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Chapter III

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Abstract: The author writes about her parents' acceptance of the principle of the plural marriage, and of the severe trial that it was to her father, Heber C. Kimball, when it was first introduced. She also provides the main portion of a discourse delivered by her father to his children prior to leaving on a mission in 1843. The author concludes reflecting on her experiences of persecution, both in the past, and continuing to the day in which she was writing. Defending the principle of plural marriage, and reflecting on the eternal fates of their persecutors, she says, "I have not written with 'the pen of the fanatic,' but with the heart 'of a woman,' who is in earnest, and does not 'prefer the glory of man above the glory of God.'"

they contain a great amount of truth and common sense. What I have written and compiled gives but a meagre description of the evils that exist among the wicked. It is the fear of these evils being overturned by the "Mormon" reformers, who preach and practice the system that is jeopardizing, and will eventually break up their pet institutions, which makes them desperate and determined to crush it out of existence. But all their weapons are weak and powerless, because they have no regard for virtue and righteousness, and therefore no foundation to work upon. But we have that which the holy Bible sustains. We have proven it to be a promoter of virtue, and know that if strictly obeyed, it will produce a higher and nobler type of humanity, alike in physical, mental and moral growth. It is an old saying that "every generation grows weaker and wiser." The human race has certainly been weakened and it has been in consequence of their own wicked and disobedient acts.

CHAPTER III.

WOMEN, I willingly admit, are the weaker sex, and that men should lead, but how many of them are really capable of leading or governing? How many of them have caused the wife of his bosom to hide her face in very shame—the woman whom he had promised to love and to cherish till death did them part, but was too utterly selfish to make any sacrifice to insure her comfort or happiness, or that of his offspring. Such will indulge their appetites, and every pernicious and unhallowed lust must be gratified at the risk of her poor heart's breaking. Though this may be a slow process, it is murder nevertheless, and their offspring are receiving the legacy—handed down by a profligate father with the certainty of transmitting the same to the coming generations, who have been sinned against in having to take up with feeble and

diseased frames, and no constitutions to begin life with. Thus human life is being shortened. Various and complicated diseases are continually multiplying, which baffle the understanding and skill of the most learned physicians. These diseases and defects are too often laid at the mother's door. There are laws laid down which should not be violated, and the greatest crimes have become so common that the world thinks little or nothing of them. Thousands of delicate women are united to men who show them not the least consideration—she being his “property” he can take license and she thereby becomes the most wretched of slaves. But through this patriarchal order (deride it as they may) is to come the emancipation of woman-kind, which has been decreed, as well as the restoration of all the human family who have not sinned against all hope of their redemption. That it is a trial, no sensitive woman nor sensible man will deny, but what is the whole of life if not a trial, and what righteous movement or reform was ever yet inaugurated, without human suffering to some degree?

But those who think that men have no trials in the plural order of marriage, are greatly deceived. The wives have far greater liberty than the husband, and they have the power to make him happy or very unhappy. For this cause, among others, there are not many men who are willing to take upon themselves these extra burdens and responsibilities, even for the sake of a higher glory hereafter. It certainly takes considerable religion and faith to stimulate a man who loves a quiet, easy-going life, to take up this cross, even with the hope of a future crown. For the benefit of readers who may doubt this I will here relate the experience of my sainted father and mother :

My mother told me repeatedly that she could not doubt that this plural order was of divine origin, for the Lord had shown it to her in answer to prayer. She was so conscientious and of such strong faith, that she never doubted after once being convinced of the truth, but she had to be convinced before accepting any principle. It was three weeks after my father was baptized into this Church before she could see the necessity of again submitting to that ordinance, as they had both been bap-

tized into the Baptist church a short time previous to hearing "Mormonism." During that period my father mourned for her as one would mourn for the dead; but he prayed unceasingly that she might see and accept the truth.

In Nauvoo my father, among others of his brethren, was taught the plural wife doctrine and he was told by Joseph Smith, the prophet, three times to go and take a certain woman; but not till he had commanded him in the name of the Lord did he obey. At the same time Joseph told him not to divulge this secret, not even to my mother, for fear that she would not receive it, for his life was in constant jeopardy, not only from outside influences and enemies, who were seeking some plea to take him back into Missouri, but from false brethren who had crept like snakes into his bosom and then betrayed him. There were also treacherous women who were double-tongued and went about doing all the mischief that was possible.

My father realized the situation fully, and the love and reverence he bore for the Prophet were so great that he would sooner have laid down his own life than have betrayed him. This was the greatest test of his faith that he had ever experienced. When first hearing the principle taught, believing that he would be required to enter this order, he thought of two elderly sisters who were great friends of my mother, and who he believed would cause her little if any unhappiness. The woman he was told to take, however, was an English lady, nearer my mother's age, who came over with her husband and two little girls with a company of Saints, in the same ship in which President B. Young and my father returned from their second mission to Europe. She had been reared in luxury but was unfortunate in marriage. Though her husband was of respectable and wealthy parents, and capable of carrying on a large business, he was a very dissipated man and ran through his own means and all of hers that he could obtain. She had three wealthy brothers, who took charge of her property to prevent her husband from squandering it. He loved her and their little daughters with all the affection of which he was capable, but was so brutal to them when under the influence of drink that she twice had been obliged to leave

him and seek refuge in the homes of her brothers. But after many professions and promises of reform, she was induced each time to return.

Upon hearing the gospel she received it, as also her husband, but he had not sufficient religion to control his appetite. Her brothers considered this step unpardonable, and thought they were more disgraced by her joining the awful people called "Mormons," than in living with a drunken and dissolute husband. The first time I saw him was a few days after their arrival in Nauvoo; he was then half intoxicated. She was of a proud and sensitive nature, and being among strangers in a strange land, it placed her under peculiar and very trying circumstances. My father and mother and the neighbors were very kind to her, and she was assisted in finding a house to rent, which belonged to an old settler in Commerce. While living there the husband came home so drunk that his abusive treatment of his wife and children outraged the feelings of Mr. Hibbard and family, and they interfered and drove him from the premises. She could no longer live with him, and he soon afterwards returned to England.

It was somewhere near this time that my father was commanded to take her and her children and provide for them. But the thought of deceiving the kind and faithful wife of his youth, whom he loved with all his heart, and who with him had borne so patiently their separations and all the trials and sacrifices they had been called to endure, was more than he felt able to bear. He realized not only the addition of trouble and perplexities that such a step would bring upon him (and in those days nearly all his time was spent in the Lord's vineyard) but his sorrow and misery were increased by the thought of her delicate condition, as well as fearing that she might hear it from some other source, which would no doubt separate them forever, and he shrank from the thought of doing anything to cause her unhappiness.

Finally he came to the conclusion to tell Joseph how he felt, and he did so, telling him he was fearful that if he took this step the trial would be greater than he could bear, and it might induce him to do that which would cause

him to forfeit his salvation. The Prophet had loved him from the time they first met each other in Kirtland, and he felt such sympathy for him that he went and inquired of the Lord; His answer was: "Tell him to go and do as he has been commanded, and if I see that there is any danger of his apostatizing I will take him to myself." This shows that the trial must have been extraordinary, for he was a man who, from the first, had yielded implicit obedience to every requirement of the Prophet.

My mother had noticed a change in his manner and appearance, and when she inquired the cause he tried to evade her questions, saying it was only her imagination or that he was not feeling well, etc. But at last he promised he would tell her after a while, if she would only wait. This trouble so worked upon his mind that his anxious and haggard looks betrayed him daily and hourly, and finally his misery became so unbearable that it was impossible to control his feelings. He became sick in body, but his mental wretchedness was too great to allow of his retiring and he would walk the floor till nearly morning, and sometimes the agony of his mind was so terrible that he would wring his hands and weep like a child, and beseech the Lord to be merciful and reveal to her this celestial principle, for he himself could not break his vow of secrecy.

The anguish of their hearts was indescribable, and when she found it was useless to beseech him longer she retired to her room and bowed before the Lord and poured out her soul in prayer to Him who hath said: "If any lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not." "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." My father's heart was raised at the same time in supplication, and while pleading as one would plead for life, the vision of her mind was opened, and as darkness flees before the morning sun, so did her sorrow and the groveling things of earth vanish away. Before her was illustrated the order of celestial marriage, in all its beauty and glory, together with the great exaltation and honor it would confer upon her in that immortal and celestial sphere, if she would accept it

and stand in her place by her husband's side. She also saw the woman he had taken to wife and contemplated with joy the vast and boundless love and union which this order would bring about, as well as the increase of her husband's kingdoms, and the power and glory extending throughout the eternities, worlds without end.

She related the scene to me and to many others and said her soul was satisfied, for she was filled with the Spirit of God. With a countenance beaming with joy she returned to my father, saying, "Heber, what you kept from me the Lord has shown to me." She told me she never saw so happy a man as father was when she described the vision and told him she was satisfied and knew that it was from God. She covenanted there and then to stand by him and honor the principle, which covenant she faithfully kept, and though her trials were often heavy and grievous to bear, she knew that father and his other wives were also being tried, and her integrity was unflinching to the end. He was heard repeatedly to say that he had shed rivers of tears over this order—the order of celestial or plural marriage.

To show the spirit that possessed my father, I here present the main portion of a discourse delivered to my mother's children. He had no others at that time, though one, an infant son by his second wife had been born and died. This was given on Sunday, May 28th, 1843, previous to starting upon his last mission but one to the Eastern States:

"I feel to speak to my children this morning that they may be wise and honored of God and of men, and I pray that I may be inspired of the Holy Ghost. My soul is swallowed up in God. As to the things of this world they are lost to me. I do not feel concerning them as I have heretofore. I only care for the things of eternity. When I behold the great things of God and the glory that awaits the righteous, and when I reflect that the road is so straight and but a few that find it, I feel to pray the Lord to bless my children and save them. I am thankful to God that I live in a day when some will find it, and will become Gods. A man must become a God as Jesus Christ did. He must prepare himself while in the flesh. Man must enlarge his

kingdom, and by enlargement he becomes a God, and will be enthroned as a judge is enthroned. I have a desire that my children may be crowned, so that if I be enthroned, I want to have the privilege of wafting myself by the power of God to visit my children. Everything we see here is typical of what will be hereafter. Oftentimes when I hear people talk of their little difficulties it appears like foolishness to me. I scarcely notice them. I want my children to be an example to others.

“My children, listen to the instructions of your parents, and when they say to you do anything, do it. While your father is under the necessity of going forth to bring souls into the kingdom, it is your duty to listen to your mother, and obey her, and take burdens from her shoulders, and if this is not done you will not have a mother many years longer. She is broken down with toiling and slaving for you. She has been a slave for the Church for many years, and you now must take care of her. * * * The time will come

when you will have children, you will have tender feelings for them, and will then look back and see the tender feeling your parents have had for you. My soul has mourned for the salvation and welfare of my children. When I look at the things of the eternal world I feel willing to make sacrifice that I may enjoy the privileges which God is willing to give to His people. I speak as a father, and there is no person on the earth that has more tender feelings for his children than I have. I want the older ones to be a pattern for the younger ones, and inasmuch as there is hardness, put it away, for it is like a seed which if it be cultivated grows to a tree and to maturity, and when it brings forth fruit, it brings forth tyranny and hardness. We should always endeavor to plant peace and kindness and they will bear the fruits of peace and kindness. Remember always to be affectionate to your parents, for you will have a posterity, because God has promised it; and if the oldest do not be faithful, God will raise a posterity from the younger.

“I want my children to show proper respect to all men and be gentle to them as you want they should be gentle to you. Be subject to all officers both civil and religious, and reverence

them in their office. When you speak of the Prophet and the Apostles, speak well of them and not reproachfully. Reverence all men in their respective offices and never speak disrespectfully of them, nor of any person on the earth, and if you cannot speak well, keep your mouth shut before God. If you do this you shall be respected as your father has been, for this has always been my course. Be attentive to these instructions and be faithful in all things and you shall be enthroned in the kingdom of God, and shall increase from generation to generation, and there shall be no end of the increase. When I come into the presence of God He will permit me to stand at your head as Adam will stand at the head of all the families of the earth. Don't give way to evil, my children, never suffer yourselves to go into wicked company or corrupt places. If we give way to sin a little, it will conceive in our bosoms and grow. I know if I am faithful no good thing will be withheld from me, but if I make a misstep it will be taken away. We are acting in view of eternity for we are laying a foundation for eternity. If you remember these things God will bless you with glory and eternal life. I want you to remember inasmuch as you honor your father, when you become old and are engaged in the ministry you shall be honored.

“This religion is true, I know it, for God has revealed it to me. Every man who rejects it will be damned, and everyone who receives and lives it will be saved. Baptism is the sign of the resurrection and is the password whereby we enter into the kingdom of God. All the ordinances are signs of things in the heavens. I want my children to observe these things, for we have come into a dispensation when we have got to open a door to receive all the dispensations of old. When I have been oppressed by the superstitions of this world I have felt as though it would burst the earth. I want to become just what I ought to be.

“My children, never cultivate a spirit of covetousness. When you see anybody that is poor, and you have means, feed them; and when a poor man or a poor woman comes along take them into your house and feed and clothe them.

Always enlist on the side of the oppressed. This principle was always in me and I want my children to cherish it. If you show mercy you shall have mercy. The character of the Almighty is to be noble, and none will come into His kingdom only those who are noble, kind, merciful, virtuous and obedient. The course I take in this life will be handed down to future generations. You will hand it down from generation to generation, and all records which are made here on the earth will be had in heaven. Judith and Roswell* are gone to prepare a way before us, and when we go to that kingdom we shall receive them to our arms again and shall enjoy their society. They have gone to prepare a way and to plead for us before the Father, for they are intelligent. Now, my children, God recognizes all you do. Never cultivate anything wicked, corrupt or dishonest. Instead of taking a penny from your neighbor, give him two. As you do unto others so shall it be measured unto you again. Let these instructions sink deep into your minds."

After closing this discourse he blessed his children, commencing with William, the oldest, and gave each of us a patriarchal blessing.

There are few to be found in the world whose piety, purity of life and unselfish acts can be compared with the greater portion of these men and women of the covenant, who through faith and righteousness have gained power with God to go forth conquering and to conquer. They have more joy and pride in being descendants of the royal family of Abraham, who with his wives and children were so highly honored of God, than in all that earth and mortals could bestow. Could more of the eventful histories of our women be published they would furnish volumes of interesting reading—equal, I think, to any novels, with just this difference, they would be truths instead of fiction. They would show what women are capable of doing and that we have some leading spirits who have few, if any, equals. At all events they are bound to make a mark

*—His children who died in infancy.

in the world, many thanks to their traducers for helping to bring them into notice.

A "Mormon" woman, Nellie White, has but lately been imprisoned for refusing to answer impertinent questions put to her by an inquisitorial grand jury. Methinks they will find it a slow and difficult task to find women who will answer them, or cells enough to hold those who will not. We defy any earthly potentate or power to compel us to break our sacred vows. Were we to come down to such a level we might be bought for money by the first bidder. If this community is to be looked upon with suspicion, because unwilling to betray a secret obligation, and laws can be enacted to compel them to become covenant-breakers, it will not be long before other communities will be treated in like manner. If Free Masonry or any other fraternity should be held sacred and their covenants binding by the members thereof, why in the name of right and reason should our covenants be less sacred, particularly those made to the Great Master Mason, and in His holy sanctuary. When men and women become so lost to every sense of honor that they can be tempted by money or anything under heaven to become as Judas to their brethren, may God be merciful to them!

This nation is taking the wrong course to quench our zeal and cool our ardor. We have seemed at times overwhelmed in danger and difficulties, which would have caused common people to despair. But that is a feeling we cannot appreciate, being something that was never experienced by true Latter-day-Saints, particularly those who have been reared in the midst of persecution. We are still fixed and determined to grapple with error and this bitter prejudice until a superior system of social government is established in our land, and we are willing to meet the consequences, knowing that He who commands and stays the elements and has borne us safely thus far over all the angry billows, while they have tossed us to and fro, will bring safely into harbor the pure in heart. They will hold to the ship and fight valiantly for Him, whom they know of a surety has accepted the sacrifices they have made for the public weal, to insure that future bliss which

has stimulated the weakest who has launched forth to meet and remove the obstacles thrown up like mountains before us. We have never known much but troublous times and it would be folly to cry peace where there is no peace.

Being among those Pioneers who traversed, weary and way-worn, thousand of miles over the dreary and uninhabited wilds of the far west, in search of some spot beyond the bounds of civilization that we might call our home; having a keen remembrance of the suffering and heart-rending sorrows we endured, besides the many sad partings and lonely graves that marked our trail, as well as the weary years of toil and privation spent here in struggling with the elements and surmounting the various difficulties that beset us on every hand; I, having seen and passed through it all, have naturally supposed there was something due us in return besides continued hostility from this free and enlightened government. But political demagogues would rather violate the constitution than displease hireling priests and hungry office-seekers, by dealing out common justice to the "Mormons." Well, we are trying to live up to the law which teaches us to forgive even "seventy times seven," and to remember the scripture which says, ' Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth.'

We are hearing daily of the misery of our fellow-beings in consequence of the chastening rod of the Almighty. His servants have been sent out to warn them of these things for the last fifty years or more, but they would not heed them. The heart of every Saint goes out in prayer in behalf of the suffering beings who have been overtaken by these judgments, although we have been hated and cruelly persecuted by them, and hundreds of our brethren are being spurned from their doors, tarred and feathered, whipped, scourged and imprisoned, and many of the aged and the youth have been slain, only because they professed to be the Saints of God and proclaimed His truths as He commanded. We know and are trying to prepare ourselves for the things which are nigh at our doors that will make every soul to fear and quake who is not living near to God. Our persecutors will soon have all

they can do among themselves without scourging an innocent people.

We worship Him whom the scriptures call the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the twelve sons whose names are to be written over the gates of the New Jerusalem, those who though born in polygamy received a blessing from their father, declaring that "all these are the twelve tribes of Israel." How will it be with these political traitors and hireling priests who have stolen "the livery of heaven, to serve the devil in," who are trying hard to destroy the power which holds this people together, who brand the wives as prostitutes, children as bastards, while at the same time they themselves are supporters of harlots, murderers of innocents, and framers of laws and secret societies to destroy those who are striving to remove ignorance and superstition, and to elevate and enlighten their fellow-beings; how will it be with them if they should ever arrive at those glorious gates and ask admittance into the holy city of our God? Methinks there will be a terrible crest-falling when they meet face to face with those ancient fathers and the ones that have here been disfranchised without trial, because they would obey and follow the honored customs of those grand old patriarchs. Oh, what a punishment will it be to the guilty souls when they learn the truth, and that their own wicked deeds have shut them out and closed the gates against them, and they hear these awful words, "*As ye have sown, so shall ye reap.*"

I have traveled considerably in Utah during the past two years and have had many opportunities of learning the minds of "Mormon" women upon the plural wife system. I know that there are scores who will endorse what I have expressed. I also testify that the ones who live up to the golden rule in this principle find blessings in it, even in this life. Instead of being man-worshippers, remaining in the same old grooves in which the human family have been at a stand still, or tending downward through many generations, we are rising above our earthly idols, and find that we have easier access to the throne of grace. Our Father says He will not accept of a divided heart. There can be no evil in a thing that inspires prayer,

drives selfishness from the heart and lengthens the cords of human feelings, leading one to do greater deeds of kindness outside of his or her own little circle. Those who are so narrow minded as to think of no one's comfort and pleasure but their own, are not capable of enjoying any great amount of eternal glory. We can never enjoy anything to its fullest extent until we have first tasted of its opposite. But if a wife and mother does her part, is true to her husband and teaches her children to walk in the true path, holding out faithful to the end, all she suffers will but add greater laurels to her crown in the world to come. And the future happiness of such, could they obtain even the slightest glimpse of it, would repay them, and they would be willing, even anxious to endure all that was possible to make them deserving of that pure and unalloyed bliss of which I solemnly testify that I have had a foretaste.

I have not written with "the pen of the fanatic," but with the heart "of a woman," who is in earnest, and does not "prefer the glory of man above the glory of God."

I here publish, by permission, a poem written by my eldest son while on his first mission in Ohio, in the year 1877. It has appeared in print before, but not in its present form, having been lately revised and, as will be seen from the title, is appropriate to the theme upon which I have written :

THE WOMEN OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT.

TO MY MOTHER,

Whose life and character are faithful exponents of the principles herein portrayed, and to all mothers in Israel whose lives show equal virtue and integrity, this poem is affectionately dedicated.

SPIRITS elect of Abram's royal race!
Through tears of welling sympathy, I trace
The record leaves whose silent tongues unfold
A part of what could never all be told,
And bow, in admiration, at the shrine,
Whose incense—woman's love—proclaims it thine.