

neighbours, were distinctly and definitely defined. Of these, the laws regulating the degrees of relationship with which marriages are prohibited, form a prominent part: and are recorded in Lev. xviii. 6-18, xx. 11-21; Deut. xxvii. 20, 22, 23. These matrimonial laws were, however, entirely based upon the fundamental principle already annunciated at the creation of Eve, namely, that the husband and wife should be "one flesh;" and, therefore, it is of the utmost importance in discussing any question relating to affinity, that this fundamental principle shall on no account be lost sight of, otherwise it would not easily be seen what relationship there existed, for instance, between a man and his uncle's wife, his brother's wife, or his wife's sister, coming as they do altogether from a different family, or, as the case may be, even from a different race. The relationships in the above cases are, therefore, no blood-relationships, but merely contracted by marriage; but as the uncle's wife, according to the fundamental principle, becomes one with the uncle, hence she stands in the same relationship to the nephew as does the uncle; and so, according to the same principle, the brother's wife becomes the sister of the brother, and the wife's sister becomes the sister of the husband.

Having made these preliminary remarks, we may now proceed to enquire what is recorded in the Mosaic law regarding the marriage with a *deceased wife's sister*.

On turning to Lev. xviii. 18, we find the following prohibition:—"And thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to cause jealousy (or enmity), to uncover her nakedness, beside her, בְּחַיֶּיהָ (*bechay-yeha*), in: her life time." Now nothing can be clearer than that according to the plain wording of the text, a man is only prohibited from marrying the sister of his wife so long as the latter is still alive. There is not the slightest allusion that he may not do so after her death. On