

compassion upon us and made greater allowance for us in the days of our ignorance than He will do for us in the future; for He expects us as a people to profit by our experience and our instruction and the opportunities afforded us, and to improve our condition, to purify our persons, our families, and our communities, and to purge evil from our midst. And touching moral purity and the intercourse of the sexes and the objects and purposes of this intercourse, God has revealed to the Latter-day Saints, as He also revealed unto our fathers, that He has a great and glorious and grand object in view in placing us here upon the earth, male and female, and commanding us to multiply and replenish the earth. His purposes in these things are from eternity to eternity. They reach back into our first or former existence, and consequently will reach forward through this our second, and into our next estate, and through all eternity. And we need a correct understanding of the proper use of the privileges and blessings that are given unto us. On this depends the glory and exaltation of ourselves and our children for evermore. The Lord is striving to educate a people that will properly understand these things and appreciate them, and that will not trifle with the fountains of life and with those choice blessings that are placed within their reach. When we look abroad into the Gentile nations at the present time, those who are acquainted with their condition are constrained to acknowledge that we live in a wicked and adulterous generation. Adultery, whoredom and lust have cursed the Gentile nations, and the wicked portion of all mankind, we may say, from time immemorable. But with

the seed of Abraham, the children of Israel—who were called an holy nation, a peculiar people—God has sought to regulate, by His laws, those things, and to teach the people so that they may raise up unto Him a holy nation, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood. He chose Abraham from among the nations and blessed him. He promised to multiply his seed like the stars in the heaven or the sands of the seashore for number. He tried and proved him well as we heard this morning. He blessed him and blessed his seed after him, likewise his son Isaac and his grandson, Jacob, and promised that the oracles should remain with him and his seed. Nevertheless, the promises made were general; they were not promises to individuals alone. Yet the promises were conditional. They were given on condition that their posterity should abide in the truth, follow the teachings and examples of their fathers, and prove themselves worthy; for Nephi has said concerning these things in the Book of Mormon that God covenants with none except those that repent and believe in His Son and keep His commandments. But there are special promises to the children of Israel, the seed of Abraham, as a people; for as a people they are the elect of God. But as individuals every one is held responsible for his own sins. No promise of the father can save any individual. Nevertheless, according to the promise made unto the fathers, God makes manifest among the children of Israel the Priesthood and reveals unto them the Gospel, and gives them an opportunity to receive it and obey it and obtain exaltation through it, if they will, and in this respect they are more favored than the Gentile nations throughout