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All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, See Ye, when He lifteth up an Ensign on the Mountains.—*Isaiah* XVIII, 3.

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### THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF MAN.

1. Man in this life consists of a body of flesh and bones quickened and animated by a living intelligent spirit. It has been supposed that spirit begins to exist within the mortal tabernacle while it is yet in embryo, and that prior to the organization of the body, the spirit had no existence. These are the views of modern christendom. We shall endeavor to prove that this view of the subject is incorrect.

2. There is not anything unreasonable in the pre-existence of spirits. If spirits can exist after death in a state of happiness or misery, is there any reason, why they can not exist prior to the organization of the body? If they can think, and will, and move after they leave the body, why can they not exercise these functions before they take possession of the body? If the destruction of the body is not the death of the spirit, then it must be admitted that the spirit is in no way dependant on the body for its existence, and, therefore, it can exist prior to the body, as well as after it. The disorganization of the body does not deprive the spirit of life, neither does the organization of the body give to the spirit life: it possesses life in itself. Life and intelligence are not the result of organization, but they are the cause; and, therefore, they must exist before the effects can follow. Our bodies are formed from the dust of the earth, but are our spirits

made from the same materials? If they were, then they would, at death, return to dust; but as they are not reduced to dust, like the body, they must be formed of materials far superior to those of the earth. Where did those materials come from? They came from God. Solomon, when speaking upon the subject of death, says, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall RETURN unto God who gave it." (*Eccles. 12: 7.*) According to this passage, the spirit has, not an earthly origin, but a heavenly one: it came from God—it returns to God. "*God who gave it,*" also receives it back into His presence.

3. Could the spirit return to God, if it never were in His presence? Could we return to a place where we never were before? If, then, the spirits of men existed with God, and came from Him to animate mortal bodies, they must either be created in Heaven at the time the infant tabernacles are being formed, or else they existed before. If the spirit is formed in Heaven at the time the earthly house is being prepared for its reception, then God must have been engaged in the work of creating spirits at the rate of about ten millions per year, or about twenty spirits per minute, which is the average number born into our world in the same time. Now we read that God

made all things, pertaining to our earth in six days, and rested on the seventh. Can we suppose, for one moment, that God neglected the formation of spirits in the grand work of creation? Can we suppose that he has been engaged in creating human spirits for this earth, at the rate of one every three seconds, ever since He pronounced the Heavens and the earth and all things therein finished and very good? Such an idea is inconsistent and unscriptural.

4. Again, would a good and wise Being create spirits, and before they had time to prove themselves by obeying or disobeying His laws, thrust them out of His presence,—banish them from His glorious kingdom,—shut them up in earthly tabernacles, hide His face from them, and subject them to temptation, wretchedness, and misery? Now, if we suppose that the spirit is formed in Heaven, while the embryo tabernacle is being formed upon the earth, then it has no time to gain experience in the presence of its Creator; it has no time to act upon its agency; it has no time to obey or disobey; but as soon as it is formed, it is, according to this supposition, banished into dreary exile from the presence of its Father, and from the glory of Heaven, to linger out a life of sorrow in an earthly tabernacle. Such a supposition is absurd, and at war with the attributes of goodness, justice, and mercy which appertain to the Deity.

5. Inasmuch as Scripture informs us that the spirit of man existed with God, and came from Him, and returns to Him, it is reasonable to believe that its formation took place at a period anterior to the organization of the body. This period of pre-existence must have been sufficiently long to have educated and instructed the spirit in the laws and order of government, pertaining to the spiritual world; to have rendered itself approved or disapproved by those laws; to have been tried in all points, according to its capacities and knowledge, and the free agency which always accompanies and forms a part

of the nature of intelligent beings; in fine, the period of pre-existence must have been sufficiently long to have constituted a probationary state, or the "*First Estate*" wherein the spirits are on trial, and may fall, and be reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

6. The pre-existence of man is a doctrine which was believed by the ancients. The disciples of Jesus, when observing a man who had been blind from his birth, put the following question to their Master: "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9: 2.) It is evident, from the nature of this question, that the disciples considered it possible for a man to sin before he was born; and that in consequence of such sin, he might be "*born blind.*" This passage shows most clearly, that the disciples, not only believed in the pre-existence of man, but believed that he was an intelligent agent, governed by laws which he was capable of obeying or disobeying, and that his sins in his former state might be the cause of his being born blind, and that his condition in his present state was affected by his acts in the former state. The Saviour, in replying to this question, says, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." (verse 3.) Now, if the pre-existence of man were not a true doctrine, why did not our Saviour take this opportunity to correct the ideas of his disciples, by telling them that the blind man could not sin before he was born? Why did he merely tell them that his blindness was not the effects of the sins of himself or parents? Why did he still leave the impression upon their minds that the blind man had a pre-existence?

7. Jesus, himself, believed in pre-existence: for he said, "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." And, again, he said, "Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8: 42, 58.) Jesus prays thus: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine

own self with the glory which I had with thee *before* the world was." (John 17: 5.) From these sayings, we perceive that the spiritual body of Jesus existed "before the world was."

8. Having proved that the pre-existence of man is reasonable and scriptural, we shall next prove that this pre-existence can be traced back to a period before the foundation of the world. The Lord asked a question of Job in relation to this matter: He inquires, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who laid the corner stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job 38: 4, 6, 7.) If Job had no prior existence, he could have easily answered the Lord's first question. He could have replied, that, when "*the foundations of the earth*" were laid, I, Job, did not exist. The very question implies that Job was in existence at the time of the organization of the globe, but that he had not sufficient understanding, as to the place where he existed, to correctly answer the question put to him. Neither could he remember, "Who laid the corner stone thereof;" neither could he recollect, the song of the morning stars; neither could he call to mind, the shout of joy which was uttered by the vast assembly of "ALL THE SONS OF GOD."

9. Jesus calls himself, "*The bright and morning star.*" (Rev. 22: 15.) And in another place, He represents Himself, "*The Beginning of the Creation of God.*" (Rev. 3: 14.) Paul says, that Jesus "is the image of the invisible God—the FIRST BORN of every creature." (Col. 1: 15.) As Jesus is the First Born Son of God, it is evident, that all the other Sons of God would be His younger brethren, begotten by the same Father. Therefore, Paul represents him as "*the First Born among many brethren.*" (Romans 8: 29.) And in another place, he says, "Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of

One: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2: 11.) That the brethren, here spoken of, are the sons of God, begotten by the same Father that Jesus was, is evident from another saying of the Apostle, "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the FATHER OF SPIRITS, and live?" (Heb. 12: 9.) Our earthly fathers are called, the "*fathers of our flesh,*" while God is called, "*The Father of Spirits.*" Earthly fathers have no power to beget spirits; they beget only the bodies of flesh, or the tabernacles; while our Heavenly Father begets the spirits, or the living beings which come from Him to inhabit the tabernacles.

10. "The First Born" of all this great family of Spirits, holds, by virtue of His birthright, a pre-eminence in all things; hence it is written, "When he bringeth in the *First Begotten* into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him." (Heb. 1: 6.) The oldest spirits or the First Begotten hold the keys of Salvation towards all the rest of the family of spirits. "The First Born" Spirit is called "*The Morning Star,*" because He was born in the morning of Creation, or in other words, because He was "The Beginning of the Creation of God." His younger brethren were called "*morning stars,*" because they were also born in the morning of creation, being the next in succession in the order of the spiritual creation.

11. "The Father of Spirits," having filled one of the celestial kingdoms with his own Sons and Daughters—the fruit of his own loins, gave commandment unto His "First Born" to organize, out of the eternal elements, another world. In obedience to this great commandment, "The First Begotten," accompanied by all His younger brethren who had kept their "*First Estate,*" proceeded to lay "the foundations of the earth," and "the corner stones thereof." And upon this grand occasion, "The

Morning Stars sang together." The Lord does not reveal to Job the sentiments contained in this song. It was probably a song, composed by one of the wisest poets in the vast kingdom of spirits, there assembled. It, no doubt, contained sentiments suitable to the majesty, greatness, and magnificence of the work which they had commenced. The foundations of a mighty world were being laid—the corner stones were placed in their appropriate position. Upon these, or around these, as a central nucleus, was to be erected a magnificent globe, arrayed in all the gorgeous splendor of celestial workmanship. Above, below, and around these eternal elements, hovered thousands of millions of the sons of God which were the spirits of men. By the spirit of prophecy, they looked upon the vast field of unorganized materials which lay stretched out almost to infinity in the boundless ocean of space which surrounded them. They saw that these materials were to be formed and fashioned into a ponderous globe, prepared and adorned for their future residence; where they should exist, and live, and move in earthly tabernacles; where they should sway the sceptre of dominion over all the lower orders of creation; where they should become fathers of fleshly bodies, in like manner, as God was the Father of their spirits. They saw the fall, redemption, and eternal exaltation of the sons of God, and the glorification of the earth which they were forming, which should become their abiding place forever. In the contemplation of the magnificent sceneries which rolled in awful grandeur before them, their bosoms swelled with indescribable joy; they gave utterance to their feelings in rapturous strains of melodious music which reverberated from world to world, filling all the heavens with the praises of God, while eternity itself trembled with joy.

12. They not only had singing to celebrate the beginning of the organization of this earth, but "all the sons of God shouted for joy." Who can

contemplate this grand event without being almost overpowered with the ideas of greatness and magnificence which force themselves upon the mind? All the generations of men that have ever lived, or that ever will live upon the earth, were assembled upon that occasion. They were the sons of God: they were the ones who shouted for joy. Their united voices must have been, as the voice of many waters, driven by fierce tempests whose mountain waves, rolling, plunging, dashing, break with awful majesty upon the rocky bound coast. A shout of joy, breaking forth simultaneously from a vast world of spirits, must have been as the rolling of ten thousand thunders, reverberating from mountain to mountain, till the whole earth trembles under the power thereof.

13. There is something grand and sublime in the contemplation of our pre-existence. How wonderful and interesting it is for us to know, that the beings whom we call ourselves, that now dwell in these earthly tabernacles—existed thousands of years ago—that we were present, when the foundations of the earth were laid—that we then sang and shouted for joy—that we were engaged with our oldest brother, the First Born, in organizing this world—that we dwelt for ages in our Father's presence in a celestial or glorified world—that we there beheld His face, and rejoiced in His glory—that we there were instructed in the wisdom and knowledge of God, till the intelligence which radiated from our persons, shone like the morning light.

14. Objections have been raised against the pre-existence of man upon the ground that we do not remember such existence, or any event connected therewith. It is true, we do not remember anything prior to our present state, but this does not prove that we had no prior existence. We do not remember our existence or anything else, during the first six months of our infancy, does this prove that we did not exist during that time? No. If, then, we could exist six

months, during our present state without remembering it, we might, for the same reason, have existed during six thousand years prior to our present state, and not remember it. Existence is in no way dependant on memory; therefore, memory has nothing to do with the question of our past state.

15. When Jesus was born into our world, his previous knowledge was taken from Him: this was occasioned by His spiritual body being compressed into a smaller volume than it originally occupied. In His previous existence, His spirit, as the Scriptures testify, was of the size and form of man; when this spirit was compressed, so as to be wholly enclosed in an infant tabernacle, it had a tendency to suspend the memory; and the wisdom and knowledge, formerly enjoyed, were forgotten. "In His humiliation, His judgment was taken away." (Acts 8, 33.) To come down from Heaven, from His Father's presence, where He had formerly possessed judgment and understanding sufficient to frame worlds, and to enter into a mortal tabernacle, was truly humiliating. It was, indeed, humiliating in the highest degree, to be deprived of so great a knowledge. Yet he humbled Himself, and condescended to descend below all things, and to commence anew at the very elements of knowledge: hence, one of the evangelists says, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature." (Luke 2, 52.) Now if Jesus had retained His wisdom when He was born into this world, it would not have been said of Him that He "*increased in wisdom.*" If the knowledge which Jesus possessed in His previous state, were taken from Him, when He entered an infant tabernacle, He could never regain that knowledge only by revelation. So it is with man. When he enters a body of flesh, his spirit is so compressed and contracted in infancy that he forgets his former existence, and has to commence, as Jesus did, at the lowest principles of knowledge, and ascend by degrees from one principle

of intelligence to another. Thus he regains his former knowledge; and by showing himself approved through every degree of intelligence, he is counted worthy to receive more and more, until he is perfected and glorified in truth, and made like his elder brother, possessing all things.

16. If the spiritual body of Jesus, and the spiritual bodies of all men, existed before the foundation of the world, as we have clearly shown, is there any thing unreasonable in the idea of the pre-existence of the spiritual bodies of all the animal creation? There is not. One class of spirits may exist before they enter their natural bodies, as well as another. Did not the same God who made the spirits of men, make the spirits of beasts also? Job says, "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? **IN WHOSE HAND IS THE SOUL OF EVERY LIVING THING.**" (Job 12, 7-10.) In this quotation, we perceive that "the soul of every living thing" is in the hand of the Lord: He is the Maker and Preserver of the souls of beasts, birds, and fishes, as well as of the souls of men: hence, Moses, when praying to the Lord, says: "Let the Lord, **THE GOD OF THE SPIRITS OF ALL FLESH**, set a man over the congregation." (Num. 27; 16.) Thus we see that the Lord is, not only the God of the spirits of men, but He is "the God of the spirits of all flesh."

17. That the spirits of all the vegetables and animals were made before their bodies is evident from the history of creation as related in the first and second chapters of Genesis. In the first chapter, we have the history of the creation of vegetables, fish, fowls, beasts, and man. In the second chapter, we are told that on the seventh day "there was not a man to till the ground;" and then

a description is given of the formation of his natural body "out of the ground." In the first chapter, and during the third day, the vegetables and trees are formed; in the second chapter, and on the seventh day, we are told that the Lord "made every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew;" and then we are informed that on the seventh day the Lord planted a garden, that is, set out the trees and herbs which he had made on the third day, and caused them to "grow out of the ground." In the first chapter, it is said, that the fish, fowls, and beasts, were created on the fifth and sixth days; in the second chapter, these various animals are formed "out of the ground" on the seventh day, and "brought unto Adam to see what he would call them." From this we learn, that the natural bodies of animals were made after the natural body of man. In the work of the temporal creation man seems to have been the first flesh upon the earth, his natural body being made even before the herbs and trees were planted and grew out of the ground. He was placed in the garden of Eden, before the Lord made the beasts and fowls, that is, their natural bodies, and brought them to him in order that he might name them. The first chapter gives a history of the creation of all things spiritual; the second chapter gives the history of the creation of all things temporal. In the order of time, and in the succession of events, the spiritual creation of the Heavens, and earth, and all things contained therein,—differs from the temporal creation of the same. To suppose that these two chapters only give the history of the natural creation, would involve us in numerous difficulties, when we endeavor to reconcile the description given in the second chapter with that given in the first. But to receive them as the descriptions of two successive creations, the first being spiritual, (as it truly was,) and the second being temporal, all difficulties and discrepancies in the two

different descriptions vanish away, and a flood of light bursts upon the mind.

18. JOSEPH SMITH, the great prophet of the last dispensation, being commanded of God to translate the Bible by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost,—commenced the great work in the month of June, 1830. In this inspired translation, the distinction between the spiritual and temporal creation, is clearly manifest. After describing the six days of labor, God informs us, that he ended His work on the seventh day, and rested therein, and sanctified it. He then teaches us, "that these are the generations of the Heaven and of the Earth, when they were created, in the day that I, the Lord God, made the Heaven and the Earth, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had created all the children of men; and not yet a man to till the ground, for in Heaven created I them; and there was not yet flesh upon the earth; neither in the water, neither in the air; but I, the Lord God, spake, and there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And I, the Lord God, formed man from the dust of the the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul, the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also; nevertheless, all things were before created; but spiritually, were they created and made according to my word. And I, the Lord God, planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there I put the man whom I had formed. And out of the ground I, the Lord God, made to grow naturally, every tree that is pleasant to the sight of man; and man could behold it. And they became also a living soul. It was spiritual in the day that I created it; for it remaineth in the sphere which I, God, created it in, yea, even all things which I prepared for the

use of man; and man saw that it was good for food. And I, the Lord God, placed the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and also the tree of knowledge of good and evil." \* \* \* \* \* "And out of the ground I, the Lord God, formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and commanded that they should be brought unto Adam, to see what he would call them: and they were also living souls, and it was breathed into them the breath of life." (Gen. 2nd chap. Inspired Translation, by JOSEPH SMITH, the prophet.) Here we learn, that every vegetable and animal, as well as man, was first created spiritually, in Heaven, and afterwards made naturally upon the earth. The succession of events in the spiritual creation was different from that in the natural creation; hence, arises the two different descriptions.

19. Heaven is the world where all the spirits, destined for this creation, had their origin: It is a world, consisting of a great variety of materials of a similar nature to those which enter into the constitution of our world. The difference between our world and a Heavenly one, consists, not in the diversity of the elements, for they are the same, but in the difference of the organization of these elements. In our world, the elements, at the present time, are so organized, that continual changes are taking place of such a nature as to produce death and the dissolution of all organized substances. In a Heavenly world, the same elements are so combined that eternal duration is stamped upon every organization. The spiritual substances, connected with our world, are not permanently combined with the other elements; while in a Heavenly world, so far as these two classes of elements are combined, their union is immortal or eternal. A Heavenly world has once been in the same condition as our world, but its temporal organization has been dissolved, and the same elements have been reorganized after the pattern of the Heavenly order: it

is thus changed from a temporal to an eternal state. In its temporal condition, it is terrestrial; in its eternal condition, it is celestial. Under the former, death usurps dominion, and spreads devastation and ruin throughout the whole organization: under the latter, eternal life reigns triumphant forevermore. In the one condition, it is a fallen world; in the other, it is a redeemed world. In the first state, it is a non-luminous body, borrowing its light from those of a higher order; in the second, it is a luminous body, radiating light upon the surrounding worlds. When a fallen world, it is inhabited by fallen beings; when a redeemed world, it is inhabited by celestial beings, redeemed from the grave, and glorified, and made like unto the God who created and redeemed them, whose sons they are, and henceforth they are Gods, ordained to do the works appertaining to Gods; and as their Father God has done before them, so will they do. Heaven, then, is a redeemed glorified world, inhabited by the Gods, and by their sons and daughters, who are the fruits of their own loins.

20. The Gods who dwell in the Heaven from which our spirits came, are beings who have been redeemed from the grave in a world which existed before the foundations of this earth were laid. They and the Heavenly body which they now inhabit were once in a fallen state. Their terrestrial world was redeemed, and glorified, and made a Heaven: their terrestrial bodies, after suffering death, were redeemed, and glorified, and made Gods. And thus, as their world was exalted from a temporal to an eternal state, they were exalted also, from fallen men to Celestial Gods to inhabit their Heaven forever and ever.

21. These Gods, being redeemed from the grave with their wives, are immortal and eternal, and will die no more. But they and their wives will be supremely happy. All the endearing ties of conjugal love which existed in their bosoms, when

terrestrial and fallen beings, are now greatly increased and perfected which serve to swell their souls with feelings of rapturous delight, and unbounded love towards each other, and with joys that are everlasting. How beautiful—how interesting—how inexpressibly lovely will they appear in each others eyes! Full of virtue and goodness, knowledge and intelligence, affection and love,—they shine forth in all the brilliancy and glory of these Godlike attributes, inspiring each other, and all Heaven, with a fulness of Eternal joys.

22. All these Gods are equal in power, in glory, in dominion, and in the possession of all things; each possesses a fulness of truth, of knowledge, of wisdom, of light, of intelligence; each governs himself in all things by his own attributes, and is filled with love, goodness, mercy, and justice towards all. The fulness of all these attributes is what constitutes God. "God is Light." "God is Love." "God is Truth." The Gods are one in the qualities and attributes. Truth is not a plurality of truths, because it dwells in a plurality of persons, but it is one truth, indivisible, though it dwells in millions of persons. Each person is called God, not because of his substance, neither because of the shape and size of the substance, but because of the qualities which dwell in the substance. Persons are only tabernacles or temples, and TRUTH is the God, that dwells in them. If the fulness of truth, dwells in numberless millions of persons, then the same one indivisible God dwells in them all. As truth can dwell in all worlds at the same instant; therefore, God who is truth can be in all worlds at the same instant. A temple of immortal flesh, and bones, and spirit, can only be in one place at a time, but truth, which

is God, can dwell in a countless number of such temples in the same moment. When we worship the Father, we do not merely worship His person, but we worship the truth which dwells in His person. When we worship the Son, we do not merely worship His body, but we worship truth which resides in Him. So, likewise, when we worship the Holy Ghost, it is not the substance which we alone worship, but truth which dwells in that substance. Take away truth from either of these beings, and their persons or substance would not be the object of worship. It is truth, light, and love that we worship and adore; these are the same in all worlds; and as these constitute God, He is the same in all worlds; and hence, the inhabitants of all worlds are required to worship and adore the same God. Because God dwells in many temples, He frequently speaks to us, as though there were many Gods: this is true when reference is made to the number of His dwelling places; but it is not true, and cannot be true, in any other sense. Therefore, in all our future statements and reasonings, when we speak of a plurality of Gods, let it be distinctly understood, that we have reference alone to a plurality of temples wherein the same truth or God dwells. And also when we speak of only one God, and state that He is eternal, without beginning or end, and that He is in all worlds at the same instant, let it be distinctly remembered, that we have no reference to any particular person or substance, but to *truth* dwelling in a vast variety of substances. Wherever you find a fulness of wisdom, knowledge, truth, goodness, love, and such like qualities, there you find God in all His glory, power, and majesty, therefore, if you worship these adorable perfections you worship God.

(To be continued.).

## CELESTIAL MARRIAGE.

(Continued.)

The first great commandment which God gave unto mankind, as recorded in the scriptures, was, to "*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.*" (Gen. 1: 28.) The principal object was to people this creation with myriads of intelligent moral beings, after His own image and likeness, endowed with God-like capacities, and capable of progressing in the grand scale of knowledge and happiness, until they should receive a fulness, and become like God, and be glorified in Him, and He in them, that they might be one in glory, and in power, and in dominion. Herein is God glorified, because there are millions of beings who eventually become like Himself, with whom He can associate, and who are capable of understanding and appreciating all the fulness of His glorious attributes, and of acting with Him in the most perfect harmony in all the magnificent works of Creation. Herein are the dominions of the Almighty enlarged, by the accession of new worlds, peopled with beings in His own form and of His own order. And herein joy, and gladness, and happiness, reign in the bosom of the great Creator, in all their fulness and perfection, because He exercises His infinite goodness in the formation of numberless worlds, peopled with beings upon whom, if obedient, He bestows all the fulness of His own great perfections.

If, then, the multiplication of human beings adds to the dominions of the Almighty, glorifies His name, and gives Him an opportunity of displaying His infinite goodness, it is reasonable to suppose that He would give laws unto mankind, regulating them upon so important a subject—a subject fraught with consequences that are eternal. Think, for one moment, of the great responsibilities, resting upon the father and mother of an infant child: they have been instruments, in giving existence to a

being, capable of eternal happiness or of eternal misery; they have been entrusted with the protection and instruction of a being in the image and likeness of God who, by proper training, may soar aloft in wisdom, and knowledge, and power, and God-like majesty to the realms of immortality and everlasting light; they have been entrusted with a treasure infinitely more valuable than all the riches and honors of this world—a treasure which, by their mismanagement may be lost—eternally lost—a treasure for which they are accountable in the great judgment of quick and dead. O, how great will be the glory and happiness of that man and woman who have obeyed that great first commandment to "Multiply," and have trained up themselves and their children unto life and immortality! On the other hand, what wretchedness and misery, will be inflicted upon those who have been instruments of unlawful connections, whose illegitimate children will remain as a standing curse, both in time and in eternity, to testify loudly of the unvirtuous associations of their guilty parents! O, how fearful the responsibilities, resting upon mankind in regard to this momentous subject!

It is because of the infinitely important consequences, involved in the multiplication of the human species, that God has regulated the same by the strictest kind of laws. He has not permitted an indiscriminate intercourse between the sexes, as among the dumb brutes; but He has ordained Marriage as the only justifiable means through which the sexes can legally "multiply and replenish the earth." All connections out of the marriage covenant, are unlawful in the sight of God; and all who are guilty of such crimes will be severely punished for the same. In ancient times persons committing adulteries, fornications, and unvirtuous connections, were punished with death, ac-

ording to the law of God, which reads as follows :

“If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman : so shalt thou put away evil from Israel. If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die ; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city ; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour’s wife : so shalt thou put away evil from among you. But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her : then the man only that lay with her shall die.” (Deuteronomy, 22 : 22, 25.)

The great abhorrence which the Lord manifested towards all unvirtuous connections, may be clearly seen from the following :

“If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, and give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid.” And, “if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel : then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die ; because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father’s house : so shalt thou put evil away from among you.” (Deut. 22 : 13, 14, 20, 21.)

It was pleasing to the Lord to have such wicked characters put to death. Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, was greatly blessed of the Lord, for putting to death a man and woman who were guilty of unlawful connections : we give the history of this event in the words of scripture.

“And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of

all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazer, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand ; and he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through. \* \* \* So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas, the son of Eleazer, the son of Aaron, the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore, say, behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace : and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood ; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.” (Numbers, 25 : 6—13 )

Why was the Lord so displeased with the sexes that he would punish them with death for unvirtuous conduct? It was, because He had ordained marriage as the only lawful way of multiplying the human race. The direful effects which follow unvirtuous associations, can easily be perceived, even though there were no law of God against such evils. First, illegitimate children are thrown upon the world without any lawful protector to look after their temporal welfare. Secondly, these children have not the moral advantages, which should be derived from the teachings and examples of lawful parents, and, consequently, are in greater danger of losing their eternal salvation. And lastly, an indiscriminate intercourse between the sexes would break up all family associations, and destroy the harmony and peace, enjoyed in the domestic circle ; fathers would not know their own children, and children could not, with confidence, say who were their fathers: such an order of things would be deplorable, and would strike a

deadly blow at the foundation of all domestic happiness. Many other dreadful consequences might also be named, as the result of licentiousness, such as jealousies, want of confidence, loathsome diseases transferred to posterity, all of which evils are abhorrent to the feelings of every good man. It is for this reason, that God has enacted strict laws in regard to all these crimes. It is for this reason, that He punishes with such heavy penalties those who violate these sacred laws.

Adulterers, and unvirtuous persons were not only to be punished temporally, but also spiritually, after this life. Hence, the Lord says, "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. 21: 8.) Punishment by a temporal death is not sufficient to satisfy the demands of justice: they must suffer the penalties of the second death also.

The same strictness against all unvirtuous conduct is taught in the book of Mormon, as may be seen from the following quotations:

"O the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up in the pride of their hearts, and all those who preach false doctrines, and *all those who commit whoredoms*, and pervert the right way of the Lord; wo, wo, wo be unto them, saith the Lord God Almighty, *for they shall be thrust down to hell.*" (2 Nephi 12: 2.)

The prophet Alma, in speaking to his son on this same subject, says, "Know ye not, my son, that these things are an abomination in the sight of the Lord; yea, most abominable above all sins, save it be the shedding of innocent blood, or denying the Holy Ghost." (Alma 19: 1.)

In another place, the Lord says to the ancient inhabitants of America, as follows:

"I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts. Wherefore,

this people shall keep my commandments, saith the Lord of Hosts, or cursed be the land for their sakes. For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise, they shall hearken unto these things. For behold, I, the Lord, have seen the sorrow, and heard the mourning of the daughters of my people in the land of Jerusalem; yea, and in all the lands of my people because of the wickedness and abominations of their husbands. And I will not suffer, saith the Lord of Hosts, that the cries of the fair daughters of this people, which I have led out of the land of Jerusalem, shall come up unto me, against the men of my people, saith the Lord of Hosts; for they shall not lead away captive the daughters of my people, because of their tenderness, save I shall visit them with a sore curse, even unto destruction: for they shall not commit whoredoms, like unto them of old, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Book of Jacob, 2: 6)

When Jesus appeared unto the ancient Nephites, in the northern part of what we call South America, He taught them, concerning adultery in these words:

"Behold, it is written by them of old time, that thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart. Behold, I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart; for it is better that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell." (Book of Nephi, page 460, chap. 5: 10.)

The same doctrine is taught in the revelations and commandments, given through Joseph, the Seer, unto this church. In February, 1831, the Lord spake thus:

"Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else; and he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, shall deny the faith, and shall not have the

Spirit, and if he repents not, he shall be cast out. Thou shalt not commit adultery; and he that committeth adultery and repenteth not, shall be cast out; but he that has committed adultery and repents with all his heart, and forsaketh it, and doeth it no more, thou shalt forgive; but if he doeth it again, he shall not be forgiven, but shall be cast out." (Book of Covenants, sec. 13, par. 7.)

"And if any man or woman shall commit adultery, he or she shall be tried before two elders of the church or more, and every word shall be established against him or her by two witnesses of the church, and not of the enemy; but if there are more than two witnesses it is better. But he or she shall be condemned by the mouth of two witnesses, and the elders shall lay the case before the church, and the church shall lift up their hands against him or her, that they may be dealt with according to the law of God. And if it can be, it is necessary that the bishop is present also. And thus ye shall do in all cases which shall come before you." (Sec. 13, par. 22.)

The saints are prohibited, by revelation, to receive certain persons into the church. The Lord says:

"Behold, verily I say unto you, that whatever persons among you, having put away their companions for the cause of fornication, or in other words, if they shall testify before you in all lowliness of heart that this is the case, ye shall not cast them out from among you; but if ye shall find that any persons have left their companions for the sake of adultery, and they themselves are the offenders, and their companions are living, they shall be cast out from among you. And again I say unto you, that ye shall be watchful and careful, with all inquiry, that ye receive none such among you, if they are married; and if they are not married, they shall repent of all their sins, or ye shall not receive them." (Sec. 13, par. 20.)

And again, the word of the Lord came unto Joseph, the Seer, in August, 1831, saying:

"There were among you adulterers and adulteresses; some of whom have turned away from you, and others remain with you, that hereafter shall be revealed. Let such beware and repent speedily, lest judgments shall come upon them as a snare, and their folly shall be made manifest, and their works shall follow them in the eyes of the people. And, verily, I say unto you, as I have said before, he that looketh on a woman to lust after her, or if any shall commit adultery in their hearts, they shall not have the Spirit, but shall deny the faith, and shall fear: wherefore, I, the Lord, have said that the fearful, and the unbelieving, and all liars, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, and the whoremonger, and the sorcerer, shall have their part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Verily I say, that they shall not have part in the first resurrection. And, now, behold, I, the Lord, say unto you, that ye are not justified, because these things are among you; nevertheless, he that endureth in faith, and doeth my will, the same shall overcome, and shall receive an inheritance upon the earth, when the day of transfiguration shall come." (Sec. 20, par. 4, 5, 6.)

In all these quotations from ancient and modern revelations, every one can see the dreadful consequences, arising from the least indulgence of these sinful lusts. Those persons who suffer unvirtuous thoughts to come into their hearts, and cherish them there for one moment will find themselves under condemnation; they have broken the law of God; they have become defiled by their wicked thoughts, and unless they repent, the Spirit will depart from them; for the Holy Ghost dwelleth not in unholy temples, and they will be left in darkness, and their faith will die away, and they will be filled with fear, and finally be cast down to hell.

The Latter-Day Saints are under greater obligations than any other people on the whole earth, to keep themselves pure and virtuous before the Lord—to refrain from adulteries,

fornications, licentiousness, all unlawful connections, all uncleanness, all fleshly lusts, all unvirtuous and unholy desires, and from all lustful thoughts and carnal affections; for we have been faithfully warned, again and again, by the voice of that great prophet and revelator, Joseph Smith; we have been warned by the voice of inspiration—by the voice of angels—by the voice of the ancient prophets of America, speaking as it were from the dead through the medium of their ancient records—we have been warned by the voice of God, threatening us with destruction, and with the miseries of the second death, if we do not keep ourselves entirely free and pure from all these sinful soul-destroying lusts. If we reject so great warnings, and sin against so great light, how can we obtain forgiveness, or escape the damnation of hell? The Lord our God is a holy and just God—faithful and true in all His words, and will in nowise vary from that which He hath said; for judgment goeth before His face, and justice and righteousness is the habitation of His throne! O ye Saints of the last days, do you realize the fearful—the infinitely important—the eternal responsibilities which rest upon you, to watch over yourselves, your children, and all who are placed under your charge? Do you realize that your condemnation and punishment will be in proportion to the light and knowledge against which you sin? If you fully understand and appreciate the warnings which you have received, happy are you, if you give heed and obey the voice of the Lord your God, for great shall be your reward, and eternal shall be your glory. But if any among you harden their hearts, and yield themselves unto the wicked lusts of their flesh, and suffer themselves to be defiled by cherishing in their minds unvirtuous thoughts and unholy desires, they shall speedily be visited by sore judgments, and their names shall be blotted out from under heaven, and they shall be thrust down to hell, where there is

weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

From the foregoing quotations and remarks, it will be seen, that the Latter Day Saints have stricter notions of virtue, and consider themselves under greater obligations to refrain, not only from unvirtuous acts, but from unvirtuous thoughts, than any other people under Heaven. But do the Saints actually demonstrate by their practices, that they believe what the Lord has taught them upon these subjects? Do they practice virtue, as well as deliver the precepts thereof? We answer, let the practices of the thirty thousand Saints in Utah, speak; let strangers who have travelled through our flourishing territory, declare; let the records of the courts of justice bear witness; let the injured females, if there be any, whose character and reputation have been destroyed by the vile seducer, publish their wrongs; let illegitimate children, if Utah affords them, come forth as a public monument of our disgrace; if a house of ill-fame can be found throughout the length and breadth of our territory, then let the Saints hide their faces in shame, and the sons and daughters of Utah blush before the Heavens; if an adulterer or seducer of female virtue, can be found in all that land, then let the elders be clad in sackcloth, and the Saints put on the garments of mourning, and weep before the Lord, day and night, until the evil be taken from their midst.

But have not some of the Saints in Utah more wives than one? Yes: and they take good care of them too; and teach them and their children the great principles of virtue and holiness by example as well as by precept. But is it not sinful, for a man to have more than one wife living at the same time? If it is, the Bible has not told us of it. But is it not contrary to the christian religion? If it is, the christian religion has not revealed it as an evil. But do you not really think that it is contrary to the will of God for a man, in these days, to take a plurality of wives? Yes, unless God shall give them to him by a revelation

through a holy prophet. Is it not contrary to the Constitution and laws of the United States for the the citizens of Utah to practicethe plurality of wives? No; neither the Constitution nor the laws of the United States, have said anything on the subject of marriage or domestic relations. But is it not contrary to the laws of the Territory? No; the Legislature of that Territory do not feel disposed to debar her citizens of any blessings or privileges, enjoyed under the sanction of the Almighty, by holy prophets and patriarchs of old.

Do you believe that the Book of Mormon is a divine revelation? We do. Does that book teach the doctrine of plurality of wives? It does not. Does the Lord in that book forbid the plurality doctrine? He forbid the ancient Nephites to have any more than one wife. What does the Book of Mormon say on this subject? It says, as follows, "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 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. 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.) Why were the ancient Nephites restricted to the one wife system? Because, first, the number of males and females among them, at the time the command was given, was about equal. Secondly, there was no probability that judgments, wars, or any other calamities which were to befall their nation, would produce a disproportionate number of males and females. Thirdly, this small remnant of the tribe of Joseph were, at that time, about equally righteous; and one was about as capable of raising up a family in righteousness as another. And lastly, the Lord, Himself, informs them, in the same connection with the quotation which I have just made, that if

He would have them practice differently from what He had previously taught them, it must be by his command. It reads as follows: "For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise, they shall hearken unto these things." Thus we see, that a man among the Nephites, by the law of God, had no right to take more than one wife, unless the Lord should command for the purpose of raising up seed unto Himself. Without such a command, they were strictly limited to the one wife doctrine: "otherwise," says the Lord, "they shall hearken unto these things;" that is, without an express command, they should hearken to the law, limiting them to one wife. So it is in this church of Latter Day Saints, every man is strictly limited to one wife, unless the Lord, through the President and Prophet of the Church, gives a revelation permitting him to take more. Without such a revelation it would be sinful, according to the Book of Mormon, which this church are required to obey. Hence, the Book of Mormon is somewhat more strict than the Bible; for there is nothing in the Bible that limits mankind to one wife, but the Book of Mormon does absolutely forbid a man to have more than one wife, unless God shall command otherwise.

Now in the early rise of this church, the Lord gave no command unto any of His servants authorizing them to take more than one wife, but on the contrary, said unto them that they should give heed to that which was written in the book of Mormon; therefore, they were under the strictest obligations to confine themselves to one wife, until a commandment came to the contrary, which the Lord did not see proper to give unto any of them, until about thirteen years after the first organization of the church. The church, therefore, are still restricted, by the severest penalties, to one wife, according to the Book of Mormon, unless in individual cases where the Lord shall, by revelation, direct otherwise.

No man in Utah, who already has a wife, and who may desire to obtain another, has any right to make any propositions of marriage to a lady, until he has consulted the President over the whole church, and through him, obtains a revelation from God, as to whether it would be pleasing in His sight. If he is forbidden by revelation, that ends the matter: if, by revelation, the privilege is granted, he still has no right to consult the feelings of the young lady, until he has obtained the approbation of her parents, provided they are living in Utah; if their consent cannot be obtained, this also ends the matter. But if the parents or guardians freely give their consent, then he may make propositions of marriage to the young lady; if she refuse these propositions, this also ends the matter; but if she accept, a day is generally set apart by the parties for the marriage ceremony to be celebrated. It is necessary to state, that before any man takes the least step towards getting another wife, it is his duty to consult the feelings of the wife which he already has, and obtain her consent, as recorded in the 24th paragraph of the revelation, published in the first No. of "The Seer."

When the day set apart for the solemnization of the marriage ceremony has arrived, the bridegroom, and his wife, and also the bride, together with their relatives, and such other guests as may be invited, assemble at the place which they have appointed. The scribe then proceeds to take the names, ages, native towns, counties, States, and countries of the parties to be married, which he carefully enters on record. The President, who is the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator over the whole church throughout the world, and who alone holds the keys of authority in this solemn ordinance, (as recorded in the 2d and 5th paragraphs of the Revelation on Marriage,)—calls upon the bridegroom, and his wife, and the bride to arise, which they do, fronting the President. The wife stands on the left hand of her husband, while

the bride stands on her left. The President, then, puts this question to the wife: "Are you willing to give this woman to your husband to be his lawful and wedded wife for time and for all eternity? If you are, you will manifest it by placing her right hand within the right hand of your husband." The right hands of the bridegroom and bride, being thus joined, the wife takes her husband by the left arm, as if in the attitude of walking: the President, then, proceeds to ask the following question of the man: Do you brother, (*calling him by name,*) take sister, (*calling the bride by her name,*) by the right hand to receive her unto yourself to be your lawful and wedded wife, and you to be her lawful and wedded husband for time and for all eternity, with a covenant and promise, on your part, that you will fulfil all the laws, rites, and ordinances, pertaining to this holy matrimony, in the new and everlasting covenant, doing this in the presence of God, angels, and these witnesses of your own free will and choice?" The bridegroom answers, yes. The President, then, puts the question to the bride: "Do you, sister, (*calling her by name,*) take brother, (*calling him by name,*) by the right hand, and give yourself to him, to be his lawful and wedded wife for time and for all eternity with a covenant and promise, on your part, that you will fulfil all the laws, rites, and ordinances, pertaining to this holy matrimony, in the new and everlasting covenant, doing this in the presence of God, angels, and these witnesses of your own free will and choice?" The bride answers, yes. The President then says, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the authority of the Holy Priesthood, I pronounce you legally and lawfully husband and wife for time and for all eternity; and I seal upon you the blessings of the holy resurrection, with power to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection, clothed with glory, immortality, and eternal lives; and I seal upon you the blessings of thrones,

and dominions, and principalities, and powers, and exaltations, together with the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and say unto you be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, that you may have joy and rejoicing in your posterity in the day of the Lord Jesus. All these blessings, together with all other blessings pertaining to the new and everlasting

covenant, I seal upon your heads, through your faithfulness unto the end, by the authority of the Holy Priesthood, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." The scribe, then, enters on the general record, the date and place of the marriage, together with the names of two or three witnesses who were present.

(To be continued.)

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