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## THE FATHER'S LEGACY.

I leave thee, boy, a name unstained,  
A name that never bore  
A touch from crime's polluted hand,  
Nor shame's dark livery wore;  
Thy life page lies before thee now,  
No hand but thine can write  
The future on its stainless leaf;  
Say, boy, shall it be bright:  
I leave to thee a name unstained,  
Now boy, thou couldst not speak  
A word of falsehood; even the thought  
Brings crimson to thy cheek,  
And I would rather see thee laid  
In thy bright manhood low,  
Than deem its lightest shade should fit  
Across thine honor's glow.  
I leave to thee a name unstained—  
Come, kneel beside me now,  
And while my trembling hand is laid  
Upon thy bright young brow,  
Talk with thy heart, my child, and pledge  
Its solemn faith to-night,  
That thou wilt prize the gift and keep  
Its sacred tablets white.  
I leave to thee a name unstained—  
I might have left thee gold,  
I might have left thee broad, rich lands,  
Bright honors, wealth untold;  
But boy, I spurned the gilded bribes—  
What were the world to me?  
What! claim its storied wealth, and leave  
A sullied name to thee?  
I leave to thee a name unstained,  
The choice will now be thine;  
Shall it be wreathed with earthly gems,  
Or bright with honor shine?  
But child of mine, remember this:  
The richest gem of earth  
Could never pluck a shadow thence,  
Laid on thy sullied worth.  
I leave to thee a name unstained,  
Go, boy, thy life path tread,  
Thy dying father's hand hath laid,  
This blessing on thy head:  
Go, claim thy part of earthly gifts,  
Ask honors, wealth, or fame;  
But, boy, beware they are not bought  
By a dishonored name.

S. E. CARMICHAEL.

G. S. L. CITY, AUG. 1, 1859.

## HAS GOD SEALED THE HEAVENS?

BY MRS. J. B. BEMIS.

Say, has the great Eternal One  
Sealed up those gates of heaven,  
That man no more his truth may learn,  
Than what that Book has given?  
Ah, has Great Wisdom's mighty fount  
Exhausted all her store?  
Or is man deemed of less account  
Than in the days of yore?  
Does He forget His children here,  
And pass them idly by?  
Say, has He not a hearing ear,  
And an all-seeing eye?  
Does not the sun its course pursue,  
The earth yet pass its rounds?  
Has not the moon its station, too,  
Where God did set the bounds?  
Has the earth refused to yield  
The increase of her store?  
Do not the blossoms deck the field—  
Birds carol as of yore?  
Say, has the air its motion ceased?  
The winds forgot to blow?  
Is life withheld from man or beast?  
All nature answers—NO!

BATTLEBORO, VT., 1859.

## TABERNACLE.

Sunday, 10 a.m., Elder John Van Cott addressed the congregation; gave an account of his experience in receiving the gospel; spoke of the favors and blessings of which the Latter Day Saints were the participants, in having the light of truth and the fullness of the everlasting gospel made known unto them and bore testimony to the restoration of the Apostolic order of the church.

Prest. Brigham Young spoke of the inherent principle in man to pay homage to some being or other, and the inclination of the mind to be active in searching after something that is hidden from their present understanding; alluded to the divinity in man, the eternity of matter, the wise distribution of intelligence by the great controller of all things.

Afternoon, Prest. H. C. Kimball addressed the audience on the increase of the Church and kingdom of God; the necessity of all beings tried and proved; said that every movement made will tend to the furtherance of the work of God, and the final triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom.

In alluding to the emigration that is passing through this city, he remarked that they are the most peaceable class of emigrants who have ever traveled through here, that they mind their own business, and do not curse every person they speak with, and he wished them well, and prayed God to bless all that would do good.

Prest. B. Young occupied the remainder of the time; spoke of the setting up of the kingdom of God, the ushering in of the reign of righteousness, and the liberty that will then be extended to all parties, sects and denominations.

The sermon will be published.

He invited the Bishops to bring the people to the Tabernacle to keep the fast on Thursday.

## SERMON

By Orson Pratt, Sen., July 24, 1859.

REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.

I came to this Tabernacle this morning without any expectation of being called upon to address the congregation; but as I have been requested to preach, I cheerfully yield to the solicitations of my brethren, praying that the Holy Ghost may impart to me something for your edification. The office of the Spirit, when given in ancient times, was to make manifest truth—to quicken the memory of the man of God, that he might communicate clearly things which he had once learned, but partially forgotten.

For instance, the Apostles heard, during three years and a half, many sermons and a vast amount of conversation and private teaching. The office of the Spirit of Truth was to bring to their remembrance the things that Jesus had formerly taught them. So it is the office of the same Spirit, in these days, to bring to our remembrance the words of the ancient prophets and apostles, and the words of Jesus, inasmuch as we have faith and confidence in God.

Our traditions inform us that if a man has two wives it is a great sin and transgression against the laws of heaven, and the laws of man. The congregation that now sit before me, both male and female, imbibed these traditions before they embraced the doctrines of the Latter Day Saints. We were taught strictly, by our parents, by works on theology, by our neighbors, by our ministers from the pulpit, by the press and by the laws of Christendom, that plurality of wives is a great crime. Many of us, perhaps, never thought of questioning the correctness of the tradition, to know whether it was in reality a crime or not. That which is generally condemned by our nation, by our parents and kindred, by our public teachers, and by the laws of Christendom generally as a crime, is considered criminal by us. If asked, why polygamy is considered a crime, our only answer is, because false tradition says so; popular opinion says it is a crime. Now if it be a crime, if it can be proved to be a crime by the law of God, then the inhabitants of this Territory, so far as this one institution is concerned, are in an awful condition, for it is well known that this practice is general throughout this Territory, with but a few exceptions. A great many families, not only in Salt Lake City, but throughout the settlements, have practically embraced this doctrine, believing it to be a divine institution, approbated of God and the Bible.

We shall inquire a little into this principle for the information of the strangers who are present. Let us inquire whether, indeed, plurality of wives ever was sanctioned by the God of heaven, whether he himself is the author of it, or whether he barely permitted it as a crime, the same as he permits many known crimes to exist. The Lord permits a man to get drunk; he permits him to lie, steal, murder, to take his name in vain, and suffers with him a long time, and at last he will bring him to judgment; he has to render up his accounts for all these things.

If the Lord permits what is termed polygamy to exist as a crime among the Latter Day Saints, he will bring us into judgment and condemn us for that thing. It is necessary that we, as Latter Day Saints, should certainly understand this matter, and understand it, too, beforehand, and not wait until we are brought to an account. If a man were in the midst of a nation where he was not thoroughly acquainted with their laws, he would be thankful to obtain such information as would guard him from committing crime ignorantly: he would not wish to remain in ignorance until the strong arm of the law laid hold of him, and brought him before the bar of justice, where he would be forced to enter into a public investigation of his deeds and be punished for them. Neither do we, as Latter Day Saints, wish to wait in ignorance, until we are brought before the great tribunal, not of man, but of God.

Let us, therefore, carefully investigate the important question—is polygamy a crime? Is it condemned in the Bible, either by the Old or New Testament? Has God ever condemned it by his own voice? Have his angels ever been sent forth to inform the nations who have practiced this thing that they were in transgression? Has he ever spoken against it by any inspired writer? Has any Patriarch, Prophet, Apostle, angel, or even the Son of God himself, ever condemned polygamy? We may give a general answer, without investigating this subject, and say to the world, we have no information of that kind on record, except what we find in the Book of Mormon; there it was positively forbidden to be practiced by the ancient Nephites.

The Book of Mormon, therefore, is the only record, professing to be divine, which condemns plurality of wives as being a practice exceedingly abominable before God. But even that sacred book makes an exception in substance as follows:—except I the Lord command my people. The same Book of Mormon and the same article that commanded the Nephites that they should not marry more than one wife, made an exception. Let this be understood, unless I the Lord shall command them. We can draw the conclusion from this, that there were some things not right in the sight of God, unless he should command them. We can draw the same conclusion from the Bible, that there were many things which the Lord would not suffer his children to do, unless he particularly commanded them to do them. For instance, God gave to Moses express com-

mandments in relation to killing, "Thou shalt not kill," and this is not one of those commandments which was done away by the introduction of the gospel, but it is a command that was to continue as long as man should continue on the earth. It was named by the Apostles as one that was binding on the Christian as well as on the Jew. "Thou shalt not kill." Every one who reads this sacred command of God would presume, at once, that any individual found killing and destroying his fellow creature would be in disobedience to the command of God, and would be committing a great crime.

The same God that gave that commandment unto the children of Israel, saying "Thou shalt not kill," afterwards gave a commandment to them, that when they went to war against a foreign city or a city not included in the land of Canaan, "When thou shalt go to war against it, and when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword; but the women and little ones shalt thou take unto thyself." (Deut. XX, 13, 14.)

Again, when Israel took the Midianites captive, they were commanded to "kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him; but all the women children, that have not known man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves." (See Numbers XXXI, 17, 18.)

The question is, was it a sin before the Most High God for the children of Israel to obey the law concerning their captives, notwithstanding the former law, "Thou shalt not kill?" Most certainly not. Thus we see that it was a law given by the same God and to the same people that they should kill their captives, that they should kill the married women, their husbands, and their male children, that they should save alive none but those who had never been married, and who had never known man; save them alive for yourselves, says the law of God.

Here, then, we perceive that there are things which God forbids, and which it would be abominable for his people to do, unless he should revoke that commandment in certain cases. Because certain individuals among the Nephites, in ancient days, were expressly forbidden to take two wives, that did not prohibit the Lord from giving them a commandment and making an exception, when he should see proper to raise up seed unto himself.

The substance of the idea in that Book is, that when I the Lord shall command you to raise up seed unto myself, then it shall be right, but otherwise thou shalt hearken unto these things, namely, the law against polygamy. But when we go to the Jewish record, we find nothing that forbids the children of Israel from taking as many wives as they thought proper. God gave laws regulating the descent of property in polygamic families.

Turn to the 21st chap. of Deuteronomy and the 15th verse, and you have there recorded that "If a man have two wives, one beloved and another hated, and they have borne him children both the beloved and the hated; and if the first born son be hers that was hated, then it shall be when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born, before the son of the hated, which is indeed the first-born; but he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the first-born, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the first-born is his."

In this law the Lord does not disapprove the principle; here would have been a grand occasion for him to do it, if it had been contrary to his will. Instead of saying, if you find a man that has two wives he shall be excluded from the congregation of Israel, or shall divorce one and retain the other, or shall be put to death, because he presumed to marry two wives, he considers both women his lawful wives and gives a law that the son of the hated wife, if the first born, shall actually inherit the double portion of his property. This becomes a standing law in Israel.—Does not this clearly prove that the Lord did not condemn polygamy, but that he considered it legal?—that he did not consider one of these wives to be a harlot or a bad woman? Does it not prove that he counted the hated one as much a wife as the beloved one, and her children just as legitimate in the eyes of the law?

Again, let us go back to the days of the Patriarchs before the law of Moses was introduced among the people, and we find the same principle still existed and approbated by the God of heaven. I have heard many of our opponents argue that the law of Moses approbated a plurality of wives, but it was not to be under other dispensations, as much as to say, it was merely given because of the hardness of their hearts; but such a saying is not to be found in the Bible. I can find a declaration of our Lord and Savior that the divorcing of a wife was permitted in the days of Moses because of the hardness of the hearts of the people; but I cannot find any passage in the sayings of the Savior, or the Apostles and Prophets, or in the law that the taking of another wife was because of the hardness of their hearts.—There is quite a difference between taking wives and putting them away.

This law of plurality, as I am going to prove, did not only exist under the law of Moses but existed before that law, under the Patriarchal dispensation; and what kind of a dispensation was that? It has been proved before the people in this Territory, time after time, that the dispensation in which the Patriarchs lived, was the

dispensation of the gospel, that the gospel was preached to Abraham as well as unto the people in the days of the Apostles; so says Paul, and the same gospel too that was preached in the days of the Apostles was preached to Abraham. "The Scriptures foreseeing God would justify the heathen through faith preached the gospel before unto Abraham," etc. The same gospel that the heathen were to be justified by, was the same gospel that Jesus and his Apostles preached, and which was before preached to Abraham. If we can find out that under the gospel preached to Abraham, polygamy was allowed, the gospel preached by Jesus, being the same, of course, would not condemn it. Jacob, we understand, went from his father's house to sojourn at a distance from the land that was promised to him, and while he sojourned there, he married Leah, one of the daughters of Laban, after having served faithfully seven years. It was a custom to buy wives in those days; they were more expensive than now-a-days. It is true he got cheated, he expected to have married Rachel, but, as I presume, the old Eastern custom of wearing veils deceived Jacob, he could not exactly understand whether it was Leah or Rachel until after he was married. Then he served seven years more to get Rachel—here was a plurality of wives.

Did the Lord appear to Jacob after this? Yes. Did he chasten him? No. Did he send his angels to him after this? Yes, hosts of them came to him; he was a man of such powerful faith, and his heart so pure before God that he could take hold of one of them and wrestle all night with him, the same as people wrestle in the streets here, only they did not swear, and, I presume, they had not been drinking whisky, and they wrestled with all their might. I do not suppose the angel, at first, exercised any peculiar faith, but merely a physical strength; he was unable to throw Jacob; and Jacob, like a prince, prevailed with God, but he began to mistrust that he was something more than a man that was wrestling with him, and began to inquire after his name, and by and by the angel determined not to be worsted, put forth one of his fingers, and touched one of Jacob's sinews, and down he came. Did this angel inform Jacob that he was a wretched polygamist—an offscouring of the earth, not worthy to dwell in the society of men? No, he was recommended as a great prince and one that had power to prevail with an angel all night until the angel put forth his miraculous power on him.

This same Jacob conversed with God, heard his voice and saw him and, in all those visions and glorious manifestations made to him, we find no reproof for polygamy; certainly, if the Lord did not intend to approbate a crime he would have reproofed him for polygamy, if polygamy were a crime. If he did not intend Jacob to go headlong to destruction, he would have told him he had taken two wives and it was not right; but instead of this, he blessed these wives of Jacob exceedingly and poured out his Spirit upon them. Leah bore him four sons and then she became for a while barren; finding she had left off bearing children, she gave Zilpah, a woman that was dwelling with them, to Jacob to wife, although he already had two, and Zilpah raised up children to Jacob. Leah had borne several children and had left off bearing; she had been more backward about giving her handmaid, Zilpah, to Jacob to wife than Rachel had been in giving Bilhah. Seeing the Lord was about to curse her with barrenness, because she did not do according to the example of her younger sister she gave Zilpah to Jacob; then the Lord hearkened to her prayer, and Leah said,—"God hath given me my hire because I have given my maiden to my husband." [See Genesis xxx: 18.]

Who ever heard of the Lord's hearing one's prayer, because a person was doing an evil? If polygamy were a crime, God would have condemned her—because she gave up her handmaid to her husband. We can not suppose that any woman, not acquainted with the law and commandment of the Most High, and believing it to be sinful for her husband to have two wives would express herself in such a manner:—the Lord heard my prayer and gave me the fifth son because I gave my handmaid to my husband to wife. This shows to us that Jacob's wife, Leah, did really consider it something pleasing in the sight of God. It was something that God and all his angels that appeared to Jacob approbated, and instead of cursing him, blessed him more and more. By these four wives the whole twelve sons of Jacob were born and they became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. And when the day comes that the Holy City, the Old Jerusalem shall descend from God out of heaven, crowned with glory, there will be found upon the wall which is erected around it, the names of the twelve Patriarchs of Israel, beautifully engraved upon the walls. I suppose the people of this day would call the most of these sons of Jacob, bastards; but they are to be honored of God, not for a few years, but an honor that is to exist forever and ever, while their names will be found emblazoned upon the walls of the Holy City, to remain throughout eternity.

Now recollect, this is under the gospel dispensation, and not under the law of Moses, which was given several hundred years afterwards.—The Lord made great and precious promises to the seed of Jacob, through these wives, saying they should inherit the land of Palestine, and they should be blessed above all people. We find this blessing fulfilled upon their heads, according to the righteousness of their descendants, until they were scattered because of iniquity.