

CELESTIAL AND PLURAL MARRIAGE

Today I would like to talk about the relationship between celestial and so-called civil marriage (which ought to be a lesson in itself), and also, talk about some phases of plural marriage, which ought to be a lesson in itself. So we are not going to complete either subject, but I am going to tell you certain things about each one of them because there are two particular concepts that we ought to have, one in each field and that opens the door to investigation on a more amplified basis by you on these two subjects. Now, in order to get this before us, and have a real meaning of what is involved, I think there is nothing we can do better than to just read out of Matthew and Luke the conversation, the dialogue that Jesus had with the Sadducees about marriage. And so, open to the book of Matthew, the 22nd chapter, and you follow as I read this and then we will get a little variation in the language and the thought in Luke. And I think we will come up with some concepts and some conclusions that are sound and that maybe some of us have not hitherto had crystallized in our minds. So the setting here is, beginning with the 23rd verse,

The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

Now this is true. They accurately said what the law was. In Deuteronomy, it is so written. And then they give an illustration, which I suppose is manufactured in order to dramatize the point that they intend to get over. But whether there actually was such a case or not does not matter.

Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also.

Then they came to what they think is going to clench the objective they have in mind. And so they say in a rather petulant and petty way, in a ridiculing way, "Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her."

Now what they are doing here is attempting to point out that there is no resurrection, that there is no such thing as a resurrection because they do not believe in it to begin with. And they think this shows how absurd it is to believe in a resurrection, one of the practical problems in effect that this proves it. Well, let me ask you this now. Why did the Sadducees come to Jesus and present this kind of a question? Why bring this question up at all? Why did they not think of something much better than this to refute the fact of the resurrection? This is a little out on a limb. It really does not refute it, it just ridicules it a little. Obviously, they had sense enough to know that there were better arguments than this against the resurrection, and that Jesus could make some intelligent explanation of

this. So they are not really laying a very good trap for him. Now why do you think they picked on this particular trap? Why did they come along and say, "Whose wife shall she be?"

Comment: Was it because the subject of Celestial Marriage was what he was talking about, it was just current?

BRM: There cannot be any question at all about it. This was the current subject in the minds of people. Now we know that categorically for one reason, because President Joseph F. Smith gave us a strong statement that said that was the reason this conversation came up, that the Sadducees had been listening to Jesus or his disciples, one or the other, teach the doctrine of Celestial Marriage.

But on top of that, somewhat to my surprise, when I was studying and writing this commentary, I came across some extremely interesting things that the sectarian commentators say. And here is one from Dummelow, a standard book, one of the better commentaries. And Dummelow says, "There was some division of opinion among the rabbis as to whether resurrection would be to a natural or to a supernatural life." A few took the view, that is, Rabbi Raf is reported to have said, "In the world to come, they shall neither eat, nor drink, nor beget children, nor trade." Now catch the vision here. Here is a rabbi with a school of thought saying, "In the resurrection, they will not beget children, they will not eat and drink. There is neither envy nor strife, but the just shall sit with crowns on their heads and shall enjoy the splendors of divine majesty." Now that is interesting that the rabbis of Jesus' day were debating whether people ate and drank and had children in the resurrection. Now Dummelow says, "But the majority inclined to a materialistic view of the resurrection. The pre-Christian book of Enoch says that the righteous after the resurrection shall live so long that they shall beget thousands." Quite interesting that they are a lot nearer the truth than the whole sectarian world, is it not? They had an idea of children in the resurrection. "The received doctrine," that is, the common view among the Jews, "is laid down by Rabbi Saadia, who says, 'As the son of the widow of Sarepton and the son of the Shunamite, ate and drank and doubtless married wives, so shall it be in the resurrection;' and by Maimonides, who says, 'Men after the resurrection will use meat and drink, and will beget children because since the wise Architect makes nothing in vain, it follows of necessity that the members of the body are not useless but fulfil their functions.'" And I really think that is better logic on the matter than I have ever heard from a sectarian source. Just the simple fact, why would God make somebody who could beget children if the begetting of children was limited to this life? Why would he make somebody who would eat and drink if eating and drinking was limited to this life? That is the argument of this school of rabbis in Jesus' day. "The point raised by the Sadducees," Dummelow says, "was often debated by the Jewish doctors who decided that, 'A woman who married two husbands in this world is restored to the first in the next.'" He is quoting the Jewish rabbis' decision of one school of rabbis.

Well, if we are going to talk about this thing now, that has happened in this conversation, we have got to do it in the light of the circumstance that existed. And the circumstance that existed for one thing was, that here were two schools of rabbis quarrelling and

debating as to whether you married in the next life or whether you did not. And the general prevailing view was that you did. So that is one thing. Now the second thing is that very obviously, Jesus and his disciples themselves had been talking about it. And so we get the Sadducees coming around with the desire to ridicule what Jesus has been saying, and his disciples. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." And then he says the verses that cause Latter-day Saints to get off, in my judgment, on a tangent where they do not belong. The verses say: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection . . . have ye not read" such and such? Let us get back on the subject that you really want to talk about. And then he quotes something to prove that there is a resurrection.

Well, the common thing in the world is for some minister to come around and say to his congregation, "There are Mormon Elders in our area. They are coming around and they are knocking on the doors. These Mormon Elders are teaching that the family unit continues in eternity, that you are married in the resurrection. And this is false. Beware of them." Then this minister says to his congregation, "Here is how you know it is false. Why, even Jesus said, 'In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage.'" Now the best thing about this is that what the Protestant minister says is true. It is true. Now we start rebelling against that and we think, "Oh, but there is marriage in heaven." Well, let me try this now. Some Protestant minister comes to me and he says, "I have been listening to the Mormon Elders and they say the family unit continues in heaven. And I say that it does not, that there is neither marrying, nor giving in marriage in heaven, and this is just what Jesus taught." And I stick out my hand and I say, "Brother, you are just one-hundred percent right. There is no such thing as marrying or giving in marriage in heaven as far as you are concerned." Now let me reread this passage in Matthew to you and you look at your book and you follow what this account really says. I am going to improve on the revelation here a little. I am going to put it in a modern setting, for you Mormon Elders instead of the disciples of Jesus:

The same day came to him [or came to the Mormon Elders] the [Unitarians], which say that there is no resurrection, and asked [them],

Saying, [Gentlemen, we have heard you Mormon Elders say that the family unit continues in eternity.]

Now there [was] with us (I am down to verse 25 now, this is the modern setting.) Now there [was] with us [one Elizabeth Taylor]: and the first, [I do not know who she flurried. She married Michael . . . or somebody, and then she married somebody else. And then she married somebody else and now she is married to Richard Burton and she has got somebody else lined up in the future.]

(Now there is this Unitarian to the Mormon Elders.) Whose wife shall she be of the seven?

Well now, what is the answer? I will read the rest of the passage.

[The Mormon Elders] answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

For in the resurrection [Elizabeth Taylor neither marries, Elizabeth Taylor and all Unitarians] neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

Now, I am dramatizing this a little to get over the point. And in essence, this is just exactly what Jesus said.

Well, you have in mind now what I said and let us open to the account in Luke and see if we do not get the perspective that I am saying here presented to us. Now this is Luke 20, isn't it?

Yes. Verse 27, in the 20th chapter.

Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,

Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.

Last of all the woman died also.

Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

Now they knew, all of them knew, that the school of rabbis that we were just quoting had made a ruling in their decision, she belonged to the first man and there was no problem that was not easily answered and this is just ridicule. So this is not even a good tempting situation. But the record says:

And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: (The children of this world marry and are given in marriage.)

But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die anymore: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

And then he goes on to talk about Moses and showing that there is a resurrection. Well, “the children of this world marry.” Now I said Celestial Marriage and civil marriage and that is what everybody says, almost. But having admitted that that is the language that you use, let us cross out that word civil now and talk about Celestial Marriage and worldly marriage to get the concept over of what is involved. And let us read one more passage. And this is in Section 132. And we are concerned with verses 15 and 16. Having taught a principle, the Lord is now drawing a conclusion and illustrating the principle. And the principle is that everything that endures in eternity has to be done by Him, by His authority. Therefore, in the light of this principle, nothing remains unless God does it. “If a man marry him a wife in the world,” “If a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me nor by my word, and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world.” There is somebody called “they”. Now that was in Matthew. He said, “When they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage.” We need some clear understanding of the antecedent of that pronoun. All right, there is somebody called “they” in this revelation. Verse 16: “Therefore, when they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage,” now you do not even begin to understand this until you know who they are, “but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory.” Well, who is “they”? Who are we talking about? Who is the Lord talking about in this revelation? Who is the account talking about in Matthew and in Luke?

Comment: (Inaudible.)

BRM: They, when they marry. Well, in Matthew, the they was the Unitarians who do not believe in the resurrection, except they had the name Sadducees in that day. He is talking about some people who do not even believe in the resurrection and therefore they do not believe in Christ as the Son of God and they have not accepted the gospel and in no sense are they candidates for the blessings of the gospel, any of them, let alone Celestial Marriage. When they, the sectarians, they, the Sadducees, they, the children of this world. Luke had it, “The children of this world marry and are given in marriage,” and when they, even if they are willing to inherit that other world, there is no giving in marriage; or marrying for them.

Comment: Could he be referring to Moses in Matthew, Moses’ people?

BRM: No, Moses’ people had Celestial Marriage. Moses had Celestial Marriage just as fully and completely as we do. In fact, he had a little more of it than we have. He had a little to spare.

Comment: What about when Moses wandered the 40 years, when he left they did not have it—

BRM: Oh, they had it. They all had it. They were Elders of Israel in Egyptian bondage before they ever came out apparently. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had it. They, the children of this world.

Well, one more verse now and that is the 17th here. “For these angels,” we are dealing as we are aware now with angels here and over here we are dealing with exalted beings who are gods and Luke has it that if they are “accounted worthy to obtain that world,” still, there is no marrying nor giving in marriage. Now that part of Luke is explained in this verse, but that they become the angels of God, Luke says. Now the Lord says, “These angles did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition.” In other words, even if they are accounted worthy to obtain that world, still, they are only angels. Now what is he saying? Remember what we had over here? This is one instance where salvation means something different than exaltation. Even if they obtain that world, even if they repent and came into the Church and live so that they obtain that world, how does Luke have it? “The children of this world marry, (worldly people) and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy, (they, of the children of this world, who repent and get along as far as they can but do not get Celestial Marriage), shall be accounted worthy “to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels.” All right, in essence, he is saying, “Even if they go and obtain this world without marriage, they remain separately and singly in their saved conditions through all eternity.” They get a degree of salvation but they have not got the fullness. Now that is the doctrine that he is saying and that is all in the world that is being said. Now about 98% of the Church will say, “Oh, there is no marrying nor giving in marriage in heaven.” Well, that is lovely. How do you know that? What I am suggesting to you is that there is not any revelation that God ever gave that either said or intimated that there was neither marrying nor giving in marriage in heaven, except for the people to whom the law applies. And the law applies to the people of this world. Worldly marriage, civil marriage, people who reject the law when they have opportunity to take it and they do not receive it. Now I do not think there is any revelation any place that says there is no marrying nor giving of marriage in heaven. I have a son that died when he was nine weeks old. My son is going to have a wife in the eternal world. Where is he going to get her? Well, he is a free agent. Maybe he is already looking her over, over there in the Spirit World, I do not know. But he is going to get himself a wife. We have got the Prophet’s statement that children of this sort are going to have “the fullness of the glory of the kingdom of the Father.” And they are going to get exaltation. Children born under the covenant, without any question, they are going to get exaltation, they are going to have families in eternity. Where do they get them? Well, my son is going to be resurrected in the first resurrection. He is going to be resurrected before the Millennium. Are we going to do some ordinance work for him? I do not know whether we are or not. I doubt it. It seems the sensible thing to suppose that he is going to choose his wife and he is going to marry her. And we limit ourselves, we restrict ourselves. We think that there is something that has got to be done. I do not think there is anything that has got to be done. The only thing that these passages say is that some people who are identified as “they”, who are limited, no, I do not believe there is marriage nor giving in marriage in heaven, as far as the generality of mankind is

concerned. Yes, I do believe there is marrying or giving in marriage in heaven for those that are worthy and eligible. Well, did it say this or didn't it say that?

Comment: We also have the scripture which says that those who are in one of the other degrees of the Celestial Kingdom cannot marry.

BRM: Yes, we do.

Comment: The one you just read?

BRM: No, Section 131.

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage]; And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

He may enter into the other, but . . . he cannot have an increase.

Which means there is no increase or no spirit children to people who are in this world.

Comment: But do we have a scripture that says he cannot enter into it after he dies?

BRM: Well, I had better know who you are talking about now.

Comment: (Inaudible.)

BRM: Well, only when I quote.

Comment: In other words, he is not eligible until he does enter, so he must be in one of the other kingdoms of that Celestial Kingdom.

BRM: Well the point of the passage that says that he cannot have an increase is that there are no children below that line. Which means that people below that line are what we just read, separate and single, unmarried no matter what kingdom that they are in. Which leaves us with this state being the only one where there are married people.

Comment: That is true, but does that have to occur in this life?

BRM: Oh, I am misunderstanding what you are saying, I guess. No, it does not have to occur in this life.

Comment: So there can be progression?

BRM: No. I still do not know what you are asking. All I have been saying here today is that there is no marrying or giving in marriage for people of this world. No marrying or giving in marriage in heaven. But I am saying there is no revelation that says that other people cannot be married or given in marriage in heaven. In paradise or in heaven, I do not know where. This is not revealed. What I am trying to do is restrict the principle that there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage in heaven to the people that are talked about in the passage, which is “they”—the Unitarians, “they”—the sectarian world who reject the truth and do not become eligible for it. Now I do not know the answer to where or when or under what circumstances there is marrying or giving in marriage hereafter. All I know is that there is none for a specific group of people.

Comment: If you would comment, please on the . . . (inaudible) . . . thirty-five what is that world, that celestial world?

BRM: I think it is. I think it is. I think it is the celestial world and it is verse 17 of Section 132, that they are separate and single “in their saved condition.” Well, it is the celestial and it is all of them. It is whatever they get. In effect it is saying, “Even if they get into the Celestial Kingdom, they are separate and single. Even if they obtain that world which is as high as this.” It could be anything below that line.

Comment: What is the indication of this then in terms of a person coming to the Celestial Kingdom when they are worthy of that kingdom and yet they are being denied progression.

BRM: Well, now I cannot answer that. All I know is that the revelation says that marriage is limited to the highest heaven of the celestial world. So there is some difference between married people and unmarried in that highest heaven. I do not know any answer except that that is what the situation is and you might go a step further and say well, here are people that are denied something down here in the terrestrial and telestial and that is just the facts and we are aware of it, but what more is there to say about it?

Comment: Does it have any restrictive distinctions of being members of the two lowest degrees of the Celestial Kingdom?

BRM: None whatever, that I ever heard of, except people speculating out on the ethereal blue when they should have been back in the classroom with their feet on the ground. People speculate and you just have to make it up because the revelation does not say anything about it.

Well, let me make one point here and then let us say a word about Celestial Marriage. And you can really build yourself a case here now. You want to teach a little marriage? What kind of a marriage do you want? We call that “Worldly Marriage,” let us call this “The Lord’s Marriage”. The Lord’s marriage or worldly marriage. Now you want to build yourself a case for getting married in the temple. Let us start with those fellows. Who can marry after the manner of the world? Well, the best I can think of is that murderers can

get married. There is no reason why murderers cannot marry, is there—as far as the law of the land is concerned? Adulterers can marry as far as the law of the land is concerned. Now what it means is that unclean people can marry, godless people, people who are going to a Telesstial Kingdom. Anybody can get married, almost, as far as civil marriage is concerned. They may have to meet some health requirements or some age requirements. According to the recent Supreme Court decision, they do not have to meet anymore of the race requirements. But anybody can get married, almost, after the manner of the world, worldly people, carnal people. Now the whole problem is this: are you going to live after the manner of the world? Or, are you going to overcome the world? What is the gospel all about? The gospel is to get people to overcome the world. “I have overcome the world,” said Jesus. “I pray not for the world, I pray for them whom thou has given me out of the world.” The whole system of the gospel is to get people to leave the world and come to Christ and live by his standards and not the standards of the world. And so you get over here dealing with the Lord’s standard and you have to have a temple recommend. And in order to get a temple recommend, you have to have personal righteousness and live in harmony with the standards of the gospel. So what you are doing is making the choice of whether you are worldly and go with the world or whether you are godly and go with the Saints in this manner of marriage. Now we do not talk about it this way, I am doing it a little severely, a little harshly to drive home what is involved. We say, “Oh, this is civil marriage,” and we put our arms around these people and hope in due course they get married in the temple, all of this is true. But on the other hand, it is not a bad idea to get the concept over that if you marry out of the temple, you are married after the manner of the world. And anybody can do that and you are going where worldly people go and even if you repent and end up getting, as Luke has it, “that world,” still, you are an angel of God instead of an exalted person.

Well, unless there is some special reason to do it, let us talk the last part of our discussion because I would like to give you a concept about Celestial Marriage that we ought to have—about plural marriage that we ought to have. If we understood this it would help us out a little—it would help us out a lot. Suppose you follow me through on some scriptures. 1 Timothy, the third chapter. 1 Timothy, the third chapter, the first two verses. “This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, (the husband of one wife.)” That does not sound like plural marriage, does it? Do you read any plurality of wives into that? Now I know what some of our brethren tried to do. They said, “Oh, Paul meant that he has got to be the husband of at least one wife.” Now I guess that that is true if you say that one wife is at least one wife. I hope you have at least one wife. But that is not what Paul is talking about at all. Paul says, “If you are going to be a bishop, you can only have one wife.”

Now let us try that on for size in latter-day revelation, shall we? Section 49 of the Doctrine and Covenants. In this passage on marriage, “Marriage is ordained of God,” verse 15, “wherefore, it is lawful,” the date of this revelation is 1831, in March, “that he should have one wife, and they twain shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation,” and so on. Now Paul does not stand alone, does he? Here is latter-day revelation that says, in 1831, that a man shall have one wife. Well, the next

thing that concerns us is Section 131, the four verses which I just quoted. And they talk about the new and everlasting covenant of marriage—Celestial Marriage.

And the next thing that concerns us is all of Section 132. Now look at 132 and I will not read it but I want to point out some things to you so that when you read it, you will think about what I am saying. Verse number one is the question. And the Lord then proceeds to answer the question. Verse four, “I reveal . . . a new and everlasting covenant,” verse five, the matter of law and six. Verse seven, the summary of the terms and conditions of the law. Now Joseph says to the Lord, “Why plural marriage?” And the Lord says, “Well, I will tell you the answer to why plural marriage.” And so he starts talking about something else. He does not start answering the question directly. But actually, he is doing what he has to do, he is laying a foundation upon which the answer will be based. And the foundation that he is laying is down through what the gospel is involved and down through the second column on page 240, a part of which we read, and it is down now to the 18th verse. And what I would like you to note is how the Lord just does not use language like men would use it. And he is this way for a purpose.

Now if you and I were revealing the doctrine of Celestial Marriage, we would just talk about men and women getting married, but the Lord does not do it. He goes out of his way to use awkward language to drill home a concept. Verse 18, “Verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife,” now this is in the single, “if a man marry a wife.” He is going all out of his way to make this one man and one woman. And it goes that way all the way through. Now in verse 19, “If a man marries a wife,” no plurality whatever involved, but express language to get the concept over that a man has to marry one wife and the woman has to marry one husband. And then the next column is the exaltation matter. And this goes on down to verse 32, verse 33. Until now, in the first 33 verses of this revelation, God has revealed the whole doctrine of exaltation that grows out of marriage and it is all in the singular, it is all what Paul said, it is all what Nephi practiced, it is all what was in that revelation in 1831. It is one man marrying one woman with no intimation whatever up to this point of plurality of wives. Now what concept I want you to get out of that is that the whole doctrine of Celestial Marriage and of the exaltation that goes out of it is revealed without the slightest inference of plurality of wives. And not only that, in some language that is especially selected to show that plurality of wives is not involved. Now the prophet said, “Why plurality of wives in the case of Moses, David and Solomon?” And the Lord says, “I will tell you, but first, you have got to understand the continuation of the family unit.” Now when you get down to verse 34, for the first time we begin talking about plurality of wives. And so what is involved is you cannot understand plurality of wives until you understand the doctrine. And the doctrine is that one man and one woman is all that is required to gain exaltation. Now in the light of that doctrine, you are then in a position to comprehend that when the wife dies, the man marries again, he has got two. Or if he marries two with the Lord’s authorization in this life, he has got two. So then you can begin to understand plural marriage. But the perspective is one man for one woman. Now, I did not bring my book. Have you got your *Teachings*? Look on page 300 and 301 and read us what you find about plurality of wives. This should be the statement that was not authorized unless the Prophet authorized it. Read it.

Comment: “Except a man and his wife enter into the new—”

BRM: No, I am sorry, that is what I have already quoted. So look on 322, -23, this is the one I want, 323 and [32]4, just start at the bottom of the page.

Comment:

In the afternoon, rode to the prairie to show some of the brethren same land. Evening, at home, and walked up and down the streets with my scribe.

Gave instructions to try those persons who were preaching, teaching, or practicing the doctrine of plurality of wives; for, according to the law, I hold the keys of this power in the last days; for there is never but one on earth at a time on whom the power and keys are conferred; *and I have constantly said no man shall have but one wife at a time, unless the Lord directs otherwise.*

BRM: Now that last is italicized, isn't it?

Comment: Yes.

BRM: Now that is the emphatic thing. “I have constantly said (that) no man shall have but one wife at a time, unless the Lord directs otherwise.” Now we are taking a second step. We have taken the step of one wife. Now, the classical statement in Jacob, the second chapter of Jacob, in the light of what we have just read there from the Prophet. The book of Jacob, that was *Teachings of the Prophet [Joseph Smith]*. Was it 323?

Comment: Yes.

BRM: 323 and [32]4, now Jacob, the second chapter. And this begins with the 23rd verse and goes down. And Jacob is talking about the condemnation upon David and Solomon and so on, where plurality of wives [was] abused. We come to verse 27:

For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; For 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.

The same concept that the Prophet just said. “I have always said one wife unless God commands otherwise.” Well now, this is the concept that we really ought to have about plurality of wives. And that is that from Adam to the present moment, it has always been the law of God that man should have one wife, excepting that under limited circumstances, under special arrangement, the Lord directs Abraham and Moses and

Joseph Smith and Brigham Young to do something different. Now he does not direct the Mohammadans to do something different, they have inherited the tradition and they follow it. Plurality of wives, legitimately and properly practiced, is limited within the framework of the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. And it is limited to the times and the seasons when the Lord directs that it be done. All right, put as simple as that, when the Lord withdraws the direction as he did in the days of Wilford Woodruff, then the law becomes what it was in Paul's day—one wife. Now there is not much question historically about what was going on in Paul's day, they had plurality of wives just like we had it in this day, until they got down to a point and the Lord reprov'd it. And the Lord removed it in our day. Well, when the Lord removed it, Paul had to make the points there to these people that from now on, a bishop had to have one wife and that was it. And that is what President McKay has to make clear to people today, that a bishop is going to have one wife, even though, in a previous day, a bishop could have had two, it depends on what the Lord tells people that applies to them. But the point is, the whole doctrine of exaltation is in the singular.

Well, we have done like we have always been doing, we are trying to cover too much ground in one day, but here are two concepts that we ought to have before us. Now, what question do we have on them?

Comment: Brother McConkie, in view of the statement of Jacob that you just read is it logical to assume when the Lord does . . . (inaudible) . . . it is just for the reason of raising up a righteous people?

BRM: Well I suppose that that is a perfectly legitimate conclusion to make. And I have understood that there have been studies showing the spiritual stature of the hosts of the descendants of plural marriage families showing that in practical reality, that a righteous seed was raised up . . . (inaudible) . . . meaning that the feet of Joseph F. Smith and the feet of others of the Brethren have had bequeathed to them the spiritual blessings that go with that parentage. He raises up a righteous seed. People born under the covenant will find it easier to believe the gospel. Both of these things are supposed to give us a perspective of marriage that is sound and right. If you get the right perspective then you begin to put everything else into its relationships.

Comment: Is plural marriage part of the exaltation for everyone in the highest degree?

BRM: Well, you see, it depends on what you are talking about. It depends on what you mean by that. Here is a fellow named Nephi. And Nephi lives in a day when there is no plural marriage and there are not very many prophets greater than Nephi and he goes on to exaltation in the highest realm. Well as far as this life is concerned, Nephi has got no interest in having any more than that particular daughter of Ishmael that seemed to appeal to him. But in eternity, that is another matter.

Comment: In the second chapter of Jacob, where it says, "Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines," in the same sentence it says, "which thing was

abominable before me, saith the Lord.” The antecedent that was put there must not be David and Solomon, it must be . . . (inaudible) . . .

BRM: No, let me tell you what that means, it is a very interesting thing. I have been reading . . . (inaudible) . . . and it is probably a good thing to bring that out. Now the problem is, that in Jacob, it says this thing was “abominable,” which thing, the having of this many wives.

Comment: So it was an abhorrence?

BRM: No, it is the many wives. Now in Jacob, it says what they did was abominable and in the 132nd Section, it says what they did was all right. So there is a seeming contradiction, but there really is not a contradiction. They are talking about two different things. Now I will read you a passage. You do not need to follow, I will just read this to you. However, I am reading in 1 Kings. Well, let me take time to read this, 1 Kings here, 11th chapter, “King Solomon loved many strange women.” He is not alone in that, is he? But, what this means is not members of the Church. “Together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them,” he married out of the Church. “And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines.” Now that is one thousand wives. “And his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods.”

All right, one thousand wives. Now let me read you what the Lord thinks about that . . . (inaudible) . . . And this is the 17th chapter of Deuteronomy. And it begins with the 14th verse.

When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, [and so on] Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; [that] thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. But he, (now here is the point) he [the king] shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

Now Solomon had a problem. He married out of the Church. He married too many. Nobody can take care of a thousand wives. What Solomon did was an abomination in two respects. He married out of the Church, Zidonians and Hittites and so on, and he married more wives than any living being ever should have had. This is just absurd, this is gross apostasy. And as a consequence, David said “What Solomon did was an abomination.”

But Section 132 says “What Solomon did when he received things of my hand, he was justified in,” meaning it was legal. So all the wives Solomon got were legally his in the new and everlasting covenant and then he apostatized and married out of the Church. It is like somebody being a rich man today and living in the midst of penury and misery. And because he is a rich man, he built himself a garage and he buys himself a thousand Cadillacs. Now nobody, for his own use, needs a thousand Cadillacs anymore than anybody needs a thousand wives. And the fact that people do that, that is an abomination of itself. You do not multiply horses and Cadillacs and wives.

Well, that is not enough explanation but you read what is in Section 132 about justifying Solomon and what is in the second chapter of Jacob about condemning him. You discover it is talking about two different things. One thing is the legality of what he did in proper instances and the other is the illegality of marrying the bride only into the Hittites and the gross injustice of taking more than any one man ought to have. Well, our time is three minutes over, I guess we had better stop on this. But here are two concepts for you of marriage that are not the heart and core of the matter, but at least you will get a right perspective where the center of the problem is involved.