

the sacrifice of his own life in testimony of his divine mission, shrank, in his feelings, from the weight of the responsibility of inaugurating and establishing this new innovation upon the established customs of the world. But he did not falter, although it was not until an angel of God, with a drawn sword, stood before him and commanded that he should enter into the practice of that principle, or he should be utterly destroyed, or rejected, that he moved forward to reveal and establish that doctrine.

To put this matter more correctly before you, I here declare that the principle of plural marriage was not first revealed on the 12th day of July, 1843. It was written for the first time on that date, but it had been revealed to the Prophet many years before that, perhaps as early as 1832. About this time, or subsequently, Joseph, the Prophet, intrusted this fact to Oliver Cowdery; he abused the confidence imposed in him, and brought reproach upon himself, and thereby upon the church by "running before he was sent," and "taking liberties without license," so to speak, hence the publication, by O. Cowdery, about this time, of an article on marriage, which was carefully worded, and afterwards found its way into the Doctrine and Covenants without authority. This article explains itself to those who understand the facts, and is an indisputable evidence of the early existence of the knowledge of the principle of patriarchal marriage by the Prophet Joseph, and also by Oliver Cowdery.

When the revelation was written, in 1843, it was for a special purpose, by the request of the Patriarch Hyrum Smith, and was not then designed to go forth to the church or to the world. It is most probable that had it been then written with a view to

its going out as a doctrine of the church, it would have been presented in a somewhat different form. There are personalities contained in a part of it which are not relevant to the principle itself, but rather to the circumstances which necessitated its being written at that time. Joseph Smith, on the day it was written, expressly declared that there was a great deal more connected with the doctrine which would be revealed in due time, but this was sufficient for the occasion, and was made to suffice for the time. And, indeed, I think it much more than many are prepared to live up to even now. When the time came to introduce this doctrine to those who were worthy in the church, God commanded the Prophet and he obeyed. He taught it as he was commanded to such as were prepared to receive and obey it, and they were commanded to enter into it, or they were threatened that the keys would be turned against them, and they would be cut off by the Almighty. It need scarcely be said that the Prophet found no one any more willing to lead out in this matter in righteousness than he was himself. Many could see it—nearly all to whom he revealed it believed it, and received the witness of the Holy Spirit that it was of God; but none excelled, or even matched the courage of the Prophet himself.

If, then, this principle was of such great importance that the Prophet himself was threatened with destruction, and the best men in the Church with being excluded from the favor of the Almighty, if they did not enter into and establish the practice of it upon the earth, it is useless to tell me that there is no blessing attached to obedience to the law, or that a man with only one wife can obtain as great a reward, glory or kingdom as he can with more than