

PLURALITY OF WIVES—THE FREE AGENCY OF MAN

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG, DELIVERED IN THE BOWERY, PROVO, JULY 14, 1855

Recorded by G. D. Watt

I have a few words to say concerning one item of doctrine, that I seldom think of mentioning before a public congregation; I refer to the doctrine pertaining to raising up a royal Priesthood to the name of Israel's God, for which purpose the revelation was given to Joseph, concerning the right of faithful Elders, in taking to themselves more than one wife. I frequently hear from others that this doctrine is laughed at and ridiculed; I heard yesterday of its being laughed out of doors, even jeered and sneered out of a Bishop's house.

I am not personally cognizant of anyone jeering at and deriding this doctrine; still, I hear that there are some few who are opposed to it. Once in a while sentiments reach my ears which sound very curious and strange, and when I hear them, I do really wish that some were possessed of better sense; I will, therefore, tell you a few things that you should know. God never introduced the Patriarchal order of marriage with a view to please man in his carnal desires, nor to punish females for anything which they had done; but He introduced it for the express purpose of raising up to His name a royal Priesthood, a peculiar people. Do we not see the benefit of it? Yes, we have lived long enough to realize its advantages.

Suppose that I had had the privilege of having only one wife, I should have had only three sons, for those are all that my first wife bore, whereas, I

now have buried five sons, and have thirteen living.

It is obvious that I could not have been blessed with such a family, if I had been restricted to one wife, but, by the introduction of this law, I can be the instrument in preparing tabernacles for those spirits which have to come in this dispensation. Under this law, I and my brethren are preparing tabernacles for those spirits which have been preserved to enter into bodies of honor, and be taught the pure principles of life and salvation, and those tabernacles will grow up and become mighty in the kingdom of our God.

I believe that our children will become mighty in faith, be powerful in defending the truth, and will soon have to take important places in the great work of this dispensation. They may be rude at present, yet, you will find within them the true principles of "Mormonism," and, when our sons become men, they will be men of God, and be useful in accomplishing a good work upon the earth.

The spirits which are reserved have to be born into the world, and the Lord will prepare some way for them to have tabernacles. Spirits must be born, even if they have to come to brothels for their fleshly coverings, and many of them will take the lowest and meanest spirit house that there is in the world, rather than do without, and will say, "Let me have a tabernacle, that I may have a chance to be perfected."