

of publicly speaking upon this subject; and it is rather new ground to the inhabitants of the United States, and not only to them, but to a portion of the inhabitants of Europe; a portion of them have not been in the habit of preaching a doctrine of this description; consequently, we shall have to break up new ground.

It is well known, however, to the congregation before me, that the Latter-day Saints have embraced the doctrine of a plurality of wives, as a part of their religious faith. It is not, as many have supposed, a doctrine embraced by them to gratify the carnal lusts and feelings of man; that is not the object of the doctrine.

We shall endeavor to set forth before this enlightened assembly some of the causes why the Almighty has revealed such a doctrine, and why it is considered a part and portion of our religious faith. And I believe that they will not, under our present form of government (I mean the government of the United States), try us for treason for believing and practicing our religious notions and ideas. I think, if I am not mistaken, that the constitution gives the privilege to all the inhabitants of this country, of the free exercise of their religious notions, and the freedom of their faith, and the practice of it. Then, if it can be proven to a demonstration, that the Latter-day Saints have actually embraced, as a part and portion of their religion, the doctrine of a plurality of wives, it is constitutional. And should there ever be laws enacted by this government to restrict them from the free exercise of this part of their religion, such laws must be unconstitutional.

But, says the objector, we cannot see how this doctrine can be embraced as a matter of religion and faith; we can hardly conceive how it can be embraced only as a kind of domestic concern, something that pertains to do-

mestic pleasures, in no way connected with religion. In reply we will show you that it is incorporated as a part of our religion, and necessary for our exaltation to the fullness of the Lord's glory in the eternal world. Would you like to know the reasons? Before we get through, we will endeavor to tell you why we consider it an essential doctrine to glory and exaltation, to our fullness of happiness in the world to come.

We will first make a few preliminary remarks in regard to the existence of man, to his first existence in his first estate; and then say something in relation to his present state, and the bearing which it has upon his next or future state.

The "Mormons" have a peculiar doctrine in regard to our pre-existence, different from the views of the Christian world, so called, who do not believe that man had a pre-existence. It is believed, by the religious world, that man, both body and spirit, begins to live about the time that he is born into this world, or a little before; that then is the beginning of life. They believe, that the Lord, by a direct act of creation, formed, in the first place, man out of the dust of the ground; and they believe that man is possessed of both body and spirit, by the union of which he became a living creature. Suppose we admit this doctrine concerning the formation of the body from the dust; then how was the spirit formed? Why, says one, we suppose it was made by a direct act of creation, by the Almighty Himself; that He molded the spirit of man, formed and finished it in a proper likeness to inhabit the tabernacle He had made out of the dust.

Have you any account of this in the Bible? Do the Scriptures declare that the spirit was formed at the time the tabernacle was made? No. All the tabernacles of the children of men that were ever formed, from remote