

today, are only carrying out the principle which God's people observed, in obedience to revelation from Him, thousands of years ago. It is gratifying to know that we are suffering persecution, that we are threatened with fines and imprisonment for the practice of precisely the same principle which Abraham, the "Friend of God," practiced in his life and taught to his children after him.

The discourses of brother Orson Pratt and of President George A. Smith have left but very little to be said in relation to the Scriptural arguments in favor of this doctrine. I know that the general opinion among men is that the Old Testament, to some extent, sustains it; but that the New Testament—Jesus and the Apostles, were silent concerning it. It was clearly proved in our hearing yesterday, and the afternoon of the day previous, that the New Testament, though not so explicit in reference to the doctrine, is still decidedly in favor of it and sustains it. Jesus very plainly told the Jews, when boasting of being the seed of Abraham, that if they were, they would do the works of Abraham. He and the Apostles, in various places, clearly set forth that Abraham was the great exemplar of faith for them to follow, and that they must follow him, if they ever expected to participate in the glory and exaltation enjoyed by Abraham and his faithful seed. Throughout the New Testament Abraham is held up to the converts to the doctrines which Jesus taught, as an example worthy of imitation, and in no place is there a word of condemnation uttered concerning him. The Apostle Paul, in speaking of him says:

"Know ye therefore that they which are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham . . .

So then they which be of the faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

He also says that the Gentiles, through adoption, became Abraham's seed; that the blessing of Abraham, says he, might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, showing plainly that Jesus and all the Apostles who alluded to the subject, held the deeds of Abraham to be, in every respect, worthy of imitation.

Who was this Abraham? I have heard the saying frequently advanced, that in early life, being an idolater, it was an idolatrous, heathenish principle which he adopted in taking to himself a second wife, while Sarah still lived. Those who make this assertion in reference to the great patriarch, seem to be ignorant of the fact that he was well advanced in life and had served God faithfully many years, prior to making any addition to his family. He did not have a plurality of wives until years after the Lord had revealed Himself to him, commanding him to leave Ur, of the Chaldees, and go forth to a land which He would give to him and his posterity for an everlasting possession. He went forth and lived in that land many long years before the promise of God was fulfilled unto him—namely, that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed; and Abraham was still without any heir, except Eliezer, of Damascus, the steward of his house. At length, after living thus for ten years, God commanded him to take to himself another wife, who was given to him by his wife Sarah. When the offspring of this marriage was born, Abraham was eighty-six years old.

We read of no word of condemnation from the Lord for this act—something which we might naturally expect if, as this unbelieving and licentious generation affirm, the act of taking more wives than one be