

# REPLY TO ORSON PRATT,

*By Joseph Smith,*

PRESIDENT OF THE REORGANIZED CHURCH OF JESUS  
CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS.

---

Published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, '7

---

## REPLY TO ORSON PRATT.

In the following pages it is intended to reply to certain assumptions, arguments and reasonings, set forth in three discourses delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, upon the doctrine of "Celestial Marriage."

One of the principal reasons why this reply is undertaken, is that these discourses were delivered by Orson Pratt, George A. Smith, and George Q. Cannon, respectively, on three successive days, during the Conference held in Salt Lake City, in October, 1869, over which Brigham Young presided.

It is presumed that, as these efforts were made with a view to counteract the effect then being produced by Elders Alexander H., and David H. Smith, who were laboring in Utah, they contain those evidences, and the arguments derived therefrom, which are considered by the defenders of "Celestial Marriage" as their strongest and most incontrovertible.

It is for this reason that I essay the task of replying to Mr. Orson Pratt's discourse of October 7th, 1869.

Mr. Pratt proceeds to say;

"Let us inquire whether it is lawful and right according to the constitution of our country, to examine and practice this Bible doctrine:"

Making the endeavor to prove that those who practice polygamy, or "Celestial Marriage," are sustained therein by the constitution of the United States the first point in his discourse.

In doing this, he says,

"Our fathers who framed the Constitution of our country devised it so as to give freedom of religious worship of the Almighty God; so that all people under our Government should have the inalienable right,—a right by virtue of the Constitution,—to believe in any Bible principle which the Almighty has revealed in any age of the world to the human family."

This declaration he immediately qualifies, as follows;

"I do not think however that our forefathers, in framing that instrument, intended to embrace all the religions of the world. I mean the idolatrous and pagan religions."

Mr. Pratt says something more upon the subject of the constitution, and the kinds of religion which might legally be practiced under it, the substance of which is above stated; concluding,

"We have the privilege to believe in the Patriarchal, in the Mosaic, or in the Christian order of things; for the God of the Patriarchs, and the God of Moses is also the Christian's God."

In closing his discourse, Mr. Pratt makes use of the following language; which I quote here, to contrast with the other statements made by him at the beginning;

"In this land of liberty in religious worship, let us boldly proclaim our rights, to believe in

and practice any Bible precept, command or doctrine, whether in the Old or New Testament, whether relating to ceremonies, ordinances, domestic relations, or anything else, not incompatible with the rights of others, and the great revelations of Almighty God manifested in ancient and modern times."

I emphasize "*incompatible with the rights of others*," because I shall subsequently call attention to them, in the main examination of the subject.

Article 1 of the amendments to the constitution declares as follows :

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;"

And Mr. Pratt makes a dangerous admission when he says the "idolrous and pagan" religions are excluded.

In Sec. 1, Art. 4, of the Constitution it is declared that

"Full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other State."

With these declarations of Mr. Pratt, and these quotations from the Constitution before us, let us inquire whether there be any foundation for the assertion that the practice of "Celestial Marriage" is legal under the Constitution.

The only thing which is affirmed by the Constitution respecting religion, is that Congress shall neither prescribe a form, nor prohibit the exercise of a form of religion. Were there no other restricting causes, then all religions, whether Pagan, Idolrous, or Christian, could be legally propagated, and the rites thereof administered in any portion of this land. But as there must be other restricting causes, or so cunning a defender of so broken a system as "Celestial Marriage" is, would not have excepted any form of religion in his claim for legal protection, it would seem just to inquire what those restricting causes are and from whence they arise.

Perhaps no better point from which this investigation can begin could be

chosen than is furnished by Mr. Pratt himself.

"We hear nothing among the religious societies of the world which profess to believe in the Bible about this marriage for eternity. Now, all marriages are consummated until death only. \* \* \* No, they marry as mortal beings only, and until death does them part."

The reason why those various religious bodies, referred to above, marry only for life, or until death does them part, is very obvious. In every State of the United States, over which the Constitution spreads its ægis of protection, there exist laws, called statutory provisions, which regulate the marriage relation, all of them recognizing the rule instituted at the beginning, as stated by Mr. Pratt.

"God created man, male and female. He gave to man, whom he created, a help meet,—a woman, a wife to be one with him, to be a joy and a comfort to him."

This also agrees with the institution of marriage as found in Genesis 2; 24.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."

Upon the statute book of the State of Illinois, from which I quote for especial reasons, there are the following laws among others regulating the marriage relation of the citizens of that State.

"All male persons over the age of seventeen years, and females over the age of fourteen years, may contract and be joined in marriage." Statutes of Illinois, Ed. of 1858, p. 579.

There is a provision for consent of parents or guardians in case of minors not necessary to quote.

"Bigamy consists in the having two wives or two husbands at one and the same time, knowing that the former husband or wife is still alive."—*Ibid*, p. 395.

"Marriages between parents and children, including grand parents and grand children of every degree, between brothers and sisters of the half as well as of the whole blood, and between uncles and nieces, aunts and nephews, are declared to be incestuous and absolutely void."—*Ibid*, p. 395.

I also quote from the law of Iowa,

"Marriage is a civil contract requiring the consent of parties capable of entering into other contracts, except as herein otherwise declared." Laws of Iowa, Revision of 1860, Sec. 2515.

"If any person who has a former husband or wife living marry another person, or continue to cohabit with such husband or wife in this State, he or she, except in the cases mentioned in the following section, is guilty of bigamy.—*Ibid*, Sec. 4348.

The reason why I quote from these laws, is that the revelation which is claimed as authority for the practice of polygamy, is said to have been given in 1843, at which time the main body of the church was in these two States of Illinois and Iowa, under the laws of which States, made with reference to, and subject to the constitutional provisions guaranteeing the exercise of legislative power, the several members composing the church were living. A violation of these laws, under the plea of religious sanction, either by personal infraction or by corporate disregard, would alike render the church guilty of breaking the law. No provision of church polity therefore could legitimately exist within these States which permitted an infraction of their statutory enactments regulating the "domestic relations," as Mr. Pratt graciously styles the "Celestial Marriage."

If no such disregard of the law of the States of Illinois and Iowa, in which States the church was in 1843, was proper and right; by what rule of reasoning can any man say, that at that time such teaching and such practice as the dogma of "Celestial Marriage" inculcates, were sustained by the Constitution.

In every State of the United States similar laws exist. Now, if there was no rule of law preventing the practice of such doctrine in the State of Illinois, and such a practice had obtained in the church as a part of their faith, then in every other State where any should go from Illinois practicing that

doctrine, they must be received and their acts recognized, for such marriages would be legal; but as there was in that State a law prohibiting such practice, it could not be legally practiced in any other State of the Union on the ground of State sanction. If not in the States, can it be in the Territory belonging to the States?

The only ground upon which the assumption that the Constitution would, under any conditions, permit the practice of polygamy under any name, by the Latter Day Saints, either in the states or territories, would be, that there were no statutory provisions regulating marriage in the States where the church was originally organized, and where it was subsequently located; and also, that the doctrine, the prohibition of the practice of which is complained of, was one of the original tenets of the church; and none, I believe have claimed for it an earlier modern origin than 1843; while it is well known that the church was organized in 1830.

It is then quite certain, that the right assumed by the legislatures of the respective states to consider marriage as a civil institution and to provide laws regulating the same, is a correct one; and as a consequence the Constitution does not permit the practice of "Celestial Marriage," and Congress may properly prohibit it in the territories of the United States.

The objection, that the laws which I have stated are simply state laws and have nothing to do with the people of a territory is not valid, from this fact; Mr. Pratt, and others, in the defense of polygamy, claim that they practice it by virtue of a revelation given in 1843; and the church was then living in Illinois, when, as I have before stated, there did exist this prohibitory law; nor was it then contemplated that the church would remove from that State. Hence, if the revelation was to do a thing which could not legally

be done, the conclusion is inevitable, *that the claim made for its divine origin is falsely made.* In this connection it may be as well to state, that in none of the published records of the church, prior to the year 1850, is there a line of assumption or argument, indicating an attempt to introduce so important a feature of faith and practice as it is asserted this "Celestial Marriage" is. The Book of Doctrine and Covenants published in 1835, republished in 1845, and again in 1864, has no provisions for it; nor do the published discourses which were delivered during the years intervening between 1830 and 1850, show that any public defense was made of it, or that it was set forth as a doctrinal tenet.

The declaration, that the time had not come for its promulgation, destroys the claim made for the validity of its practice; nor does the assertion, that the laws of the States would not permit it, help its defenders; but is, on the contrary, a confession of its corruptness, for no other tenet promulgated by the church as a doctrine, has ever contravened any law of the land, or demanded in its practice the breaking of that law.

To assert that Joseph Smith was afraid to promulgate that doctrine, if the command to do so had come from God, is to charge him with a moral cowardice to which his whole life gives the lie. Nor does it charge him alone with cowardice, but brands his compeers with the same undeserved opprobrium. The very fact that men are now found who dare to present and defend it, is proof positive that Joseph and Hyrum Smith would have dared to do the same thing had they been commanded so to do.

The danger to the lives of those men would have been no more imminent, nor any greater in the preaching of "Celestial Marriage," than it was in preaching the "Golden Bible" and the doctrine that Joseph Smith was a pro-

phet blessed with divine revelation. For the preaching of these tenets many lost their lives; Joseph and Hyrum Smith were repeatedly mobbed, were imprisoned and finally died, in the faith originally promulgated, but—if we may judge from their public records,—not believers in polygamy.

I have been thus prolix in regard to this point, because much stress is put upon the legal restriction put in the way of preaching in the States that favorite theory, during the years between the martyrs' death and 1850; when it is said fear kept them silent; and the inference is fair that it is now urged only as a shadow for an excuse, for that silence.

In proceeding to a further examination of Mr. Pratt's argument, I notice

"God created man, male and female. \* \* \* He gave to man whom he had created, a helpmeet,—a woman, a wife to be *one with him.* \* \* \* He therefore instituted the marriage institution. The marriage that was instituted in the first place was between *two* immortal beings, hence was marriage for *eternity* in the very first case we have recorded for an example \* \* \* hence, when God gave to Adam his *wife* Eve, he gave her to him as an *immortal wife*, and there was no *end* contemplated of the relation they held to each other as *husband and wife.*"

These statements being true, do they not most pointedly provide that all subsequent conjoining of the sexes must be in conformity with the pattern or example given; and this example shows this contract to have been made between two, one of each sex, only.

The glamour which Mr. Pratt with his compeers throws over this institution, and which has given it so great weight with the ignorant and unwary, is the result of sophistry, and is this. It is assumed that Adam and Eve were created immortal; and that from this it may be concluded that this marriage was an eternal one between immortal beings; that being of this character it was designed to continue forever. This is the gilding of the dirty pill of plurality; and Mr. Pratt must know, if

what has been stated by Heber C. Kimball, Jedediah M. Grant, B. Young, and others, respecting the difficulty experienced in making the women, as a class, and many of the men to believe this doctrine be true, that unless there was some effort put forth to sugar-coat the affair, it would remain untold and unbeliev'd.

Even this, however, is destroyed by a statement made by Mr. Pratt in the very next sentence of his discourse; to wit,

"Death, in its operations, tore asunder, as it were, these *two* beings who had hitherto been immortal, and if God had not, before the foundation of the world, provided a plan of redemption, they would perhaps have been torn asunder forever, but inasmuch as a plan of redemption had been provided, by which man could be rescued from the Fall, Adam and Eve were restored to that condition of union, in respect to immortality, from which they had been separated for a short season of time by death. The atonement reached after them and brought forth their bodies from the dust, and restored them as *husband and wife*, to all the *privileges* that were pronounced upon them before the Fall. That was *eternal marriage*; that was a *lawful marriage* ORDAINED BY GOD. That was the Divine institution which was *revealed and practiced* in the early period of our globe."

The fact which Mr. Pratt here states, by which statement he is bound to abide the logical conclusions deducible therefrom, that the marriage consummated between Adam and Eve subsequently to the Fall, was a *lawful marriage* by reason of its divine institution, is precisely the ground taken by the Reorganization against the doctrine of "Plural Marriage," "Celestial Marriage," "Spiritual Wifery," as held by the church under the presidency of B. Young.

Death parted Adam and Eve, as Mr. Pratt admits, and that too, according to his argument, while they were immortal; by reason of which death, the bond of union between the two was "torn asunder," and was only restored by an act of divine clemency. Adam and Eve ceased to live upon the earth, at least it is stated that Adam

died, and it is to be presumed that Eve died also.

The commandment given to Adam and Eve, upon which some stress is laid, to "multiply and replenish the earth" was not revoked at the Fall; but there was added to it this significant qualification,

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

This taken with the knowledge that Adam and Eve died, after having performed their mission of life to this earth, and bequeathed as a heritage, a condition of mortal existence subject to death, to all their posterity, direct, intermediate and remote, leads fairly to the conclusion, that as it was known that man would fall, his relationship as male and female, as husband and wife, was preordained by divine wisdom to suit the circumstances of the condition incident to that fall.

Mr. Pratt, as do all other defenders of the doctrine of polygamy, speaks glowingly of the "*privilege* of propagating their species;" these are his words. I inquire, who was granted this privilege? Mr. Pratt answers, Man. "Male and female created he them." It was then a privilege held conjointly. No greater privileges were conferred upon the male portion of these contracting parties than upon the female, so far as this propagation of their species was concerned; but as coincident *evils* attendant upon this condition of propagation, the male was to eat his bread in the sweat of his face all the days of his life, and the conception of the female was to be *multiplied*, and in *sorrow* was she to bring forth.

If it was a *privilege* to labor, to subdue the soil to man's use, and to eat his bread in the sweat of his face, then was Adam thus privileged. If it was a privilege to Eve to have her *conception multiplied* and to bring forth in sorrow, then was Eve privileged; but

God called it a *curse*. Can Adam's sons,—can Eve's daughters,—can these hoary-headed defenders of lust gloze over these indelible words of God? "I will multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in *sorrow* shalt thou bring forth children." "*Cursed* shall be the ground for thy sake; in *sorrow* shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life."

The same rule of right, the same rule of justice, the same rule of equity and privilege that grants to Adam the power of propagating his species, and furnishes as his help-meet *one* woman to be his wife, that thereby the earth might be filled with the measure of man's creation, at once and forever defines how Adam's posterity may carry out the same grand design.

One other thing still in this connection I wish to present. No children were born to Adam and Eve until after the fall; hence, if immortal before the fall, (which I now neither admit nor deny), and mortal after the fall, it would seem just to conclude that their marriage relation was instituted especially for a mortal condition, and for time only. As an argument in favor of this I offer the facts, that children were born to them after the fall, and that they both died.

If the condition of Adam and Eve before the fall is to be taken as a type of their condition when resurrected, then as no children were born to them in the garden, none will be born to them when resurrected.

Besides this, if Adam had but one wife, Eve, before the fall, he will have but one, Eve, in the resurrection; for as he had but one before the fall, but one during his life outside the garden after his fall and before his death, he will appear in the resurrection with but one.

It is stated by Mr. Pratt and other polygamists, that the gifts of God are given more bountifully to the faithful than to the unfaithful, hence a plurality of *wives* are given to God's especial

favorites. What an argument this bald statement is?

Mr. Pratt says,

"The same God who created the two sexes implanted in the hearts of each love toward the other."

To regulate "this principle" in the heart of man and woman God gave divine laws "that they might be limited and prescribed in the exercise of it towards each other." "He therefore ordained the marriage institution." If God, then, ordained the marriage institution, and the one declared by Mr. Pratt to be the type of an "eternal" one, a "lawful" one, a "divine" one, be the true one, all others differing from it are untrue and corrupt. To this typical marriage there were but two parties, the one male and the other female.

The same heaven implanted love of the opposite sex, which says to man that it is improper and evil for a woman to have more than one living husband at one and the same time, with whom she may interchange the tokens of this love; will declare in precisely the same terms and with the same consistency of claims, that it is equally improper and evil for a man to have more than one living wife at one and the same time.

This love is not different, neither in kind, degree, purity, strength, nor intensity in either party; nor does Mr. Pratt or his compeers so hold or so present it. They represent it as being the same. Why then, if they have been so created and the seal of God, in fairly dividing the numbers of either sex born into the world since the fall, has been set upon this duality, two-by-two principle for generation succeeding generation, should any man be justified in the attempt to subvert that principle.

Mr. Pratt seems to be pleased with the idea embodied in his assumption that

"When the sons and daughters of the most High God come forth, in the morning of the

resurrection, this principle of love will exist in their bosoms just as it exists here, only intensified according to the increased knowledge and understanding which they possess."

And in order to throw discredit upon the declaration of Christ which strikes directly at the roots of this assumption, he entirely misconstrues it. He says,

"It is true that we read in the new Testament that in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven. These are the words of our Savior when he was addressing himself to a very wicked class of people, the Sadducees, a portion of the Jewish nation, who rejected Jesus, and the counsel of God against their own souls. They had not attained to the blessings and privileges of their fathers, but had apostatized; and Jesus in speaking to them, says that in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God.

No man ever did in a public discourse, more completely betray the cause he was essaying to defend, than has Mr Pratt in the few words I have just quoted. The pronoun "they," which occurs in the declaration of Jesus, Mr. Pratt states refers to the Sadducees, a "wicked" sect among the Jews, and that these Sadducees are the ones to whom our Savior refers as the class neither marrying nor giving in marriage, and who shall be as the angels of God.

The statement of Christ which Mr. Pratt thus misconstrues to his own shame, is as follows;

"But they who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, through resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage."

I quote the verse following it,

"Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Luke 20 : 34, 35.

If the statement of Christ be true, then has Mr. Pratt spoken the words which not only condemn him, but all who hold to marriage for eternity; and the delusive theory which he has built, of the exaltation and peculiar privileges

to which the many-wived patriarchs of ancient and modern days are to be entitled for the practice of this polygamic rule, fades with the breath that built it.

If the Sadducees are the ones of whom the Savior said, "they are as the angels of God," and they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; then are they who will marry and be given in marriage, not as the angels of God.

If the Savior's words be true,—and he spake of those who should be the children of God,—as the angels of God because they were the children of the resurrection; then are the Sadducees, and all, who, like them anticipate the joys of sexual intercourse in the resurrection, not as the angels of God,—not the children of God, nor the children of the resurrection. It was a fatal mistake of Mr. Pratt, and shows the straits to which men once wise, are driven to sustain a system of error against the truth.

It is an easy grade down which Mr. Pratt now slides into the common routine of argument and assumption, which characterizes all the commoner minds engaged in teaching polygamy. I shall not reply, at any great length, to very many of those dogmatical assertions which are brought forward and made to do duty as argument deduced from sound and safe premises. I shall, however, notice those which appear to be most prominent.

Mr. Pratt, speaking of Abraham, says,

"When God saw proper to call out Abraham from all the heathen nations, and make him a great man in the world, He saw proper, also, to make him a polygamist."

The records of Abraham's life shows that Sarah, Abraham's wife, was the party to whom Abraham was indebted for the companionship of Hagar, not God; and still further, God commanded Abraham to put her away.

Mr. Pratt says that God promised

blessings unto the issue of Abraham's second wife. To this we object, that God does not call Hagar a wife, but a "bond-woman." Moreover, the peculiar blessings promised to Ishmael, the issue of Hagar, was, "and he will be a wild man; and his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Still further

"As for Sarai, *thy wife*, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah thou shalt call her name."

From these words we feel assured that God does not call Hagar a wife, nor recognize her as such; but Sarai is called a wife.

If the offspring of all polygamic liaisons are to partake of the kind of blessing pronounced upon Ishmael, it is easy to account for the turbulent and irresponsible progeny of Utah polygamists.

The statement of Mr. Pratt respecting Jacob, I shall pass with little comment, for this reason. Br. David H. Smith, in his "Bible vs. Polygamy," has pretty well shown the fallacy of the arguments used from this portion of the record to support "Celestial Marriage." There is one statement, however, which I can not so lightly pass by; and shall notice it; not so much from the force it may have for a defense of polygamy, as from a consideration of the responsible position and learned character of the man who makes it. That statement is, that Jacob had four *wives*, and was approbated of God in so having them. The statement is not made that God *commanded* him to take them; but simply that God *permitted* him to take them, and that God called them the *wives* of Jacob.

In the enumeration of the family of Jacob, when taking his journey down into Egypt to Joseph, Rachel alone is called the *wife* of Jacob, and Joseph (the blessed son) and Benjamin are named as her sons.

"The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife; Joseph and Benjamin." Gen. 46 : 19.

The historian in another place says that Jacob "took his *two wives*;" in another "his *wives*;" but these expressions are to be taken guardedly, and are to be modified or strengthened by other texts.

As further evidence that Rachel was considered of God "the wife" of Jacob, neither Isaac his father, nor Joseph his blessed son, whom he loved more than all the rest, had more than one wife; and the contract between Laban and Jacob was for her alone. Besides all this, when Jacob was sent unto Padan Aram he went for *a wife*, not *wives*. In this intent he saw Rachel, contracted for her to be his wife, and served for her. Laban, according to the history, did not call Leah the wife of Jacob; but insisted that Jacob should be satisfied with Leah for a week and serve for Rachel, whom he at once gives to him, another term of seven years. The other women were the gifts of Rachel and Leah to Jacob, not the gift of God nor ever recognized of God as Jacob's wives. The only instance on record where God calls them wives, so far as I learn, and that is by an inference, is where the statement is made in the Book of Mormon, that David and Solomon had many wives and concubines; the inference is, that if David had more than one then Jacob had also.

I have already dwelt longer upon this case of Jacob's than I intended; but can not forget to notice another point. To show still further evidence that Rachel was considered the legal wife, the true wife of Jacob, the Lord when reproving the people through Jeremiah, says

"A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."

How like the declaration,

"I have heard the cry of the fair daughters of my people."

With which God rebukes the people

upon this land, as given us in the Book of Mormon immediately after the clause upon which Mr. Pratt relies, viz.,

"For if I will, saith the Lord, raise up seed unto me I will command my people."

The prophet Hosea, in the xii. ch., 12 verse, gives us still another evidence, as follows.

"And Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep."

It is evident that Jacob served for no one but Rachel; and the children of Israel proper may rightly hold Rachel their mother.

The next statement made by Mr. Pratt which I shall notice is, as follows,

"And yet he was the offspring of plurality, of the second wife of Jacob. Of course, if Reuben, who was the first-born unto Jacob, had conducted himself properly he might have retained the birthright, and the greater inheritance; but he lost that through transgression, and it was given to a polygamic child."

This statement, in its legitimate results, is fatal to the purpose for which it was made, and betrays the folly and wickedness of the system in the defense of which it was used.

Mr. Pratt's statement is, that the birthright was Reuben's; but he having lost it, it was given to *Joseph*, a polygamic child.

How will Mr. Pratt break in upon the law of descent; of primogeniture, by which he claims the birthright to Reuben; and, setting aside the claims of Simeon, Levi, Judah, sons of Jacob's first wife, according to Mr. Pratt; and Dan, Naphthalia, Gad sons of Jacob, by his other *wives*, according to Mr. Pratt; give the birthright to one born at so late a period of time as was Joseph. If the theory upon which Reuben was entitled to the birthright be worth anything, Simeon, and after him all the rest born before Joseph were entitled to it; but if the true descent be in Joseph, which must be the inevitable conclusion, then were Reuben, Simeon, Levi and all others born of other women than Rachel

polygamic children and not legal sons of a legal wife, legal heirs to a legal birthright.

This statement admits another conclusion, which is eminently favorable to the position assumed by the Reorganized Church, which is this, that which is a matter of descent, as was the birthright in the family of Jacob, can not descend to strangers.

Another argument which Mr. Pratt uses in defense of polygamy; but which is a far better one against it, is this. When Rachel had been a long time barren, she prayed to God for issue; "The Lord hearkened to her cry and granted her prayer." The giving to Rachel issue, to that issue the birthright, "the double birthright" as Mr. Pratt truly states, plainly indicates, not that God approved of polygamy but that Rachel was the legal wife of Jacob; and well may Mr. Pratt say, as he does, that God "ordained that Joseph" "should be considered the firstborn of all the twelve tribes."

There is no evidence that Zipporah was alive at the time when the history shows that Moses married an Egyptian woman; and if there be a doubt, that doubt is in favor of her being dead. Mr. Pratt says that the reason why Miriam was punished by leprosy, was that she was jealous of the Ethiopian woman.

The inspired record does not so state. Aaron was guilty as well as Miriam, and Mr. Pratt will not surely charge Aaron with the jealousy attaching to an antagonism against polygamy, with which he charges Miriam. That Miriam received a direct punishment which was not inflicted upon Aaron apparently concluded in the same sin, does not justify Mr. Pratt in begging the question, which he does in charging jealousy upon Miriam. Mr. Pratt misstates the scriptures, and I am inclined to think, purposely, in this case as in others. He does this to frighten the maze-bound women whom the cor-

rupt sophistry of himself and co-workers have enslaved. Shame on the man that can stoop so low!

The crime for which Miriam was punished does not appear to have been a cry against Moses for having married more wives than one, but was an assumption of the right to command Israel because that God had spoken to Aaron and Miriam as well as to Moses; thereby seeking to exalt themselves and degrade Moses. See Numbers chap. 12.

I next notice the argument of Mr. Pratt respecting the leading forth from the land of Jerusalem Lehi and those who came with him. He here, as in each of the points heretofore named, betrays the cause he labors to defend; for no man could cite the history, making such comment, as Mr. Pratt does, without establishing the truth of that which we of the church have charged him and others with, in the introducing polygamy into the church. He says,

"There were Nephi, Sam, Laman, and Lemuel the sons of Lehi, and Zoram, brought out of Jerusalem. How many daughters of Ishmael were unmarried? Just five. Would it have been *just* under these circumstances to ordain plurality among them? No. Why? Because the males and females were equal in number and *they were under the guidance of the Almighty.*"

By this argument Mr. Pratt proposes to account for the giving of the revelation from God to that branch of Israel. He says "in this case the Lord through his servant Lehi, gave a command that they should have but one wife."

I do not thank Mr. Pratt for this acknowledgment. It was forced from his lips by Him who ruleth on high, who has thus intended to show forth His power, and make manifest the depth of folly and vice into which men once wise in the gospel had fallen.

It requires no extraordinary degree of intelligence to see the fatal effect the admission and statement here made must have upon the cause which the

friends of Mr Pratt have hoped he was successfully defending.

*First.*—How many came out of the Land of Jerusalem? Lehi, and ten others!

*Second.*—How were they divided in respect to sex? Lehi, and five male and five female. "Two and two the male and his female." "Noah and his wife, and his three sons and his three sons wives." Truly history repeats itself.

In this case, the equality of the numbers of the sexes, is admitted by Mr. Pratt to be the correct basis upon which the command of God came to them, that they should have but one wife.

In this I think Mr. Pratt to be correct, and I reason as follows: If Adam and Eve were the type before the flood; Noah, and his three sons with but one wife each, the types saved through the flood; and those coming over to this land at the time referred to by Mr. Pratt, the types for God's people here, are not the evidences very strongly in favor of but one wife, so far as the types are concerned.

I notice, again,

"The Lord through his servant Lehi, gave a command that they should have but one wife."

Here the fact is recognized that God commanded them to have but one wife. Let there be no dodging this statement, for I shall insist upon the deductions which may legitimately be made from this admission.

Mr. Pratt continues,

"By and by, after the death of Lehi, some of his posterity began to disregard the *strict law* that God had given to their father, and took more *wives* than one, and the Lord put them in mind, through his servant Jacob, one of the sons of Lehi, of this law, and told them that they were *transgressing* it, and then referred to David and Solomon, as having committed *abomination* in his sight." "The Bible also tells us that they sinned in the sight of God; not in taking wives *legally* but in those they took *illegally.*"

I have italicised some words in the foregoing statement for the purpose of calling particular attention to their import.

As before argued, the fact of command is admitted. Here is a putting in mind of that command with a citation to David and Solomon; the illustrious precedents for the practice of polygamy, so triumphantly quoted.

I here inquire what law was it these men were transgressing? The law of God providing for the marriage institution, one man one wife and but one. Why were Solomon and David cited at all? The answer is unmistakable.

"Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me." "I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up a *righteous* branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph."

While I am treating of this point I propose to answer another statement of Mr. Pratt's, which is a gross misrepresentation.

"The same God that commanded one branch of the House of Israel in America, to take but one wife when the numbers of the two sexes were about equal, gave a different command to the hosts of Israel in Palestine."

To this statement of Mr. Pratt, I reply, that the ground taken by those who oppose polygamy, that the command to have but one wife is "universally applicable in regard to man's domestic relations," is correct, and quote from the Book of Mormon,

"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."

The abominations here referred to, are those which the Lord declared David and Solomon to have been guilty of. What were they? Having many wives and concubines.

What more wide reaching law could any man wish?

The cries of the fair daughters of the people of God were heard. Then, as now, "The chain cable of the church" was galling and grievous to the daughters of Israel. Then, as now, the wickedness of men debased with lust wrought folly and vice. Then, as now, men sought to excuse themselves, because David and Solomon were guilty. Now, as then, God declares against it.

As if the record of Mr. Pratt's folly would be incomplete, unless he should make another admission equally fatal to his cause, he says "In the early rise of this church, February 1831, *God gave a commandment* to its members. \* \* \* Wherein he says, thou shall love thy wife with all thy heart, and shall cleave unto her and none else."

In this sentence Mr. Pratt has honored the law of God. He says still further, "It was given in 1831, when *the one wife system prevailed* among this people."

No more complete admission could we of the Reorganized church ask than this. The ground upon which we have stood from the beginning was, that "plurality of wives," or "polygamy" was not a doctrine of the church. Mr. Pratt here admits that in 1831 it was not, and further that God gave a law providing for but one wife.

Like a beast taken in the coils, every way this learned defender of the "law of lust" turns himself, he but makes manifest the weakness of his cause, and betrays his compeers in transgression.

Mr. Pratt, in connection with this law of 1831 and the one given to Jacob says, God "had the right to vary." This is decidedly a new dogma in Mormonism. The standard cry and gathering call of Mr. Pratt, with all others of the elders who went abroad, in the days when the "one wife system prevailed," was "God never changes;" "God is without variableness or shadow of turning;" "God is the same, yesterday, to-day and forever." What God

is this that Mr. Pratt now says "varies?" What shall be the confidence to be reposed in him?

In one thing which Mr. Pratt says in connection with what I have quoted above I agree, and that is, that the Lord has a right to say when the time shall come that the saying of the prophet shall be fulfilled

"We will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach."

That this will be fulfilled if the fulfillment is yet future, I believe; and if it was to be fulfilled as a part of the history of the saints under Brigham Young, it will have its fulfillment when the fair daughters of God's people whose minds have been polluted by the poison of "Celestial Marriage," and whose bodies have been debauched by men under the guise of religion, shall cry unto God for release, and shall come to the branch which shall be beautiful and glorious that the reproach which has come upon them may be removed

If Mr. Pratt is willing to apply the context to the women in Utah with whom the modern patriarchs are mating, I see no reason why I should object. See Isa. 3rd and 4th chapters.

I now come to a part of Mr. Pratt's discourse which is very strange, being strange in that it shou'd receive credence in any audience in the world, much less among a people famed for acute reasoning.

After stating that the time for God to change his plan came in 1843, and that in pursuing that plan to change, God gave a revelation, he further states that he had not time to read the revelation and adds,

"Suffice it to say that God revealed the principle through His servant Joseph in 1843."

The evidence here given that God gave the revelation claimed as authority for the practice of polygamy by Mr. Pratt, is his own unsupported word.

Mr Pratt says,

"That if the members of the church had undertaken to vary from the law given in 1831, to love their one wife with all their hearts and to cleave to none other, they would have come under the *curse* and *condemnation* of God's *holy law*."

If then God's *holy law* given in 1831, would bring a curse and condemnation for its transgression; how can the practice of that, which by that law was made holy, ever become *unholy*? Or how can that then forbidden as unholy, ever become holy. Is "God unchangeable?"

Again, it is urged with an earnestness worthy of praise, that "an apostate" destroyed the original revelation.

Mr. Pratt says,

"So in regard to the revelation on plurality, it was only a short time after Joseph's death that we published it, having a *copy* thereof. But what became of the *original*? An apostate destroyed it; you have heard her name."

I presume it will not be denied, that Emma, the wife of Joseph the martyr, is the woman referred to by Mr. Pratt.

What a lame and utterly futile argument is this. So important a change to be made in the domestic economy of God's people; so radical an alteration in "God's holy law;" so complete a destruction of so carefully fostered an institution as the marriage relation to be accomplished by the giving of a revelation upon the subject, and God provides himself with no better safeguard for his word than the uncertain temper of "a wicked, wicked woman," as Brigham Young chooses to call her, "an apostate" as Mr. Pratt calls her.

I wish now to enquire what it takes to constitute an apostate. Webster defines the word as follows,

"One who has forsaken the faith, principles, or party to which he before adhered."

The term as applied by Mr. Pratt is given thus,

"Pertaining to, or characterized by, apostasy or defection from one's original principles."

Will Mr. Pratt, or any other champion of polygamy, please tell me what

principle the church originally held; say, from 1830 to 1843, from which she that was the prophet's wife has apostatized? Which one of the dogmas of the church has she refused credence to? Which one of the tenets, so profoundly taught as the gospel plan of salvation by the church, has she failed to honor? Wherein lies her apostasy?

If, as Mr. Pratt states, she burned the so called revelation of God, it is strong proof that she had never adhered to the principle said to have been taught in it; hence she could never have apostatized from that principle.

Again, Mr. Pratt admits, that from 1831 to 1843, the church was living under the "holy law" of God which commanded them to cleave to "but one wife." From these principles this woman has never swerved; hence these are not the ones she has apostatized from.

If in calling the wife of Joseph Smith the martyr, an apostate, it is intended to allege that she refused to yield credence to the authority which sought to impose so grievous a departure from "God's holy law" upon her, in common with the rest of the women of Israel, then is she guilty; but she can not be convicted of departing from a principle to which she never adhered.

Mr. Pratt further observes,

"That same woman has brought up her children to believe that no such thing as plurality of wives existed in the days of Joseph, and has instilled the bitterest principles of apostasy into their minds."

Against what principles of the Gospel has this woman taught her children to rebel? From what principle of "God's holy law," taught by the church during the time when Mr. Pratt says they were living under that law, has she taught them to apostatize? How can the spirit of apostasy from any tenet, dogma, or principle of faith be instilled into the minds of those who had never yielded credence to that

principle, dogma, or tenet, by one who likewise had never received it?

I was baptized by my father, and was blessed by him. I was not baptized into an adherence to "polygamy," "plurality of wives," or "Celestial Marriage;" neither was I blessed into fellowship with either of these doctrines. I could therefore never apostatize from that principle. Neither of my brothers ever held any kind of fellowship with the Brighamite church, hence they could by no means have apostatized therefrom. Besides this, all the public records of the church prior to the death of Joseph Smith, as Mr. Pratt admits, agree in denouncing the doctrine of polygamy; hence, neither the mother nor her children can justly be charged with apostasy from the doctrines of the church as held during the martyr's lifetime, when they too denounced polygamy.

What evidence have we, that the *copy* which Mr. Pratt claims, was a true transcript of the original, supposing there to have been an original? Upon whose testimony are we to receive it? Is the public record of Joseph Smith to be disregarded? Is the record of Hyrum Smith, while living, to be left out of the account? Are the records held out to the church and to the world, down to as late a period as 1850, as containing the law of God, to be entirely ignored in deciding this question? And are all these to be rendered void and of none effect, upon the testimony of one man that "an apostate woman" burned an original revelation, of which a "copy" was kept, which "copy" was subsequently kept by *one* man and published at his command, without ever having been placed before the church, in quorums or as a whole, for their endorsement; and this publication not made until it becomes necessary to account for the existence in that church of that which was ever before denied and denounced as a crime. Out upon such evidence? Who can receive it?

As an individual, I am thankful to that mother that she taught me to *love the truth* and hate a lie; to love an un-deviatingly true God, and to despise the principle that would represent him as a changeful being. Who taught me that the principles taught by the church as contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Book of Covenants, were true; and that that which contravenes those laws and subverts those principles is untrue. I rejoice that she has taught me to reverence holiness, to love virtue; to respect consistency of theory and practice, of life and profession; to regard my father as a good man, who dared to do that which God commanded him to do. She taught me that the principles upon an obedience to which my salvation was placed, were to be found in the New Testament; and that neither the Book of Mormon nor the Doctrine and Covenants, contradicted the gospel therein revealed. This teaching has resulted in making me the avowed opponent of the doctrine of "polygamy," "spiritual wifery," "plurality of wives," or "Celestial Marriage," which ever name its advocates may choose to accept.

My brothers have placed themselves upon the record as being also enemies to that doctrine. Wherein then has our mother been guilty of instilling into our minds the "bitterest spirit of apostasy?" We are not apostates from the faith our father died to establish. We shall maintain the doctrines avowed by him against all comers, and shall oppose every attempt to fasten upon him the odium of being the putative father of "polygamy."

I must notice a statement respecting the census of the United States.

"If all the inhabitants of the earth, at the present time, were righteous before God, and both males and females were faithful in keeping his commandments, and the numbers of the sexes of a marriageable age were exactly equal, there would be no necessity for any such institution. Every righteous man could have his wife and there would be no overplus of females."

Two points here I wish to call especial attention to. If the inhabitants of the earth were *righteous*, and the sexes equally divided, there would be no necessity for the institution of polygamy.

According to the books, God has upon three separate occasions started the race of man upon the basis above represented.

Adam and Eve at the beginning; Noah and his sons each with one wife; and Lehi and his company, each with one wife. In each instance they were righteous at the outset. In each instance they departed from the law, and that departure was characterized by polygamy. If then, God at each of these three periods of time, and in these three instances, placed man upon a righteous footing, equalizing the sexes, it is strong presumptive evidence that it was to continue a righteous basis during the duration of man's residence upon the earth.

I now present this conclusion, drawn from Mr. Pratt's statement, and from the facts stated above, that it was God's design that the sexes should be equally divided, and that where they were equally numbered, "one man should have but one wife, and one woman but one husband;" that it was a righteous law when instituted, and that it was instituted when Adam and Eve were placed upon the earth; again instituted when Lehi came to this land; again instituted when the church was organized in 1830, and must obtain when the sexes are equal.

I now ask if the advocates of polygamy, who claim legitimacy for that institution because the females in the world, and in the United States number more than the males, if they will deny the opposite conclusion; *i. e.*, if the males in the world and in the United States are in excess of the females if it does not establish the doctrine of polyandry. If then the excess of females in Massachusetts, New York,

and Pennsylvania, States of the United States, warrants polygamy in Utah; will not the excess of males in Utah, California, Nevada, and Montana, (if there be an excess in Utah), warrant polyandry in Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania.

In 1860 there was an excess of females in the State of New York numbering 11,032; in Connecticut 7,802, and in Massachusetts 36,970. After the war, in 1865, the excess in New York 5,234; in Connecticut 6,114, and Massachusetts but 20,000. Mr. Pratt quotes the excess of females in New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, as an argument in favor of polygamy. He says nothing about the ravages of the war from 1860 to 1865; nor does he say one word about the equalization fast going on even during the war in these States. Besides, he has said nothing about the great decrease in the excess of females in these States as shown by comparison of the census of 1865 with that of 1860.

The last census shows an excess of females in eight States and the District of Columbia; an excess of males in twenty-six States and seven Territories; an excess of males in the United States and Territories numbering 733,244. But as it is scarcely worth while to waste much time over statistics I go at once to Utah, where, if Mr. Pratt's argument be worth anything there should be an excess of females, and what is the result? The census last taken gives in Utah 19,947 females against 20,178 males, an excess of 231 males; just that many in favor of the doctrine of polyandry, (two or more husbands for one woman), if an analogous reasoning to Mr. Pratt's argument be correct, and many times that number against Mr. Pratt's statement and argument both. That the excess of males must continue to increase is evident to all.

The closing sentence of Mr. Pratt's

discourse I have referred to, and italicised the words "incompatible with the rights of others." It is stated, and I believe with some truth, that the practice of polygamy has been the procuring cause of wrong to hundreds of individuals, for whom there was no redress within the pales of the society where the wrongs occurred. Again, as the number of males and females are nearly if not quite equal in Utah, the place of all other places where the doctrine should wear its best face, it must inevitably occur, that if 2,000 men out of a population of 20,000, have an average of two wives each, there are 16,000 who can have but *one* and 2,000 who can have none; hence the *right* of these 2,000 to one wife is outraged; and if it be necessary to exaltation that a man should have more than one, as is taught by polygamists, then is the right of these other 16,000 to more than one wife outraged. From this very slight examination it will be seen that the practice of polygamy is incompatible with the rights of others than those who thus practice it.

A distinguishing feature of pagan and idolatrous nations, is polygamy; and hence polygamy can not be legally practiced under the Constitution. So says Mr. Pratt.

There is but one thing more to which I shall direct an examination in detail, and I shall then take the discourse as a whole in recapitulation. Mr. Pratt charges an excess of deaths among the males born into the world before arriving at a marriageable age. This proves nothing; and if he admit, as he must, that an equal number are born he admits the basis which we claim and must be concluded thereby.

As we declared at the outset, this reply to Mr. Pratt was undertaken only upon the supposition warranted by the premises, that the efforts put forth by him, George A. Smith, and George Q. Cannon were to represent the true grounds of defense upon which the

advocates of polygamy relied. I have found false premises assumed, misstatements of facts and scripture, misrepresentations of the plainest truths once held by the church, and an abuse of persons not favoring "Celestial Marriage" to be the chief weapons used in such defense.

If the advocates of polygamy take shelter under the Constitution of the United States, as permitting the practice of that doctrine, they must insist upon its recognition by the several States forming the federal compact. I have shown that polygamy can not exist in those States, by reason of statutory regulations forbidding it. I have further shown that if the practice of polygamy in the States be claimed as a right especially accruing to the people of Utah, or to any portion of the Latter Day Saints, it must be by virtue of that principle having been an original and fundamental doctrine of the church at its origin, as shown by the books, public prints, and public discourses delivered, published and acknowledged by the church at that time.

I could have shown that this latter was impossible from the history; but I preferred doing so from Mr. Pratt's own statements, which I have done.

Following Mr. Pratt's discourse, I have shown that when a righteous law was given to a righteous people respecting the institution of marriage, that institution was monogamic; the sequence of this would be, that an institution of plural marriage is unrighteous.

I have further shown that the church lived under a "holy law" from 1831 to 1843; which "holy law" was monogamic. The right of departure from this "holy law" is shown to rest upon a supposed revelation, the evidence of

the authenticity of which is of very doubtful character, and open to grave question.

I have also shown that the adoption of the dogma of polygamy by the church, involves the entire abandonment of the tenet of the unchangeability of God, as to defend his position, Mr. Pratt claims for God a right which he has never claimed for himself, that of "varying" his law, giving to one portion of his people a monogamic marriage institution; to another a polygamic one; and by a parity of reasoning, to another an institution of polyandry.

The burden of proof does not properly lie upon those advocating monogamy. It is admitted by Mr. Pratt, and by all others, his compeers in polygamy, that the church was existing under the monogamic marriage institution and that too by a direct commandment of God, at the time that it was sought to introduce a contrary practice. This being true, which is beyond dispute, it is indispensably necessary, that the authority upon which that contrary practice must obtain, must be sustained by clear, decided and unequivocal evidences. To produce these evidences devolves upon the advocates of the change. They have ever failed to do so. The evidences upon which they rely are vague, inferential and unsatisfactory, as is abundantly proven by a review of Mr. Pratt's discourse. My conclusion then, from this review, is, that Mr. Pratt has failed to sustain his claim in behalf of polygamy, and shown no good reason for my acceptance of it, I therefore again announce myself its avowed opponent.