

distinction which exists between the Latter-day Saints and the rest of mankind.

My brethren and sisters, there are some principles which it seems to me we should comprehend clearly in connection with our position as Latter-day Saints; and one is that which is alluded to in this chapter that I have read in your hearing, namely:

“Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

“For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.”

This was a command that was given unto Israel with great force and emphasis. They were commanded from the beginning that they were not to marry with those who did not belong to their family, or did not belong to the Israel of God, or were not the covenant people of God. And it was not a new law; it was not a law that was given to Moses, and through him to the children of Israel for the first time. If you will read back to the days of Abraham, you will find that the same sentiment filled the heart of Abraham, the patriarch, concerning his posterity. When he wanted a wife for his son Isaac, he took his eldest servant of his house and made him swear by the God of Heaven that he would not take a wife unto his son of the daughters of the Canaanites, a race with which he did not want his son to intermarry. And he sent his servant back to Mesopotamia, to his old country and his kindred, it being where his brother Nahor had lived, to find there for his son Isaac a wife that should be suitable to him. The servant took this oath,

and he went feeling that God had given unto him a mission and that he would be prospered in obtaining a wife for the son of his master. He prayed unto the God of his master to give him success, and give him a sign by which he might know the girl that the Lord designed for his master's son. And according to his faith so it was done. Rebekah came to the well, and as he had prayed so she did, and she proved to be the very girl that God had designed for Isaac, and the very girl that Abraham in his heart desired that his son should have. She was Abraham's grand niece, and his wife Sarah's grand niece, a double cousin of Isaac's, her grandmother, Milcah, being Isaac's mother's sister, and her grandfather, Nahor, being Abraham's father's brother. You know it is said in the Bible, that Abraham married his sister. But though called his sister, she was not his sister, in our sense of the relationship. She was the daughter of his brother Haran; but at Haran's death, Terah—Haran and Abraham's father—brought up Haran's children as his own. Two of these children were girls. One of them married Nahor, a brother of Abraham's, and the other married Abraham, both of them sisters of Lot. They were, therefore, nearly related.

So you see that in those early days the same sentiment pervaded the minds of the servants of God, respecting the families with whom they should intermarry. You will remember also that this same Rebekah afterwards, when fear was begotten in her heart respecting her son Jacob, and the enmity of his brother Esau, said to Isaac in substance: “I do not want Jacob to marry the daughters of this land, I want him to marry the right blood, to marry into the right families.” Isaac sent Jacob back to his mother's