

sibilities, will forever remain to his posterity "The everlasting Father."

As far as we can glean from the sacred records, we find that this relationship was established for the bringing upon this sphere of action a posterity. The powers and functions which had been conferred upon man and woman were exemplified in this direction, and when a man's wife was barren, when any of these daughters of Israel in ancient times were childless, it was considered to be a reproach to them, yet in the exercise of faith and by the blessing of the Almighty, and by obedience to the patriarchal order, many of these ancient sisters, the progenitors of the Israel of the latter days, were delivered from barrenness, and became the mothers of a vast and ever increasing host of posterity. Those who are familiar with the sacred Scriptures will remember one of the wives of Jacob; they will remember the case of Hannah, the mother of Samuel the Prophet, and there are others which are familiar to our minds which need not be quoted. The desire for offspring among the wives of Israel was a prevailing feeling, because it was understood that from that lineage should come the Messiah of the latter days, and every daughter of Israel was anxious that in a direct line she might be the honored of God, in being the medium through which should come the Redeemer, the promised Immanuel.

It ought also to be remarked in connection with this question, that marriage was at times polygamic as well as monogamic—that is, right away in the early history of the world there were men who had more wives than one. Lamech was the first who is mentioned in Scripture. And here it might be observed, although

probably all understand it, that the Bible does not profess to give a perfect history in detail of the habits and practices of the ancient people of God, for these are only secondary to the ever present assertions of divine interest in and regulation of the human family. There are only revealings or incidental glimpses here and there in regard to the principles of social and domestic life, and hintings of some which have been kept hid from then to now; but that marriage was the heritage of man is certain, and that while under many circumstances it was monogamic, there were also many cases in which it was of a polygamic character, and in both instances it was given by command and then received the approbation of the heavens. It was regulated and sustained by the great lawgivers of ancient Israel, who were inspired to point out in detail the limits of consanguinity, the times and seasons of privilege, and what should be the method of securing posterity under such and such circumstances; until the time came when Israel as a nation enjoyed its highest glory, and then we find that this principle (polygamy) formed one of the leading features of the household extension in the kings of that time. David is a noted illustration. Solomon was another, and in the comments of the Scriptures regarding these two men, notwithstanding their multiplicity of wives, we find no condemnation save in the fact that they in other respects violated the fundamental law of ancient Israel. David, we are told, captured the wife of another man by stratagem and because he did this he fell under condemnation. The son that was born to him of that connection died a premature death; but afterwards when he repented, he married and still retained that