

EDITORIAL

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EDITORIAL THOUGHT

BRETHREN, from henceforth, let truth and righteousness prevail and abound in you; **AND IN ALL THINGS BE TEMPERATE**; abstain from drunkenness, and from swearing, and from all profane language, and from everything which is unrighteous or unholy; also from **ENMITY, AND HATRED, AND COVETOUSNESS**, and from every unholy desire. Be honest with one another, for it seems that some have come short of these things, and some have been uncharitable, and have manifested greediness because of their debts towards those who have been persecuted and dragged about with chains without cause, and imprisoned. **SUCH CHARACTERS GOD HATES**—and they shall have their turn of sorrow in the rolling of the great wheel, for it rolleth and none can hinder. Zion shall yet live, though she seems to be dead.—His. of Church, 3:233.—Joseph Smith.

THE TRUE COURSE

In the early days of President John Taylor's administration the Saints had so weakened in their faith in the real heart of Mormonism—its marriage system—that goodly numbers were advo-

cating the surrender of the sacred principle in exchange for statehood. Like the Israelites of old, they wanted to be as other people and have a government patterned for the world. Israel rejected the Lord in that day and the Saints were rejecting Him now.

Perhaps no voice was more resonant in condemning this apostate attitude than that of George Q. Cannon, then the first counselor to President Taylor. He could see but one course—to accept the revelations of the Lord and live them in toto, let the consequences be what they may. In an address delivered at Provo, Nov. 20, 1884, among other things he said:

Efforts have been made among us to change this conditon of affairs, (to pass from territorial government to Statehood). There has been and still are, perhaps, some who call themselves Latter-day Saints who are almost ready to lend themselves to any scheme that has for its object the obtaining of a State organization for Utah. Such persons look upon this as so great a blessing and so great a boon that they are almost willing to forego their religious belief and to pander to those who have got power and to make some sort of concession to them in order to achieve this, what they consider, a very desirable end. There has been some agitation in years past respecting plural marriage, and some people, calling themselves Latter-day Saints, have been almost ready to go into the open market and bid for a State government at the price of conceding this principle of our religion, for the privilege of becoming a State of the Union. **THOSE WHO ARE READY TO DO THIS ARE READY ALSO TO CAST OFF OBEDIENCE TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE SON OF GOD, AND TO SAY, "WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MEN WHO HOLD AN OFFICE IN THE CHURCH SHOULD HAVE ANY VOICE IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE STATE." THEY ARE READY TO SELL OUT THEIR BELIEF AS LATTER-DAY SAINTS, AND THEIR VENERATION AND REVERENCE FOR THAT POWER WHICH GOD HAS RESTORED, FOR THE SAKE OF OBTAINING A LITTLE RECOGNITION OF THEIR RIGHTS AS CIT-**

IZENS, ON THE PART OF THOSE IN POWER. It does not require much familiarity with the spirit of God or with the principles of our holy religion to understand exactly the positions that such persons as these to whom I allude occupy among us. **WHEN A MAN IS READY TO BARTER ANY PRINCIPLE OF SALVATION FOR WORLDLY ADVANTAGE THAT MAN CERTAINLY HAS REACHED THE POSITION THAT HE ESTEEMS WORLDLY ADVANTAGE ABOVE ETERNAL SALVATION.** Can such persons retain the spirit of God and take such a course as this? No, they cannot. That other spirit will lead such persons astray, and they will be left to themselves. *Des. News*, Dec. 13, 1884.

A year later (1885), these apostate conditions doubtless having accentuated, President Cannon gave expression to the following very emphatic declaration:

There are men who say: "Yield this practice (plural marriage) for the present; perhaps public opinion may soften and then this principle may be taught and practiced."

I look upon such a suggestion **AS FROM THE DEVIL.** It would be quite as proper to propose **APOSTACY** for a short season until public opinion would become more favorable to us. If there are any in the Church who cannot stand the pressure, instead of talking compromise, let them withdraw quietly from the Church. If they can see nothing in the principle of celestial marriage worth contending for, leave those who do see and appreciate its value to fight the battle alone. The latter will then be neither weakened nor betrayed by the association of those who, in their hearts, **STAND READY TO YIELD.** If there are men in the Church who love the world and its favor better than they do God and Truth, or if they fear men's displeasure and punishment more than they love exaltation, now is a good time for them to exhibit the feeling. But if they have regard left for those who have been their friends and brethren, they ought not, while professing to be members of the Church, to be consorting with those who are its deadly enemies and assenting to their plans **FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF A VITAL PRINCIPLE OF EXALTATION.** They should have so much self respect that, while professing to worship Jehovah, they will not prostrate themselves before the image of Baal.—*Juvenile Instructor*, 20:156.

On September, 1886, President Taylor approached the Lord for direction relative to a manifesto that had been prepared by prominent members of the Church for his signature, and which was intended to discontinue plural or celestial marriage. He received the following revelation:

Revelation to President John Taylor.

Given at the Home of John W. Woolley, Centerville, Utah, September 26-27, 1886

My son John, you have asked me concerning the New and Everlasting Covenant and how far it is binding upon my people; thus saith the Lord. All commandments that I give must be obeyed by those calling themselves by my name, unless they are revoked by me or by my authority, and how can I revoke an everlasting covenant, for I the Lord am everlasting and my everlasting covenants cannot be abrogated nor done away with, but they stand forever.

Have I not given my word in great plainness on this subject? Yet have not great numbers of my people been negligent in the observance of my law and the keeping of my commandments, and yet have I borne with them these many years; and this because of their weakness—because of the perilous times, and furthermore it is more pleasing to me that men should use their free agency in regard to these matters. Nevertheless, I the Lord do not change and my word and my covenants and my law do not, and as I have heretofore said by my servant Joseph: All those who would enter into my glory **MUST AND SHALL** obey my law. And have I not commanded men that if they were Abraham's seed and would enter into my glory, they must do the works of Abraham? I have not revoked this law, nor will I, for it is everlasting, and those who will enter into my glory must obey the conditions thereof; even so, Amen.

Under instruction of the Lord, on this occasion, and in the presence and under the immediate direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith, President Taylor set five of the brethren apart to exercise the sealing authority and to keep alive the principle of plural marriage, even after such a manifesto that was before him, and which he pro-

claimed was from the lower regions, should be signed by a future leader of the Church, as he predicted would be the case.

President Taylor died July 25, 1887, after which a constitutional election was held in the Territory of Utah, on which occasion the people voted for a constitution that definitely outlawed the practice of plural marriage—the Lord's marriage system. It is claimed that some 95% of those voting for the proposed constitution were members of the Church. Congress rejecting the petition of the people, the effort to obtain statehood failed, but the Mormon people had placed themselves on record as opposing the Lord.

In 1889 new and more drastic laws were being proposed in Congress against the Mormon people. The liberties and properties of the members of the Church were jeopardized by the threat of confiscation. President Wilford Woodruff, successor to John Taylor, was being urged by many of the leading men of the Church to surrender plural marriage in accordance with the demands of the Government. Weighted with years (he was in his 83rd year) and with troubled spirit, he went before the Lord for comfort and direction. Upon this occasion, he recorded in his Journal the following:

November 24, 1889: Attended a meeting with the lawyers at the Gardo (house) in the evening. They wanted me to make some concession to the court upon Polygamy and other points, and I spent several hours alone and inquired of the Lord and received the following:

Thus saith the Lord to my servant Wilford. I the Lord have heard thy prayers and thy request and will answer thee by the voice of my Spirit.

Thus saith the Lord unto my servants the Presidency of my Church who hold the keys of the Kingdom of God on the earth. I the Lord hold the destiny of the courts in your midst and the destiny of this nation and all other nations of the earth in mine own hands, and all that I have revealed and promised and

decreed concerning the generation in which you live, shall come to pass, and no power shall stay my hand.

Let not my servants who are called the Presidency of my Church DENY MY WORD OR MY LAW, which concerns the salvation of the children of men. Let them pray for the Holy Spirit which shall be given them to guide them in their acts. PLACE NOT YOURSELVES IN JEOPARDY TO YOUR ENEMIES BY PROMISE. Your enemies seek your destruction and the destruction of my people.

IF THE SAINTS WILL HEARKEN UNTO MY VOICE AND THE COUNSEL OF MY SERVANTS THE WICKED SHALL NOT PREVAIL.

Let my servants who officiate as your counselors before the courts make their pleadings as they are moved upon by the Holy Spirit, WITHOUT ANY FURTHER PLEDGES FROM THE PRIESTHOOD. I, the Lord, will hold the courts, with the officers of Government and the nation responsible for their acts toward the inhabitants of Zion. I, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, am in your midst. I am your advocate with the Father. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. Fear not the wicked and ungodly. Search the scriptures for they are they which testify of me; also those revelations which I have given to my servant Joseph and to all my servants since the world began, which are recorded in the record of divine truth. Those revelations contain the judgments of God which are to be poured out upon all nations under the heavens, which include great Babylon. These judgments are at the door. They will be fulfilled as God lives. Leave judgment with me; it is mine, saith the Lord. Watch the signs of the times and they will show the fulfillment of the words of the Lord.

Let my servants call upon the Lord in mighty prayer; retain the Holy Ghost as your constant companion and act as you are moved upon by the Spirit and all will be well with you. THE WICKED ARE FAST RIPENING IN INIQUITY AND THEY WILL BE CUT OFF BY THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD. GREAT EVENTS AWAIT YOU AND THIS GENERATION AND ARE NIGH AT YOUR DOORS. AWAKE, O ISRAEL, AND HAVE FAITH IN GOD AND HIS PROMISES, AND HE WILL NOT FORSAKE YOU. I THE LORD WILL DELIVER MY SAINTS FROM THE DOMINION OF THE WICKED IN MINE

OWN DUE TIME AND WAY. I CAN NOT DENY MY WORD, NEITHER IN BLESSING NOR JUDGMENTS. THEREFORE LET MINE ANOINTED GIRD UP THEIR LOINS, WATCH AND BE SOBER AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS. Pray always and faint not. Exercise faith in the Lord and in the promises of God; be valiant in the testimony of Jesus Christ. The eyes of the Lord and the Heavenly Hosts are watching over you and your acts. Therefore be faithful until I come. I come quickly to reward every man, according to the deeds done in the body. Even so, Amen.

Ten months later President Woodruff was induced to sign the Manifesto (1890) which was later interpreted as an abandonment, **by the Church**, of polygamy. The Church had officially accepted the principle in 1852, and abandoned it in 1890.

Rejecting the Lord's system of marriage His Spirit was withdrawn to such an extent that no revelation to the Church has been given since. The Church rejected a saving and exalting principle, as it had done in previous dispensations, when relative darkness again covered the land so far as the Church was concerned.

Speaking of the situation involved in this rejection of a principle of salvation, the Prophet Micah uttered the following awful rebuke:

Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.

Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; **FOR THERE IS NO ANSWER OF GOD.**—Micah 3:4-7.

Night **has** come unto this people. The leaders have confessedly plead with the Lord for light and direction, but **"there is no answer of God."** In the present administration the leader of the Church has on more than one occasion testified that he has plead with the Lord for direction on certain vital subjects, but **"could get no answer."**

In the case of ancient Israel, when the people rejected the rule of the Priesthood and demanded a king, that they might be as other people, the Lord told His prophet, Samuel, they were not rejecting him but they were rejecting the Lord. And so with modern Israel, in rejecting the law of the Holy Priesthood, (D. & C., 132:28, 58, 61) they were not rejecting Joseph Smith but Almighty God. They rejected a principle of salvation and exaltation—the law of Abraham.

Fortunately the Priesthood **"carried on"**, and the Lord's system of marriage has continued among the faithful in accordance with instructions given by Him through President Taylor, as related; and the very forceful remarks of President Cannon, as quoted, remain the law of the Lord. God's laws are supreme. In the present dispensation none of them will be revoked—they are eternal. The Lord says:

And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof **MUST and SHALL** abide the law, or **HE SHALL BE DAMNED**, saith the Lord God. * * * Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham; enter ye into my law and ye shall be saved.—D. & C., 132:6, 32.

WHOSE PRAYERS WILL GOD ANSWER?

In the present discord among nations—a condition clearly predicted through the prophets of God, both ancient and modern—there is much for solemn reflection and lessons of lasting value to be learned. When in prime health men are inclined to scout the necessity of humility or the call to worship, rather assenting to the sentiment, "Zion prospereth, all