it is evident he did not spare to inveigh most sharply against the sin of fleshly uncleanness; had a plurality of wives been of this kind, he doubtless would have preached against it, which, if he had, some trace would most probably have been left of it, as there is of his preaching against the sin of whoredom, by the harlots being said to believe on him; which they certainly would not have done, any more than the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 21: 32.) if the preacher had not awakened them to a deep and real sense of their guilt, by setting forth the heinousness of their sin. He exerted his eloquence also against public grievances, such as the extortion of the public officers of the revenue—the publicans—tax-gatherers—likewise against the oppressive methods used by the soldiery, who made it a custom either to take people's goods by violence, or to defraud them of their property, by extorting it under the terror of false accusation. These were public grievances, against which the Baptist bore so open a testimony, that the publicans and soldiers came to him, saying—What shall we do? This being the case, is it conceivable that a man of the Baptist's character, who was so zealous for the honor of the law, as to reprove even a king to his face for adultery, should suffer, if a plurality of wives be adultery, a whole nation, as it were, of public adulterers, to stand before him, and not bear the least testimony against them? I do not say this is a conclusive, but it is surely a very strong presumptive argument, that in the Baptist's views of the matter, a plurality of wives, whoredom, and adultery were by no means the same thing."

"While this system of a plurality of wives was revered and observed, we read of no adultery, whoredom, and common prostitution of women among the daughters of Israel: no brothels, street-walking, venereal disease; no child-murder, and those other appendages of female ruin, which are too horrid to particularize. Nor were these things possible, which, since the revocation of the divine system, and the establishment of human systems, are become inevitable. The supposing our blessed Savior came to destroy the divine law, or alter it with respect to marriage, is to suppose Him laying a foundation for the misery and destruction of the weaker sex."

Having given the above extracts from the writings of the Rev. Martin Madan, in his "Thelyphthora," we now make the following extracts from a tract published by the eminent divine, Bishop Burnet, who was elevated to the see of Salisbury, England, by William III., and who is described as a learned, judicious and excellent Bishop. He is known principally by his "History of the Reformation," and by that of "His own Times."

The tract was written on the question:

"Is a plurality of wives in any case lawful under the Gospel?"

"Neither is it [a plurality of wives] anywhere marked among the blemishes of the patriarchs; David's wives, and store of them he had, are termed by the prophet, God's gift to him; yea, a plurality of wives was made in some cases a duty

by Moses' law;—when any died without issue, his brother, or nearest kinsman, was to marry his wife, for raising up seed to him; and all were obliged to obey this, under the hazard of infamy, if they refused it; neither is there any exceptions made for such as were married. From whence I may faithfully conclude, that what God made necessary in some cases to any degree, can in no case be sinful in itself; since God is holy in all His ways.

"But it is now to be examined, if it is forbidden by the Gospel. A simple and express discharge of a plurality of wives is no where to be found.

"It is true, our Lord discharges divorces, except in the case of adultery, adding, that whosoever puts away his wife upon any other account, commits adultery: so St. Luke and St. Matthew in one place have it—or commits adultery against her: so St. Mark has it—or causes her to commit adultery: so St. Matthew in another place.

"But, says an objector, if it be adultery then to take another woman after an unjust divorce, it will follow that the wife has that right over the husband's body, that he must touch no other.

"This is indeed plausible, and it is all that can be brought from the New Testament, which seems convincing; yet it will not be found of weight.

"For it is to be considered, that if our Lord had been to antiquate the plurality of wives, it being so deeply rooted in the men of that age, confirmed by such fashions and unquestioned precedents, and riveted by so long a practice, he must have done it plainly and authoritatively, and not in such an involved manner, as to be sought out of his words by the search of logic.

"Neither are these dark words made more clear by any of the apostles in their writings: words are to be carried no farther, than the design upon which they were written will lead them to; so that our Lord being, in that place, to strike out divorce so explicitly, we must not, by a consequence, condemn a plurality of wives; since it seems not to have fallen within the scope of what our Lord does there disapprove."

"Therefore, to conclude this short answer, wherein many things are hinted, which might have been enlarged into a volume, I see nothing so strong against a plurality of wives, as to balance the great and visible imminent hazards that hang over so many thousands, if it be not allowed."

Arizona advices state that since January, in Prim county alone, 1,690 head of cattle have been stolen by Indians. During the same time out of a population of 7,580 whites the savages have murdered fifty-two, wounded eighteen, and carried two into captivity.

A clergyman once traveling in a stage coach was asked by one of the passengers if he thought that pious heathens would go to heaven. "Sir," answered the clergyman, "I am not appointed judge of the world, and, consequently, cannot tell; but if ever you go to heaven, you shall either find them there, or a good reason why they are not."

Died:

In Provo City, of measles, Aug. 20th, 1869, Mrs. S. H., son of Moses and Jane Cluff, aged one year and eight months. *Mill. Star* please copy.

At Moroni City, Aug 23d, 1869, of diarrhea, Beddels, daughter of Wm. L. and Ellen A. Draper, aged two years and fifteen days.

At St. George, of intermittent fever, after eleven days illness, Florence J., daughter of David and Julia Ann Moss, aged four years, two months and ten days.

In Salt Lake City, at fifteen minutes past 8 o'clock this morning, at the residence of his son William, in the 10th Ward, John Oster, sen., aged 61 years. His friends are invited to attend the funeral, which will take place at the Ward schoolhouse at 4 o'clock to-morrow afternoon. *Mill. Star* please copy.

At the residence of Millen Atwood, 13th Ward, at 2 o'clock this morning, of bronchitis, Emily C., wife of Wm. H. Branch, of St. George. Funeral services at the 13th Ward Assembly Rooms, to-morrow (Wednesday) at 10 o'clock a.m.

In American Fork, August 17, of inflammation, Mary Miriam, daughter of Joseph and Mary Wild, aged 11 months and 19 days. *Mill. Star*, please copy.

In the 10th Ward, S. L. City, August 25th, of inflammation of the bowels, Elizabeth Keddington, aged 8 years and 6 months; daughter of William and Elizabeth Keddington. *Mill. Star*, please copy.

In this city, on the 20th inst., William H., son of George and Ellen Saville, aged 5 months and 16 days. *Mill. Star*, please copy.

At Provo, on the 18th inst., of measles, Mary Elizabeth, daughter of Oliver G. and Isabella Workman, aged 9 years, 4 months and 7 days. *Mill. Star*, please copy.