

Testament? If the presumption is of any weight in relation to the eight writers of the New Testament, it certainly is of greater weight in relation to twenty writers of the Old Testament. But it is known that in the latter case the presumption is false; therefore it is of no strength or force whatever in the former case.

Now let us examine some other objections urged against polygamy. The objector has often referred to the saying of Jesus, when commanding the people that they should not put away their wives, saving it should be for the cause of fornication. Jesus says Moses suffered a divorce to be given because of the hardness of the hearts of the people; and further says it was not so from the beginning; that God made man, male and female, and they were joined together by Divine authority, and they twain became "one flesh." Now, says the objector, it does not say that three or that four shall become one flesh, etc.; and consequently, this is an argument against plurality. Let us examine this, and see if there is any force in it. It was not so in the beginning, before the days of Moses. What was not so? This putting away of wives—this divorcing of wives for every little nonsensical purpose. Jesus was showing that it was contrary to his mind and will; that Moses only suffered it because of the hardness of their hearts; but that in the beginning it was not so; as much as to say, "If you give divorces, you practice something given through the wickedness of the people. If you put away your wives for any other cause than that of fornication, you cause your wives to commit adultery; and if any man marry her that is put away, he committeth adultery."

Then, again, he says, "If a woman put away her husband, she committeth adultery." A man has no right to put away his wife, nor a woman her

husband. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder; for in the beginning it was not so, but they twain became one flesh."

Is this an argument against having more than one wife? For instance, Jacob and Leah were one flesh, Leah being his first wife. Jacob and Rachel were one flesh. Jacob and Bilhah were one flesh. Jacob and Zilpah were one flesh; and if he had had a thousand more, it would have been the same: each wife would have been a legitimate wife, and one flesh with Jacob; and their children would have been legitimate. This was no argument against plurality. If so, Jacob would have been found a transgressor.

In the second chapter of Genesis, it is stated that the Lord took a rib from Adam, and, by adding other materials, formed a woman, and brought her to the man, and gave her to him as an helpmeet—as a wife. "And Adam said, This I know now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh."

This is the saying which Jesus quoted. Now, Jacob, in taking four wives, became one flesh with each one of them; but how and in what respect? Perhaps it may be said that they became one in mind, one in understanding, one in intellect, one in judgment, etc. Their minds are to be one. But it does not say one in mind, one spiritually, but one flesh.

How are we to understand this? Paul (Eph. v. 28—31) says, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.