

I have reflected a little upon the text that was presented to us by our President a few days since, and upon the excellent remarks made by himself and others upon the subject of heirship, or the inherent rights of the firstborn, and of election. I consider, indeed, that it opens a broad field, and that there is no danger of exhausting the subject, whatever may be said of it.

The covenants made with the fathers, and the rights of the children by reason of them, are an interesting subject to me.

In the first place, if all men were created alike, if all had the same degree of intelligence and purity of disposition, all would be equal. But, notwithstanding the declaration of American sages, and of the fathers of our country, to the contrary, it is a fact that all beings are not equal in their intellectual capacity, in their dispositions, and in the gifts and callings of God. It is a fact that some beings are more intelligent than others, and some are endowed with abilities or gifts which others do not possess.

In organizing and peopling the worlds, it was found necessary to place among the inhabitants some superior intelligences, who were capacitated to teach, to rule, and preside among other intelligences. In short, a variety of gifts, and adaptations to the different arts, sciences, and occupations, was as necessary as the uses and benefits arising therefrom have proved to be. Hence one intelligence is peculiarly adapted to one department of usefulness, and another to another. We read much in the Bible in relation to a choice or *election*, on the part of Deity, towards intelligences in His government on earth, whereby some were chosen to fill stations very different from others. And this election not only affected the individuals thus chosen, but their posterity for long generations, or even forever.

It may be inquired where this election first originated, and upon what principle a just and impartial God exercises the elective franchise. We will go back to the earliest knowledge we have of the existence of intelligences. We learn from the writings of Abraham and others, and from modern revelation, that the intelligences that now inhabit these tabernacles of earth were living, active intelligences in yonder world, while the particles of matter which now compose our outward bodies were yet mingled with their native element; that then our embodied spirits lived, moved, conversed, and exercised an agency. All intelligences which exist possess a degree of independence in their own sphere. For instance, the bee can go at will in search of honey, or remain in the hive. It can visit one flower or another, as independent in its own sphere as God is in His. We find a degree of independence in everything which possesses any degree of intelligence; that thinks, moves, or acts: because the very principle of voluntary action implies an independent will to direct such action.

Among the intelligences which existed in the beginning, some were more intelligent than others, or, in other words, more noble; and God said to Abraham, "These I will make my rulers!" God said unto Abraham, "Thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born."

NOBLE! Does He use the word *noble*? Yes; the word noble, or that which signified it, was used in conversation between God and Abraham, and applied to superior intelligences on earth, and which had pre-existed in the heavens.

I am aware that the term is greatly abused, in Europe and elsewhere, being applied to those titled, and to those who inherit certain titles and estates, whether they are wise men or fools, virtuous or vicious. A man may