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Arnold Friberg, *Christ Appearing in the Western Hemisphere*, © 1951 Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

“This is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father” (3 Nephi 27:13).

God's Plan and Satan's Proposal

JOHN E. FOSSUM

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A concerned mother once approached me and asked what I thought could be done to help her son realize the importance of the gospel in his life. At the end of our conversation, we both concluded that, in the end, it would be up to the son and the manner in which he chose to exercise his agency. I said to the mother, “Don’t you sometimes wish you could *force* a testimony into the hearts of those you love?” She just chuckled and replied, “Yes, you can see why Satan’s proposal to force everyone to choose the right would have been so tempting.” The mother then turned and exited my office, leaving me alone with my thoughts. There was something that didn’t sit right about her comment. The idea that Satan was trying to force people to choose right did not seem to fit with his efforts here on earth. I searched the scriptures and the teachings of the living prophets, and what I found convinced me of the need to reflect more seriously on God’s plan and Satan’s proposal.

God's Premortal Plan

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught that “the need for [the] Fall and for an atonement to compensate for it was explained in a premortal Council in Heaven at which the spirits of the entire human family attended and over which God the Father presided.”¹ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin similarly stated, “In a premortal council at which we were all present, [Jesus Christ] accepted our Father’s great plan of happiness for His children and was chosen by the Father to give effect to that plan.”² It is important to note that the Council in Heaven was about *how* to accomplish a plan that already existed and that had preestablished goals. It is unlikely that Heavenly Father called a council and said, “Okay, I need to come up with a plan for my children. Does anyone have any good ideas?” It is more likely that he knew exactly what needed to happen for his children to return to him but allowed input concerning how those ends would be met. The Bible Dictionary in the Latter-day Saint edition of the Bible clarifies that “the war [in heaven] was primarily over *how and in what manner* the plan of salvation would be administered to the forthcoming human family upon the earth. The issues involved such things as agency, how to gain salvation, and who should be the Redeemer.”³ Teachings such as these imply that there was nothing ad hoc or impromptu about God’s premortal plan. He knew what needed to happen, and he wanted to include his children in carrying it out.

In another recent conversation I had with a faithful member of the Church, we discussed doctrines of salvation. It quickly became apparent that I had a far more optimistic outlook on the final outcome of God’s plan than she did. I concluded our exchange by quoting 2 Nephi 33:7, 12: “I have . . . great faith in Christ that I shall meet many souls spotless at [God’s] judgment-seat. . . . And I pray the Father in the name of Christ that many of us, if not all, may be saved in his kingdom at that great and last day.” The implication that many, if not all, would be saved was alarming to her, and she said very gravely, “Be careful, brother. Remember that it was Satan’s idea to save *all* of God’s children.” However, the idea to save all of God’s children did not originate with Satan but with our loving Heavenly Father. His plan was and is “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). As the Apostle Paul put it, “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who *will have all men to be saved*, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:3–4; emphasis added). Elder John A. Widtsoe stated: “The eternal plan of the Lord, the gospel, is to save and exalt all of his children, from

the first to the last man. Any other view is of a merciless, cold divinity, presenting an insurmountable handicap in life's efforts. True religion is marked by the doctrine that salvation, that is, unending happiness and joy, is within the reach of all men and will be measurably reached by all. The gospel offers eternal hope to every soul, in spite of weakness and failure and folly."⁴ The center of God's premortally ordained plan was the salvation of his children, and salvation continues to be the focus of all of his dedicated efforts.

The scriptures teach clearly that God's plan is to make salvation and exaltation available to every one of his children. Some have expressed confusion about the difference between the terms *salvation* and *exaltation*. In some circles, the word *salvation* has come to mean the universal gift of the Resurrection, which is given to all of God's children regardless of their actions in mortality. In that sense, any one of God's children who inherits any of the three degrees of glory is technically saved, or has received salvation. Exaltation, however, has been defined specifically as inheriting one of the degrees of glory within the celestial kingdom to dwell in God's presence. Yet even those who propose such a distinction between the two words concede that "these [two] terms are used frequently in the scriptures synonymously, in fact most of the time."⁵

Concerning these terms, Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught, "We are oft-times prone to create artificial distinctions, to say that salvation means one thing and exaltation another, to suppose that salvation means to be resurrected, but that exaltation or eternal life is something in addition thereto." Elder McConkie continued, "When [prophets] speak and write about salvation, almost without exception, they mean eternal life or exaltation. They use the terms *salvation*, *exaltation*, and *eternal life* as synonyms, as words that mean exactly the same thing without any difference, distinction, or variance whatever."⁶ Hence, we have scriptural references stating that "the greatest of all the gifts of God" is eternal life (D&C 14:7), and synonymously, "There is no gift greater than the gift of salvation" (D&C 6:13). Unless otherwise noted, the words *salvation* and *exaltation* will be used synonymously in this article to mean life with God in the celestial kingdom.

The words of the Lord make it very clear that "the works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated, neither can they come to naught" (D&C 3:1). In addition, the Lord counsels, "Remember, remember, that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of men" (D&C 3:3). The work of God is captured in the Savior's words to the Nephites in 3 Nephi 27:13–15: "Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the

gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, . . . and my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross . . . that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father. . . . Therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me.” At the very least, the Savior’s words in this instance represent a universal invitation to all of God’s children to come unto him and receive the greatest gift that he has to offer, which is eternal life (see D&C 14:7). When a child of God comes unto the Savior with “a broken and a contrite heart” (Psalm 51:17), he or she becomes a witness of the truth “that Jesus was crucified . . . for the sins of the world, yea, for the remission of sins unto the contrite heart” (D&C 21:9). The repentant soul who turns to Jesus will experience a liberation from sin as his or her disposition to do evil is purged through the power of the Spirit (see Mosiah 5:2).

In the New Testament, the Lord stated, “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might



Greg K. Olsen, *The Bible and Book of Mormon Testify of Christ*, © 1990 Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

Christ’s Atonement opens the door for exaltation in the celestial kingdom of the Father for anyone and everyone who desires such a gift and is willing to live according to divine requirements.

be saved” (John 3:17). We find similar divine sentiments expressed in the Doctrine and Covenants: “And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us—that he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness; that through him all might be saved whom the Father had put into his power and made by him; who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands, except those sons of perdition who deny the Son after the Father has revealed him” (D&C 76:40–43). This particular set of verses in the Doctrine and Covenants has been identified by some as one of the few instances in the scriptures where the word *saved* can mean acquiring any of the three degrees of glory, from telestial to celestial. Yet we should also emphasize the fact that Christ’s Atonement opens the door for exaltation in the celestial kingdom of the Father for anyone and everyone who desires such a gift and is willing to live according to divine requirements. Hence, the divine declaration “that . . . all might be saved” may rightly be paraphrased as follows: “Anyone who desires righteousness with a full heart and is willing to do all that the Father asks can be exalted in his presence.” Christ’s Atonement, which constitutes the center of God’s plan, makes the potential of exaltation available to anyone who desires it.

Understanding that God’s plan and ultimate desire was and is to make exaltation possible for all of his children sheds light on additional insights concerning the premortal council and War in Heaven. For instance, when the Bible Dictionary states that there was a war “over how and in what manner the plan of salvation would be administered to the forthcoming human family upon the earth,” we can safely assume that the end goal of the plan was already established before any input was considered. The potential exaltation for every soul would have been a central requirement of any proposal or input that our Father may have entertained. In essence, the Council in Heaven was God’s way of including his children in carrying out the plan that he had already developed.

The final outcome of the plan was certain and nonnegotiable. As Elder Widtsoe suggested, every single one of God’s children had to have an opportunity to return to his or her Father’s presence. Any other outcome would have been wholly unacceptable for a loving Father to consider. Two prominent gospel scholars have put it this way: “We must ever keep in mind that our God and Father is a successful parent, one who will save far more of his

children than he will lose! If these words seem startling at first, let us reason for a moment.”⁷ They then go on to account for the innumerable hosts of God’s children who are celestial candidates. These include all children who die before the age of accountability, along with the countless billions who have lived and died without the law, for whom the scriptures say “there is no punishment” and “there is no condemnation; . . . for they are delivered by the power of [the Holy One of Israel]” (2 Nephi 9:25). Indeed, God’s plan is one of mercy and exaltation.

Satan’s Proposal

The Lord stated that in premortality Satan came before him and said, “Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor” (Moses 4:1). There are many who believe Satan came up with the concept of redeeming all mankind. But when we consider that the potential exaltation of all of God’s children was a premortal prerequisite for any proposal to the council, those same words become *reiterative*, not declarative, in nature. For example, if we were to insert some clarifying subtext into Moses 4:1, it might read something like this: “Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind [the prescribed and divinely decreed goal of this council], that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor” (Moses 4:1). When we read Moses 4:1 in such a manner, our primary focus shifts to the latter part of the verse in order to find the errant ingredient of Satan’s plan: “And surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.”

What made Satan’s proposal so deviant, rebellious, and self-aggrandizing was *not* that he desired to save all of God’s children. Indeed, we can rest assured that the exaltation of God’s children was as far from his heart as any other charitable motive. The scriptures make it clear that Satan sinned in that he alone desired *all* the glory for any success in bringing to pass what the Father had already set out to accomplish—the salvation and exaltation of all of his children. “And surely *I* will do it,” Satan said. “Wherefore give *me* thine honor” (Moses 4:1; emphasis added). Satan’s proposal was more than just self-centered and egotistical. In reality, his proposal constituted an outright rebellion against God and his kingdom. President Ezra Taft Benson taught that “in the pre-earthly council, Lucifer placed his proposal in competition

with the Father's plan as advocated by Jesus Christ. He wished to be honored above all others. In short, his prideful desire was to dethrone God.⁸

The Doctrine and Covenants affirms that Satan's desire was to dethrone God. In section 29, the Lord states, "[The devil] rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency" (v. 36). What this verse says is just as important as what it does *not* say. Note that the verse does *not* say, "The devil rebelled against me because he arrogantly proposed to save *all* of my children." By exclusively emphasizing Satan's desire to dethrone God, this verse squares nicely with Moses 4:2, in which God emphasized the primary distinction between Satan's suggestion and the proposal of his Beloved Son. God said, "But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, *thy will be done*, and the *glory be thine forever*" (emphasis added). The main difference was *not* that Satan wanted to save everyone while Christ was resigned to losing some or most of God's children. The main difference was that Satan selfishly wanted to seize all the glory for accomplishing the Father's plan, while Christ unselfishly wanted to give all glory to his Father for accomplishing that same prescribed plan.

Thus the idea to "redeem all mankind" (Moses 4:1) was not original to Satan. Instead, that sentiment reiterates what *God* required of any proposal in that premortal council. God's plan of salvation, then, becomes just that—a plan to save his children, not a plan that damns the large majority of its participants, as many people believe. It is unfortunate that those who share a pronouncedly optimistic outlook concerning the final outcome of God's plan of salvation are often warned about aligning themselves with Satan's premortal agenda. This is simply not the case. There can be danger in ascribing inclusive forecasts of exaltation to devilish beliefs. Doing so ignores the faithful and optimistic comments made by Nephi and Paul cited earlier (see 2 Nephi 33:7, 12; see also Timothy 2:3–4) and by other modern-day prophets. Additionally, Mormon prayed that "[men] might be restored unto grace for grace, according to their works. And I would that all men might be saved" (Helaman 12:24–25). Indeed, longing for the salvation of *all* of God's children is what God does, for "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16).

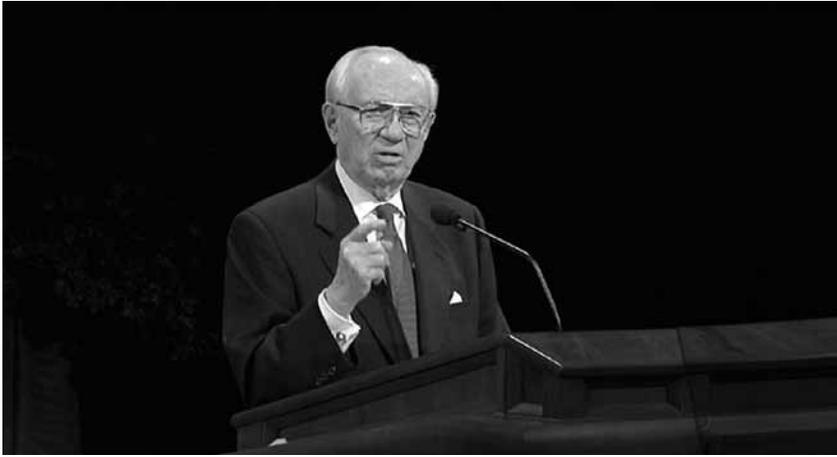
Many members of the Church believe that Satan's idea was to force all of God's children to follow the commandments during mortality. This would ensure that no one would sin, and hence everyone would make it back to

Heavenly Father's presence. Under Satan's proposal, no one would be able to choose wrong instead of right, which explains (in the minds of many) how Satan "sought to destroy the agency of man" (Moses 4:3). Disallowing people to choose the wrong and forcing them to choose only the choices we deem appropriate does indeed qualify as an attempt to destroy their freedom to act. But our agency can be destroyed in other ways. Here again, with the help of the scriptures and teachings of the modern prophets, we learn of other possibilities.

President J. Reuben Clark Jr. taught *two* ways in which Satan could have potentially tried to destroy the agency of God's children. President Clark said, "Satan's plan required one of two things: Either the compulsion of the mind, the spirit, the intelligence of man, *or else saving men in sin.*"⁹ In other words, Satan's plan may not have been one of forcing us to choose the right. Instead, his plan may have been one of allowing people to do whatever they want in life without consideration of consequences or personal accountability. Without consequences for actions, no one would be damned, and all would make it back to Father. Elsewhere President Clark taught, "[The devil] is back where he was at the time of the great council in Heaven when he would have *taken away the free agency of men, save them in their sins, indeed there would have been no sin.*"¹⁰

Similar to forcing us all to choose the right, this second option also would have had no way of producing the result of exaltation and personal growth in anyone. Attempting to save humanity in their sins ignores the eternal, immovable requirement of having opposition in all things, which opposition creates the circumstances where agency can exist. Lehi taught clearly that were it not for the eternal and unchanging nature of the opposing forces of right and wrong, there would not be sin. If there were no sin, then there would be no righteousness. Lehi continued, "And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness. And if there be no righteousness nor happiness there be no punishment nor misery. And if these things are not there is no God. And . . . there could have been no creation of things, neither to act nor to be acted upon" (2 Nephi 2:13).

According to Lehi, opposition is what makes agency possible, and agency is what makes progression and growth possible. Without opposition between the eternal constants of right and wrong—and such opposition creates consequence and accountability—Lehi seems to suggest that even God could never have progressed to his current exalted and glorified condition. This is because



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President Hinckley taught that “the contest between good and evil, which began with the War in Heaven, has never ended. It has gone on, and on, and on to the present.”

opposition is the engine of eternal progression. Hence, as Lehi taught, there could have been no God and no creation, because there would have been nothing to act or to be acted upon. President Clark explained further, “Under [Satan’s] plan eternal progression would have been ruled out. We would have become mere automatons, living and breathing, and eating if we could get something to eat, and breeding like animals.”¹¹ In other words, the devil may have attempted to destroy our agency by attempting to nullify and destroy the eternal conditions of opposition that make agency possible. Elder D. Todd Christofferson said succinctly, “We recognize the gift of agency as a central aspect of the plan of salvation proposed by the Father in the great premortal council, and that ‘there was war in heaven’ (Revelation 12:7) to defend and preserve it.”¹²

There must be opposition in all things; otherwise, agency cannot exist. If Satan’s proposal was one of doing away with right and wrong, then it also must have consisted of eliminating (or at least altering) the eternal forces of opposition that, as Lehi mentioned, were so necessary for progression. In short, Satan’s arrogant proposal was to change the dynamics of eternity. Such an alteration would do away with requirements such as accountability and consequences for choices. Under such a proposal, changing these eternal requirements would allow all of humanity to come to earth and do whatever they wanted without fear of consequence. Thus, all would be brought back regardless of personal choice or preference.

Satan's presumptuousness in changing eternal law to suit his selfish purposes is described in the Doctrine and Covenants: "And again, verily I say unto you, that which is governed by law is also preserved by law and perfected and sanctified by the same. That which breaketh a law, and abideth not by law, *but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willeth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin*, cannot be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice, nor judgment. Therefore, they must remain filthy still" (88:34–35; emphasis added). In premortality, Satan may have tried (and may still be trying) to become a law unto himself by attempting to alter the eternal laws that make our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation possible.

Satan's Tactics in Mortality

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that "the contest between good and evil, which began with [the War in Heaven], has never ended. It has gone on, and on, and on to the present."¹³ Elsewhere he reiterated, "The conflict we see today is but another expression of the conflict that began with the War in Heaven."¹⁴ Indeed, the war that began in premortality "is continued in mortality in the conflict between right and wrong; between the gospel and false principles, etc. The same contestants and the same issues are doing battle, and the same salvation is at stake."¹⁵ If the same contestants are doing battle, and if the same issues are being fought for, it stands to reason that Satan's premortal agenda would be similar to (if not the same as) his current agenda. It's unlikely that Satan's selfish motives have changed much from premortality until now. If we look around us at what type of rhetoric Satan currently perpetuates, perhaps we can come to understand more accurately what he promulgated in the premortal councils of heaven; he certainly does not appear to be trying to force people to choose the right here in mortality.

The three anti-Christ's in the Book of Mormon can be used to illustrate the primary thrust of Satan's proposal in premortality. While each anti-Christ was slightly different in his attempt to dissuade people from believing in Christ and embracing his gospel, integrating their messages provides an illustrative cross-section of the devil's wicked plan. Sherem, for example, denied the necessity for a Savior while pretending to maintain the importance of certain aspects of the gospel, such as the law of Moses. He declared, "I know that there is no Christ, neither has been, nor ever will be" (Jacob 7:9). Nehor rejected the notion of accountability and consequences for our actions when he taught that no one needs to "fear nor tremble" in this life and that "all

mankind should be saved,” regardless of their choices (Alma 1:3–6). Similarly, Korihor blasphemously proclaimed that “there should be no Christ” (Alma 30:12) and that “whatsoever a man did was no crime” (Alma 30:17). In all instances, the pernicious rhetoric of these anti-Christes “[led] away the hearts of the people” (Jacob 7:3) and caused them “to commit whoredoms” (Alma 30:18).

The three anti-Christes’ philosophical platforms mirror Satan’s premortal proposal, in which he would essentially have done away with right and wrong, which would have eliminated the need for a savior altogether. Elder Spencer J. Condie observed, “There was an additional selfish flaw in Satan’s plan. Because his plan allowed for no mistakes it required no atonement for sin, and thus he could save his own satanic skin from any suffering.”¹⁶ The same devilish motives that powered Satan’s premortal proposal are ever-present in the rhetoric of his earthly representatives. The adversary of us all would have us embrace his unrestrained and hedonistic approach to existence that encourages us to “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us. . . . Yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this. . . . And at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God” (2 Nephi 28:7–8). In the end, Satan’s was and is a do-what-you-want philosophy that never could and never will produce the power to save because it required no sacrifice. As stated in the *Lectures on Faith*, “A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; . . . it is through the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things that men do actually know that they are doing the things that are well pleasing in the sight of God. . . . Under these circumstances, then, he can obtain the faith necessary for him to lay hold on eternal life.”¹⁷

Conclusion

The traditional distinction between God’s premortal plan and Satan’s devilish proposal can foster a somewhat pessimistic view of our Heavenly Father’s power and willingness to save his children. By mistakenly attributing desires for universal salvation to the enemy of us all, we detract from the glory, power, and perfection of a loving Father’s plan to save. Like the prophets of old, we would do well to remember “in whom [we] have trusted” (2 Nephi 4:19). We worship a Father who provided his Son as a Savior “who is mighty to save and to cleanse from all unrighteousness” (Alma 7:14). As the Prophet Joseph

Smith taught, “Our Heavenly Father is more liberal in His views, and boundless in His mercies and blessings, than we are ready to believe or receive.”¹⁸ Elsewhere he added, “God does not look on sin with [the least degree of] allowance, but . . . the nearer we get to our Heavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls; we feel that we want to take them upon our shoulders, and cast their sins behind our backs.”¹⁹ Such is the motive of our loving God.

To misunderstand God’s plan of salvation even slightly is to risk misunderstanding the core of his character. Elder McConkie reminded us that “it is the first principle of revealed religion to know the nature and kind of being that God is.”²⁰ It is my hope that by clarifying the nature of and relationship between God’s premortal plan and Satan’s selfish agenda, we can strengthen our individual and collective faith and hope in our Father’s loving care, “that faith also might increase in the earth” (D&C 1:21). As we come to understand more fully what the Lord intends to accomplish through his plan in the eternities to come, we begin to understand why the morning stars sang together “and all the sons of God shouted for joy” in the premortal courts above (Job 38:7). We feel to raise our voices with the Prophet Joseph and declare, “Let the sun, moon, and the morning stars sing together, and let all the sons of God shout for joy! And let the eternal creations declare his name forever and ever! And again I say, how glorious is the voice we hear from heaven, proclaiming in our ears, glory, and salvation, and honor, and immortality, and eternal life; kingdoms, principalities, and powers!” (D&C 128:23).

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Notes

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Atonement of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, March 2008, 35.
2. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Christians in Belief and Action,” *Ensign*, November 1996, 70.
3. Bible Dictionary, “War in Heaven,” 788; emphasis added.
4. John A. Widtsoe, *Handbook of the Restoration* (Independence, MO: Zion’s Printing, 1944), 223.
5. Joseph Fielding McConkie, *Doctrines of Salvation*, ed. Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955), 2:11.
6. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 129.
7. Robert L. Miller and Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Life Beyond* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2004), 137.
8. Ezra Taft Benson, in Conference Report, April 1989, 4. Indeed, many religious texts emphasize pride as the main ingredient of Satan’s proposal—wanting to displace God and steal his glory and not wanting to force salvation upon God’s children. For example, Jewish

legends state that Satan wanted to “exalt [his] throne above the stars of God,” declaring boldly, “I will be like the Most High!” At that moment of arrogant rebellion, God “at once . . . flung Satan and his host out of heaven, down to the earth, and from that moment dates the enmity between Satan and man.” Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909), 1:64. Other texts emphasize Satan’s pride in wanting to dethrone God and arrogate the Father’s power to himself. Milton’s seventeenth-century literary production, *Paradise Lost*, articulated Satan’s rebellion in this manner: “His pride had cast him out from heav’n, with all his host / Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring / To set himself in glory above his peers, / He trusted to have equaled the Most High, / If he opposed; and with ambitious aim / Against the throne and monarchy of God / Raised impious war in heav’n and battle proud / With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power / Hurl’d headlong flaming from th’ ethereal sky.” John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Scott Elledge (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993), 9, lines 36–45.

9. J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Conference Report, October 1949, 193; emphasis added.

10. J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Conference Report, April 1951, 79; emphasis added.

11. Clark, in Conference Report, April 1951, 79.

12. D. Todd Christofferson, “Moral Agency,” *Ensign*, June 2009, 49.

13. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Dawning of a Brighter Day,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 81.

14. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Times in Which We Live,” *Ensign*, November 2001, 74.

15. Bible Dictionary, “War in Heaven,” 788.

16. Spencer J. Condie, *Your Agency: Handle with Care* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 6.

17. Joseph Smith, comp., *Lectures on Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 6:7.

18. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 257.

19. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 241.

20. Bruce R. McConkie, “The Lord God of the Restoration,” *Ensign*, November 1980, 51.