

son of the hated woman happened to be the firstborn, he should actually inherit the double portion.

Consequently, the Lord approved, not only the two wives, but their posterity also. Now, if the women had not been considered wives by the Lord, their children would have been bastards, and you know that He has said that bastards shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord, until the tenth generation, hence you see there is a great distinction between those whom the Lord calls legitimate or legal, and those who were bastards—begotten in adultery and whoredom. The latter, with their posterity, were shut out of the congregation of the Lord until the tenth generation, while the former were exalted to all the privileges of legitimate birthright.

Again, under that same law and dispensation, we find that the law provided for another contingency among the hosts of Israel. In order that the inheritances of the families of Israel might not run into the hands of strangers, the Lord, in the book of Deuteronomy, gives a command that if a man die, leaving a wife, but no issue, his brother shall marry his widow and take possession of the inheritance; and to prevent this inheritance going out of the family a strict command was given that the widow should marry the brother or nearest living kinsman of her deceased husband. The law was in full force at the time of the introduction of Christianity—a great many centuries after it was given. The reasoning of the Sadducees on one occasion when conversing with Jesus proves that the law was then observed. Said they, “There were seven brethren who took a certain woman, each one taking her in succession after the death of the other,” and they inquired of Jesus which of the seven would have her for a wife

in the resurrection. The Sadducees, no doubt, used this figure to prove, as they thought, the fallacy of the doctrine of the resurrection, but it also proves that this law, given by the Creator while Israel walked acceptably before Him, was acknowledged by their wicked descendants in the days of the Savior. I merely quote the passage to show that the law was not considered obsolete at that time. A case like this, when six of the brethren had died, leaving the widow without issue, the seventh, whether married or unmarried, must fulfill this law and take the widow to wife, or lay himself liable to a severe penalty. What was that penalty? According to the testimony of the law of Moses he would be cursed, for Moses says, “Cursed be he that doth not all things according as it is written in this book of the law. And let all the people say, Amen.” There can be no doubt that many men in those days were compelled to be polygamists in the fulfillment of this law, for any man who would not take the childless wife of a deceased brother and marry her, would come under the tremendous curse recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, and all the people would be obliged to sanction the curse, because he would not obey the law of God and become a polygamist. They were not all Congressmen in those days, nor Presidents, nor Presbyterians, nor Methodists, nor Roman Catholics; but they were the people of God, governed by divine law, and were commanded to be polygamists; not merely suffered to be so, but actually commanded to be.

There are some Latter-day Saints who, perhaps, have not searched these things as they ought, hence we occasionally find some who will say that God suffered these things to be. I will go further, and say that He