

tion before exercised towards him in the eternal world. He then renewed that election and covenant, and blessed him, and his seed after him. And He said—In multiplying, I will multiply thee; and in blessing I will bless thee.

The Sodomites, Canaanites, etc., received the reverse of this blessing. Instead of giving them a multiplicity of wives and children, He cut them off, root and branch, and blotted their name from under heaven, that there might be an end of a race so degenerate. Now this severity was a mercy. If we were like the people before the flood, full of violence and oppression; or if we, like the Sodomites or Canaanites, were full of all manner of lawless abominations, holding promiscuous intercourse with the other sex, and stooping to a level with the brute creation, and predisposing our children, by every means in our power, to be fully given to strange and unnatural lusts, appetites, and passions, would it not be a mercy to cut us off, root and branch, and thus put an end to our increase upon the earth? You will all say it would. The spirits in heaven would thank God for preventing them from being born into the world under such circumstances. Would not the spirits in heaven rejoice in the covenant and blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in relation to the multiplying of their seed, and in every additional wife which God gave to them as a means of multiplying? Yes, they would; for they could say—“Now there is an opportunity for us to take bodies in the lineage of a noble race, and to be educated in the true science of life, and in the commandments of God.” O what an unspeakable contrast, between being a child of Sodom, and a child of Abraham!

Now, Abraham, by his former superiority of intelligence and nobility, by his former election before the world

was, and by conducting himself in this world so as to obtain the renewal of the same according to the flesh, brought upon his posterity, as well as upon himself, that which will influence them more or less to the remotest generations of time, and in eternity.

Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, when speaking upon this subject, testifies that the children of Israel differ much every way from the Gentiles, for to them, says he, pertains the election, the covenants, the promises, the service of God, the adoption, the glory, the giving of the law, and the coming of Christ in the flesh. He then goes on to trace the peculiar branches in which the heirship is perpetuated. Abraham had a son Ishmael, and several children by his other wives and concubines which the Lord gave unto him. They might all be blessed, but the peculiar blessings of heirship and Priesthood remained and were perpetuated in Isaac.

Again, when Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, had conceived twins, the election to these peculiar blessings ran in the lineage of Jacob, and not of Esau. True, Esau was the firstborn, and was heir to the inheritance, which always pertains to the birthright, but the election to hold and perpetuate the keys of eternal Priesthood was peculiar to Jacob, and even that which Esau did inherit was forfeited by transgression, and therefore transferred to Jacob.

The Lord blessed Ishmael in many things, because he was Abraham's seed. The Lord blessed Esau in many things, because he was a son of Abraham and Isaac, but the peculiar things of the Priesthood, through which all nations should be blessed, pertained exclusively to that peculiar branch of the Hebrews which sprang from Jacob.

Now before these two children were born, or had done any good or evil in this life, God, who was acquainted with