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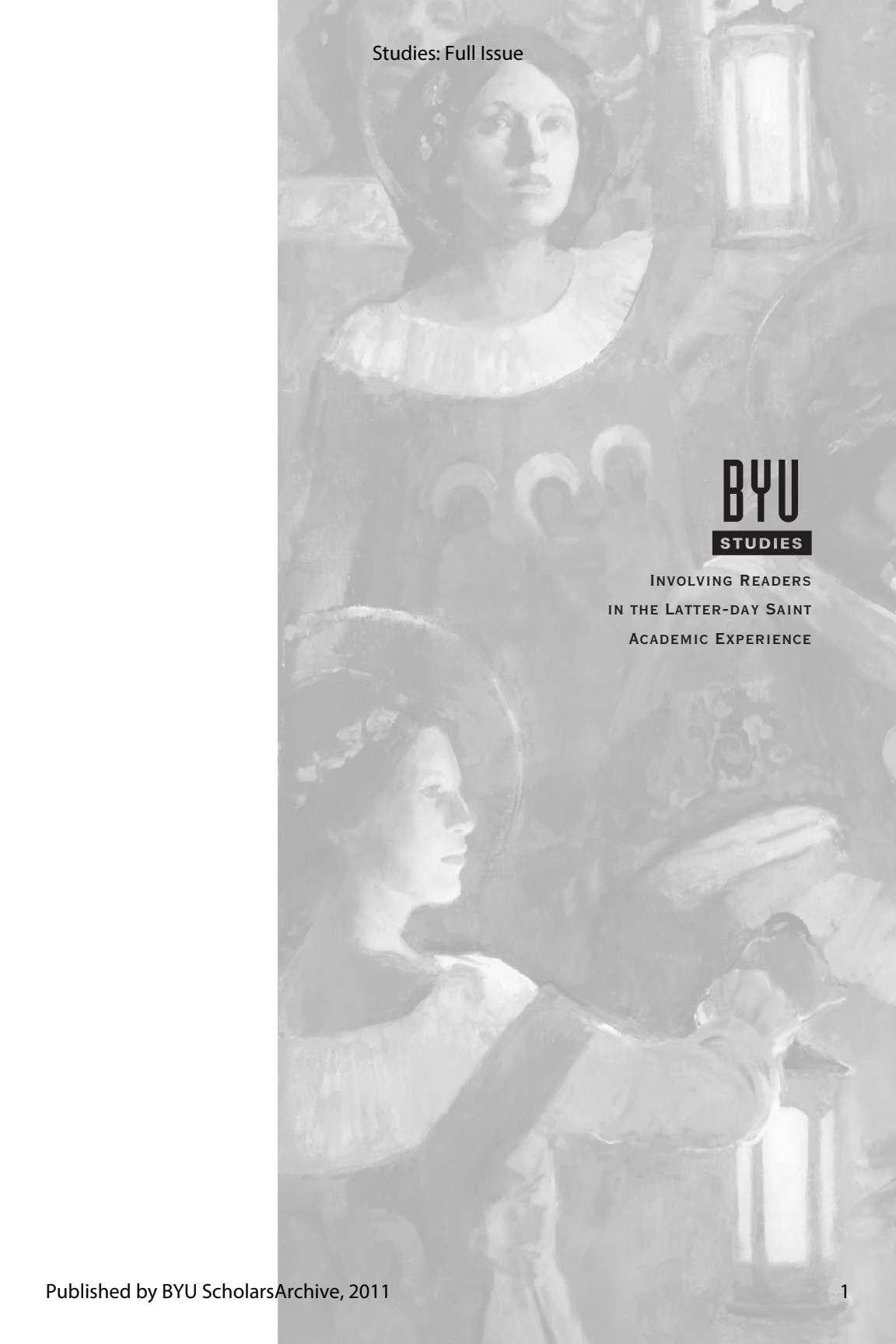
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Studies: Full Issue

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STUDIES

INVOLVING READERS
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ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE



STUDIES

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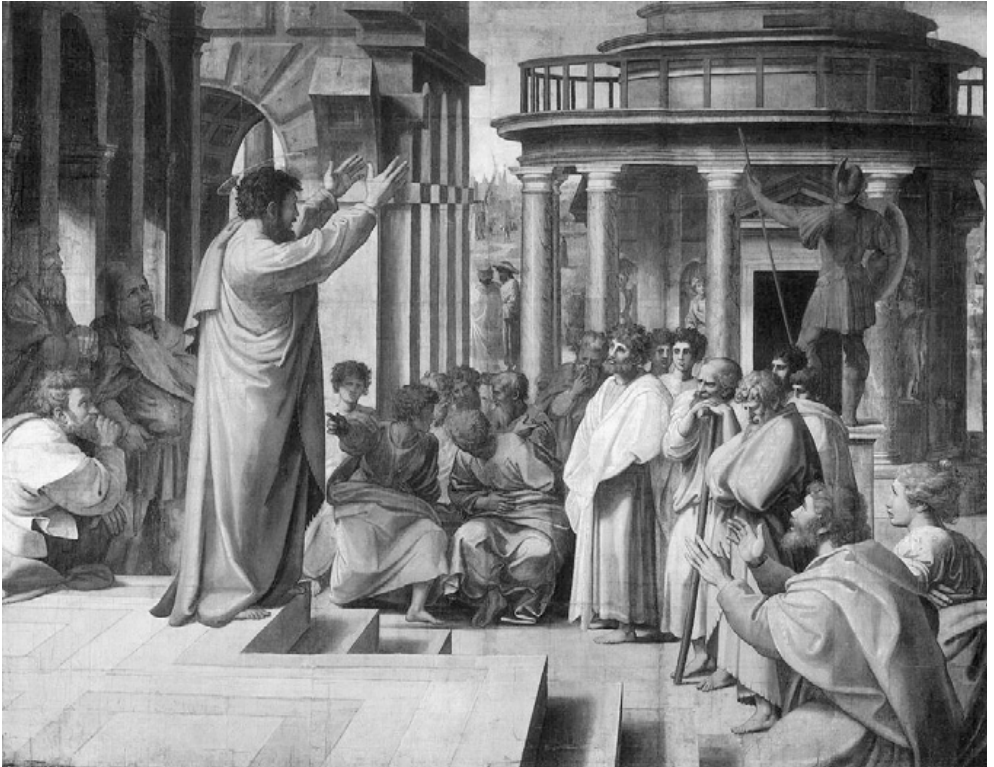
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Raphael, *St. Paul Preaching in Athens*. Glue distemper on many sheets of paper glued together, 12' 10" x 14' 5". From 1515 to 1516, Pope Leo X commissioned Raffaello Sanzio (1483–1520) to paint a set of cartoons as patterns for tapestries that would hang below Michelangelo's famous ceiling in the Sistine Chapel. Seven of the cartoons, including this one, survived and are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The Four Discourses of Mormonism

Joseph M. Spencer

I would like to begin, as well as to end, with a deceptively simple question: What does it mean to be Mormon?¹ A whole series of events and developments motivate this question for me—from the explosion of academic interest in Mormon studies to the emergent internationalization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, from the fact that fully half the Church’s members are converts to the rise of what Internet-savvy Latter-day Saints call the “bloggernacle.” Such events and developments point to the possibility (perhaps the necessity) of leaving behind any definition of “Mormonness” that makes it a question only of belonging—at best to a particular culture or ethnic group,² at worst to “a victimized post-modern minority.”³ In the place of *belonging*, I would substitute *believing*: if Mormonness is not a question of cultural heritage or ethnicity, it is, I would argue, a question of faith or faithfulness.

In order, then, to ask about what it is to be Mormon, it is necessary to ask what ultimately amounts to a philosophical question: *What is (Mormon) faith?* This question will occupy most of my attention in this paper. My approach to this question in what follows will be twofold. In the first part, I explore the implications of a recent philosophical interpretation of the writings of Saint Paul, namely, that of the French philosopher Alain Badiou. My intention, in this analysis of Badiou’s reading of Paul, is only to uncover the basic contours of faith as such. However, as I argue, the notion of faith Badiou outlines in his reading of Paul, for all its obvious merits, needs ultimately, if it is to be translated into fully Mormon terms, to be concretized by the complex history of Mormonism. Hence, in the second part of what follows, I will work out a more intricate understanding of what specifically *Mormon* faith is by

Joseph M. Spencer

Hoping to promote discussions focused on LDS scripture and European philosophy, Robert Couch and I launched an email list called LDS-Herm (short for LDS Hermeneutics) in 2006. “The Four Discourses of Mormonism” is one of many projects—some collective, some individual—that have precipitated out of the discussions on that list. The particular conversation to which I originally responded with the first draft of this essay began with a



question from Adam Miller: “If one were to attempt to forge a new kind of writing that is appropriate to careful and explicitly faithful thinking about Mormonism, a kind of writing that could grip both scholar and interested lay person alike, what would it look like?” Though I never ask that original question explicitly in my paper as it now stands, it is both what called the paper into existence in the first place and what justifies its existence for me now.

But in many ways, this paper has been with me in an unwritten form since my undergraduate years at BYU, when I first encountered the writings of Hugh Nibley. Though my academic interests are ultimately quite distant from Nibley’s (I flirt with ancient studies in something like the way Nibley flirted with philosophy), I felt from the first reading that he had accomplished something crucial in his writings, something that most Latter-day Saint writers were somehow unable to achieve. I remember walking around the streets south of campus one hot summer afternoon—if I remember right, I was mostly trying to avoid working on a paper on Aristotle—talking with my wife, Karen, about how Nibley alone seemed to have avoided the trap of falling into either academic or devotional self-satisfaction. While the years since that walk have given me opportunity to read enough to see that Nibley was and is not alone in his approach, I have only grown in my conviction that the nature of fidelity is too often obscured.

I should mention that I presented a first draft of this paper at the annual meetings of the Association of Mormon Scholars held in 2008 at Southern Virginia University, and a rather different draft at the annual meetings of the Association for Mormon Letters held in 2009 at Utah Valley University. My thanks go to both of these organizations.

offering a perhaps unique reading of the history of the Restoration. In the end, I hope at the very least to have outlined a notion of faith that not only makes sense in light of Mormon history, but also that can make sense of Mormon history itself—as well as of what it means to be Mormon. In doing so, I will introduce four different “Mormon discourses,” or modes of organizing knowledge and experience, that will help to make particular sense of some of the ways in which faith is compromised.

Alain Badiou on the Writings of Paul

Alain Badiou, unquestionably one of the most important philosophers working in France today, undertook what he himself described as a “strange enterprise.”⁴ As an atheist, Badiou would seem to be the last person to take up a philosophical reading of the epistles of Saint Paul—at least in an approving fashion. Actually, though, he is only one of a number of nonreligious and non-Christian European thinkers who have quite productively turned their attention to the ancient Apostle.⁵ And at least one Latter-day Saint, writing strictly as a philosopher to a non-Mormon audience, has attempted a reading of Saint Paul in the name of “travers[ing] both theism and atheism for the sake of grace.”⁶ So it is that Badiou announces on the very first page of his study that he writes neither “to bear witness to any sort of faith” nor to defend some kind of “antifaith.”⁷ His interest is, strictly speaking, in the productivity of what Paul has to say, regardless of the question of religious commitments.

But why all this confessedly nonreligious reading of Paul’s epistles? For Badiou, at least, the motivation lies in his identification of the Apostle as “a poet-thinker of the *event*,” as a thinker who established the “paradoxical connection” that “provides the foundation for the possibility of a *universal* teaching within history itself.”⁸ Thus, though Badiou regards as “a fable” the central event to which Paul dedicated himself (that is, Christ’s Resurrection),⁹ he finds Paul’s thought to be the most rigorous exposition available of the manner in which an event, named and harnessed by its faithful subject, opens the way to a universalism without totalitarianism: A truth, discovered in the course of an event and then announced without compulsion, can be “offered to all, or addressed to everyone, without a condition of belonging being able to limit this offer, or this address.”¹⁰ And it is the need for the construction of just such a universalism *without totalitarianism*—after the mingled advances and atrocities of the twentieth century—that makes Paul unmistakably, in Badiou’s phrasing, “our contemporary.”¹¹

But the believing Christian—and therefore Latter-day Saint—might immediately object to Badiou’s usurpation of sorts: What right has he to

read Paul while ignoring the reality of the Resurrection of Christ? But there is reason, I think, not to be too hasty about dismissing Badiou out of hand for the simple reason that he is not a believer. Though Badiou himself admits that he does not believe that the Resurrection event took place, he does *not* attempt, in his careful reading of Paul, to subtract that element from Paul's thinking. Indeed, in order to follow most closely the kind of universalism that the preaching of the event opens up, Badiou allows Paul—and, along with him, the Christian or Latter-day Saint reader—his faith in the Resurrection. Taking as his task the work of outlining the *structure* of Paul's thought, Badiou is not particularly interested, in his reading, about the *content*. It is of course the believers' prerogative to take Badiou's immensely productive analysis of the structure of Paul's thought and return to their own commitment to the content of the New Testament announcement.¹²

These preliminaries aside, what can be said in order to clarify what Badiou means by Paul's universalism without totalitarianism, and what does it have to do with faith?

In what I regard as the most insightful part of his analysis, Badiou works out what he calls Paul's "theory of discourses."¹³ Badiou begins here by pointing out that the Apostle to the Gentiles, rather than understanding his preaching to be addressed to "an absolutely open multitude of peoples and customs" or to "all the human subsets of the [Roman] empire," sees the world in terms only of the Jew and the Greek, "as if, with these two referents, the multiple of the *ethnē* [Gentiles, nations] had been exhausted so far as the Christian revelation and its universal destination is concerned."¹⁴ But this reduction of so many "peoples and customs" to the simple dyad of Jews-and-Greeks is strategic for Paul, according to Badiou: "They refer to what Paul considers to be the two coherent intellectual figures of the world he inhabits, or what could be called *regimes of discourse*."¹⁵ Paul is thus "in fact presenting us with a schema of [two] discourses." And this schema is organized in order to "position a *third* discourse, [Paul's] own, in such a way as to render its complete originality apparent."¹⁶

In its basic contours, then, the "theory of discourses" Badiou finds in Paul is a schema of three discourses, two (the Jewish and Greek discourses) forming a tight circle with which the third (Christian or apostolic discourse) breaks. But what is the circle of the first two discourses, and how does the third break with it?

Greek discourse, as Badiou nicely summarizes it, is the discourse "of the [Stoic] wise man," wisdom in Stoicism being a question of "appropriating the fixed order of the world," making Greek discourse "cosmic," a question of "deploying the [human] subject within the reason of a natural *totality*."¹⁷

In other words, Hellenistic thought had, in the time of Paul, constructed a kind of universalism, but one that was accomplished only through a totalization of the universe, through a belief that the world could be reduced to a knowable order to which one should ascetically adjust. (This discourse, in the time of Paul, would of course have been as much the discourse of many of the Romans as of the Greeks: Stoicism had become, by the first century of the common era, almost the official worldview of the Roman aristocracy.)

Of course, Paul was not the first to recognize that the totalizing universalism of Stoic thought was problematic. Rabbinic Judaism, for example, took exception to the Greek vision. Indeed, it announced that the “Jewish nation” was “*constitutively* exceptional,” due, as Badiou says, to “the prophetic sign, the miracle, election,” and so forth.¹⁸ Thus, while “Greek discourse base[d] itself on the cosmic order so as to adjust itself to it,” constitutively “Jewish discourse base[d] itself on the *exception* to this order so as to turn divine transcendence into a *sign*.”¹⁹ Over against the Hellenic notion of totalizing universalism, first-century Judaism presented itself as a particularity, as a “point of incoherence” in the framed “cosmic totality” of which the Stoic spoke.²⁰

But if Judaism took exception to Stoic totalizing universalism, why is Paul as much at odds with the Jew as he is with the Greek? Badiou explains: “Paul’s profound idea is that *Jewish discourse and Greek discourse are the two aspects of the same figure of mastery*. . . . In the eyes of Paul the Jew, the weakness of Jewish discourse is that its logic of the exceptional sign is only valid *for* the Greek cosmic totality.”²¹ In other words, because Jewish discourse positioned itself rhetorically as an exception *to* Greek discourse, it was unavoidably dependent on the Greek understanding of the world. Constituting itself as the point of incoherence *in* the Stoic cosmos, Judaism constituted itself a part—albeit an *incoherent* part—of that same cosmic schema. The result is, as Badiou says, that “the two discourses share the presupposition that the key to salvation is given to us within the universe, whether it be through direct mastery of the totality (Greek wisdom), or through mastery of literal tradition and the deciphering of signs (Jewish ritualism and prophetism).”²² In sum, for Badiou’s Paul, “whether the cosmic totality be envisaged *as such* or whether it be deciphered on the basis of the sign’s exception, [it] institutes in every case a theory of salvation tied to mastery (*to a law*), along with the grave additional inconvenience that the mastery of the wise man and that of the [Jewish] prophet, necessarily unaware of their identity, divide humanity in two,” thereby dispelling any genuine universality.²³ Universalism without totalization is therefore compromised both by the Jewish commitment to the Law of Moses (after the

event of the Resurrection had disannulled its discriminatory power) and by the Greek commitment to the Law of the Cosmos (effectively the law of *death*, as the writings of the Stoics—in direct continuity with Socrates and Plato—make quite clear, and so a law that is, like the Mosaic Law, disannulled by the event of the Resurrection).

Another way of describing the problem associated with the Greek and Jewish discourses is their shared pretension to knowledge: the Stoic notion of wisdom is grounded in the presupposition that there is a knowable cosmic order, and the Jewish notion of exception presupposes that the transcendent bestowal of a sign allows one to know the will of God. Thus, if, as Paul says, “the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom” (1 Corinthians 1:22), they are joined by their conviction that *knowledge is power*, and so that *faith is weak*. But it was precisely this privileging of knowledge over faith that Paul sought to overturn.

And so Paul’s *third* discourse—the Christian or apostolic discourse—begins with the Resurrection of Christ, a “pure event” that, because its having happened is *neither* “falsifiable” *nor* “demonstrable,” amounted to the “opening of an epoch” that worked out the “transformation of the relations between the possible and the impossible.”²⁴ Ignoring, rather than posing as the exception to, the Stoic’s constitutive law of *death*, the event of the Resurrection does not fit—even as a point of incoherence—within the Greek’s cosmic totality. And, as Badiou says, because “the interest of Christ’s Resurrection does not lie in itself, as it would in the case of a particular, or miraculous, fact [the sign],” the Resurrection as event “is measurable *only in accordance with the universal multiplicity whose possibility it prescribes*.”²⁵ Effectively indifferent to the differences by which the Greek and the Jew maintain their distinct (but intertwined) identities, the event of the Resurrection ignores what the Stoic law of the cosmos and the Jewish Law of Moses prescribe. Regardless of what the laws had (and have still!) to say, the Resurrection *just happened*.

The apostolic or Christian discourse, then, is the discourse of naming the possibilities revealed by this unapologetic happening: “His discourse is one of pure fidelity to the possibility opened by the event.”²⁶ Given to “pure fidelity”—in a word, to *faith*—Christians say with Paul that “whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away” (1 Corinthians 13:8) as they give themselves without reserve to a set of truths (the happening of the event as well as the possibilities unveiled by that happening), the truth of which truths they cannot prove. But it is precisely because the faithful subjects cannot prove the truth of what they believe that their preaching is genuinely universal: subtracted from knowledge as construed by the Greek and the Jew, the unprovable truth to which one must declare fidelity

is effectively an *impartial* truth, both in the sense that it refuses to be *particular* to any established culture or human subset, and in the sense that it does not itself form a *part* of the totality that is formed by the intertwined thought of the Greeks and the Jews.

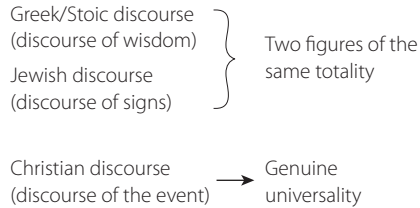
Open to all and yet indifferent to the difference that structures the Greek/Jewish totality, truths unveiled in pure events open up the possibility of a universalism *without* totalitarianism.

Faith, then, for Badiou's Paul is a question of one's fidelity or one's faithful subjection to a genuinely universal truth revealed in a *past* event, such as in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Rather than being a kind of obscure and usually stubborn commitment to something one *hopes* will or can take place in the *future*,²⁷ in Badiou's view, faith is a question of declaring unapologetically that something happened, and that such a happening marks the dawn of a hitherto unknown truth.

But if this notion of faith seems to be relatively straightforward, it should be noted that the faithful are not without temptation. Indeed, as Badiou goes on to work out at some length, once an event has summoned the faithful to fidelity, their vigilance is also summoned against three crucial temptations: disbelief, despair, and uncharitableness.²⁸ Not only do they face the task of *keeping the faith*, but they must also *consistently hope* that the truths they have glimpsed in the course of an event can, if faithfully preached, effect a genuine change in the world as it is presently constituted; and they must demonstrate *universal charity* by refusing, in their preaching, to render the impartial truth of the event partial by announcing that truth only to particular human subsets. If they despair and so become convinced that the truth has no real purchase on the world, their faith or fidelity inevitably suffers. And, equally, if they refuse to uphold the actual universality of the universal truth revealed in the event by deciding that it is only for this or that people, they have effectively compromised their faith. Faith, hope, and charity.

Each of the three temptations that threaten fidelity is tied to a derelict discourse that breaks with the universality of Christian or apostolic discourse. The temptation to turn from Christian discourse back to Jewish discourse is the temptation of disbelief: individuals demand a sign before they will believe, and so they compromise the unprovability of the event.

The Universality of Christian Discourse

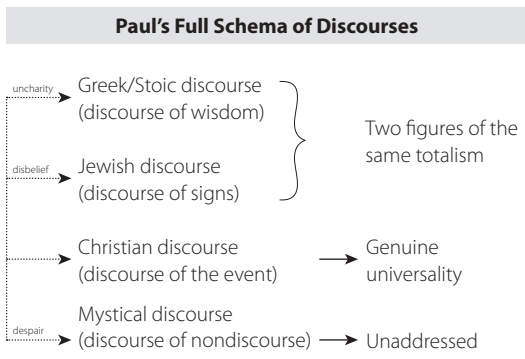


The temptation to turn from Christian discourse back to Greek discourse is the temptation of uncharitableness: in taking up a commitment to the totality that can only register the Jews, for example, as a point of incoherence in the system, they compromise the universality of the event’s implications. And the temptation to turn from Christian discourse to a fourth discourse is the temptation of despair. What is this fourth discourse?

As Badiou points out, Paul “delineates, as if in shadowy outline, a fourth possible discourse, besides the Greek (wisdom), the Jew (signs), and the Christian (evental declaration).”²⁹ This fourth discourse, which Badiou names *mystical* discourse, “is the discourse of the ineffable, the discourse of nondiscourse. It is the subject as silent and mystical intimacy, inhabited by ‘things that cannot be told’ [*arrhēta rhēmata*], which would better be translated as ‘unutterable utterances’ (*diēs indiçibles*), only experienced by the subject who has been visited by miracle.”³⁰ The quintessential New Testament experience of this fourth discourse is glossolalia, speaking in tongues—but all *charismata*, all miraculous, mystical, or revelatory gifts of the Spirit, would certainly fall within it as well. For Paul, miracles and the gift of tongues are very real, and so he unquestionably justifies their existence. But, as Badiou says, Paul is emphatic that this “fourth discourse (miraculous, or mystical) must remain *unaddressed*. . . . He refuses to let addressed discourse, which is that of the declaration of faith, justify itself through an unaddressed discourse, whose substance consists in unutterable utterances.”³¹ If the faithful do make an appeal to the miraculous in their preaching, they “*relapse inevitably into the second discourse*, that of the sign, the Jewish discourse. For . . . what is a miracle if not a sign of the transcendence of the True?”³²

In short, the fourth discourse is the discourse of the signs that *follow* faith. But people of faith, once they have experienced the gifts of the Spirit, are unfortunately tempted to make of these signs-that-follow-faith-for-oneself into signs-that-inspire-faith-for-others, to compromise the

work of faithful preaching by attempting to prove the truth of the event by a miraculous show of power. But such individuals give in to this temptation only because they become genuinely desperate in their preaching, because they begin to *despair* in light of the unavoidable



weakness of the unprovable. Doubting that the truth can do its own work and thus genuinely change the world through its being preached in faith, they cease to hope and only so compromise the event's weak but universal power, "relapsing into the logic of signs and profs."³³

Thus for Badiou, to sum up, genuine faith is "a discourse without proof, without miracles, without convincing signs," a "language of the naked event, which alone captures thought."³⁴ In a word, faith is what it is precisely because it is *evental*. The constitutive anchor of genuine faith is always the event, the happening that proceeds without regard to the totalizing laws, scientific as much as political, imposed on the world in the name of knowledge.

Faith, then. But what of *Mormon* faith? How does the faith articulated by Badiou's analysis of Paul map onto the Mormon experience, and how might Badiou's careful reading help to articulate the notion of faith embodied in Mormon history?

The Complex of Mormon Faith: The Four Discourses of Mormonism

At the very least, there are strong parallels between Badiou's exposition of Pauline faith and the notion of faith in Mormonism. Indeed, when Badiou says, concerning the evental nature of faith, that "there invariably comes a moment when what matters is to declare in one's own name that what took place took place, and to do so because what one envisages with regard to the actual possibilities of a situation requires it,"³⁵ the Latter-day Saint is immediately reminded of Joseph Smith's history recorded in the Pearl of Great Price, where the Prophet dares to compare himself to Paul:

I have thought since, that I felt much like Paul, when he made his defense before King Agrippa, and related the account of the vision he had when he saw a light, and heard a voice; but still there were but few who believed him; some said he was dishonest, others said he was mad; and he was ridiculed and reviled. But all this did not destroy the reality of his vision. He had seen a vision, he knew he had, and all the persecution under heaven could not make it otherwise; and though they should persecute him unto death, yet he knew, and would know to his latest breath, that he had both seen a light and heard a voice speaking unto him, and all the world could not make him think or believe otherwise. So it was with me. (JS-History 1:24-25)

The passage is striking not only because of Joseph's subjective fidelity to an event that is ultimately "without proof or visibility,"³⁶ but because Joseph only inscribed it *eventually*, at that moment that, as Badiou says, "invariably comes . . . when what matters is to declare . . . that what took place took place . . . because what one envisages with regard to the actual possibilities

of a situation *requires it*.”³⁷ As Joseph himself put it, “I have been induced to write this history, to . . . put all inquirers after truth in possession of the facts . . . [and] I shall present the various events in relation to this Church, in truth and righteousness” (Joseph Smith—History 1:1–2).

Moreover, as Jon Duncan notes in his study of discourses in early Mormonism, Joseph Smith employed a “prophetic discourse” that subtracted itself from the play of the two dominant discourses in nineteenth-century America: “Speaking for God, the Mormon prophet could be anti-democratic or anti-republican”; if Joseph “could speak with a republican tongue,” he just as well “could act in a democratic fashion.”³⁸ That is, because Joseph Smith’s prophetic discourse was neither constitutively liberal nor constitutively conservative, it seems to have operated with a kind of indifference to the difference between these two prevalent political discourses. Neither conservative nor liberal, early Mormon discourse as embodied in the Prophet Joseph Smith can be viewed as an always-third discourse, prepared at once to speak from within the situation of its present and yet always otherwise than the two political discourses that seem to situate that present as such.³⁹

Of course, enemies of early Mormonism had a name for this tertiary position: fanaticism. By far the most consistent complaint about the Mormons during their stays in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois was that they were deluded enough to believe in absurd spiritual gifts, uniquely bestowed miraculous powers, and the like. In Badiou’s terms, Latter-day Saints were seen from the very beginning, not as having taken up a third, essentially universal, discourse, but as having taken up a *fourth*, essentially mystical, discourse of the miraculous, the mysterious, and the unutterable. But Joseph Smith, just as much as Paul, was concerned about the danger of compromising the genuine universality of the discourse of faith by appealing to the miraculous or the mystical. He warned concerning the gift of tongues, for example: “You may speak in tongues for your own

comfort but I lay this down for a rule that if any thing is taught by the gift of tongues, it is not to be received for doctrine.”⁴⁰ Or again, he said concerning visions and the like: “When you see a vision &c pray for the interpretation if you get not this, shut it up.—There must be certainty in this matter.”⁴¹ It must therefore be admitted that, although Joseph

A First Comparison with Mormonism

Republican discourse	Greek/Stoic discourse
Democratic discourse	Jewish discourse
↔	
Mormon discourse	Christian discourse
Fanatical discourse	Mystical discourse

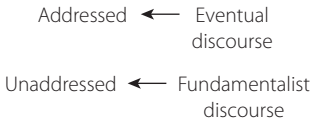
Smith's enemies consistently claimed that Mormonism could subtract itself from the play of the two dominant political discourses of the nineteenth century only through a retreat into mysticism, Joseph Smith himself was careful to instruct the Saints not to make such miraculous displays a part of their faith.

Taking these details together, then, it seems at the very least that Mormonism complements Pauline faith as Badiou reconstructs it, that Mormon discourse is indeed an evental discourse.⁴² And what would seem, then, to make Mormon discourse unique among other possible evental discourses—ranging from religious convictions like Christianity to revolutionary political movements like Marxism—is the specific event or events to which it declares fidelity. Inasmuch as Mormonism is called into its very existence by the series of revelatory events that mark its beginnings, its uniqueness among evental discourses is a question of the consequences it draws in its faithfully pursuing the implications of those events. And so, at the very least, it would seem that to be Mormon would be simply to act in fidelity to the founding events of Mormonism—the angelic visitations, the bestowal of lost keys, the translation and transcription of unknown or new scripture, and so on.⁴³

However, it seems to me that fidelity to founding events is not, in the end, so simple with Mormonism. While this fidelity might have been simple before about 1835, it has never been so since. With the remainder of this paper, I will suggest a complex of *four* intertwined discourses of Mormonism, all rooted in the event but not all, strictly speaking, evental. To some extent, my argument is that once evental discourse genuinely emerges as a third-but-not-fourth discourse in a situation already polarized—so far, so Badiouian—it has the power to *redeem* the other three discourses that make up a situation, to reorient or even to recode these other discourses so that they become a part of a somewhat complex quadrangle of discourses that are, all taken together, unquestionably faithful, hopeful, and charitable. If with this idea of redeemed discourses I can be accused of breaking with Paul's and Badiou's *neither/nor* ("neither Jew nor Greek," says Paul in Galatians 3:28), let me respond by saying that I do so by taking up Nephi's and Joseph Smith's *both/and* ("both Jew and Gentile," says Nephi in 2 Nephi 26:33). And perhaps it is uniquely Mormon to see the event, not so much as calling for this world to *pass away* (as, perhaps, in 1 Corinthians 7:31), but rather as opening up the possibility of *redeeming* the world that the faithful intend to inherit (as, perhaps, in D&C 88:18–20).

At any rate, I will lay out the four discourses of Mormonism through a review of the early history of the Restoration.

Before 1835



Before 1835, Mormon discourse was, it seems to me, relatively Pauline (in Badiou's sense). The Saints, in their fidelity to at least the event of Moroni's appearance to Joseph Smith,⁴⁴ took up a discursive position that was neither Catholic nor Protestant, neither religiously conservative nor religiously liberal. And paired with their *addressed* eventual discourse was, as the historical record shows,⁴⁵ an *unaddressed* discourse essentially parallel to Paul's mystical or unutterable discourse, which I will here call fundamentalist discourse.⁴⁶ It thus appears that Mormonism was, up until about the publication of the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, divided between two discourses: one addressed, offering to *any* (who had ears to hear) a scriptural hermeneutic grounded in fidelity to the founding events of the Restoration; and one unaddressed, that of tongues and prophecies, as well as rods and stones.

Changes, however, began to come starting in 1833, though these changes only came to full fruition, I would argue, in 1835. Precipitating the changes was the wholesale ejection of the Latter-day Saints from Jackson County after native Missourians became alarmed by what they perceived to be the Mormons' attitude toward slavery. In response to the crisis, as Richard L. Bushman helpfully summarizes, "The conflict in Missouri changed Joseph's politics dramatically. For the first time, government figured in his thought as an active agent. . . . From then on, Joseph was never far removed from politics."⁴⁷ When a revelation came in December of 1833 in response to the violence the Missourians had used to force the Saints out of Jackson County, it spoke openly of the inspiration behind the United States Constitution and enjoined the Saints to seek redress from the government.⁴⁸

More important, perhaps, was the revelation that came in the following February, calling for the organization of Zion's camp (D&C 103). Marching with between one and two hundred men, Joseph Smith led the "armies of Israel" to what his companions believed was to be a battle for the redemption of Zion. When in June of 1834, while camped only a short distance from Missourians who were quite as prepared to fight as the armed Saints, Joseph Smith received a revelation that the Saints were to "wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion" (D&C 105:9). In addition to eventual and fundamentalist discourse, a third, essentially *political*, Mormon discourse was effectively constructed, and that *by revealed commandment*. The vital passage from the revelation runs as follows:

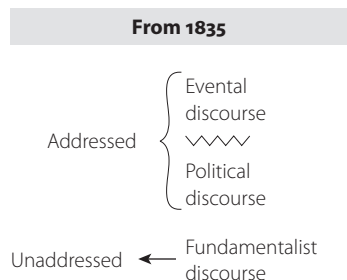
And let all my people who dwell in the regions round about be very faithful, and prayerful, and humble before me, and reveal not the things

which I have revealed unto them, until it is wisdom in me that they should be revealed. Talk not of judgments, neither boast of faith nor of mighty works, but carefully gather together, as much in one region as can be, consistently with the feelings of the people; And behold, I will give unto you favor and grace in their eyes, that you may rest in peace and safety, while you are saying unto the people: Execute judgment and justice for us according to law, and redress us of our wrongs. Now, behold, I say unto you, my friends, in this way you may find favor in the eyes of the people, until the army of Israel becomes very great. (D&C 105:23–26)

The revelation commanded the Saints, as it were, to bracket both eventual and fundamentalist discourse when speaking with their neighbors. Peace and settlement, it seems, are impossible when one preaches to the locals with unsettling fidelity to the founding events of Mormonism.

But what must not be missed here is that this political discourse, even as it seems to have involved a kind of willful discursive suspension of belief, was given to the Saints precisely in order to ensure that their eventual fidelity was *not* compromised. That is, it seems at least in part to have been intended to keep the Saints from allowing their militant fidelity to translate into military action—something that would not only have compromised the faith itself, but that would likely have led to the annihilation of the Saints.

The importance of this adjustment to Mormonism in 1834 for making sense of the difficulties the Saints faced from 1834 to 1838 cannot be overstated. One of the effects of the revelation of June 1834 was that *addressed* Mormon discourse was effectively split in two, and though the revelation, wisely followed, might have reduced the threat of external conflict, the sudden implicit contradiction between two public faces of Mormonism immediately led to serious internal conflict. Some members of the Church detected in the introduction of an alternative discourse a kind of concession to American ideologies. Others, quite comfortable with the public acceptability of a political Mormon discourse, seem to have begun to harbor hope that the Church might be rid once and for all of what they regarded as its embarrassing earlier fanaticism. Because its addressed discourse had suddenly become divided, it became possible for the Saints to divide themselves into two rival camps, those committed to eventual-and-fundamentalist discourse alone, and those committed to political discourse alone. And of course it was not long before Saints began apostatizing in the name of one or the other of these rival camps. David Whitmer and



Oliver Cowdery, for example, both left the Church in 1838, though each for different reasons: Whitmer claimed, in so many words, that the Church had effectively abandoned evental and fundamentalist concerns, while Cowdery loudly announced that the Church was compromising his right to political discourse.

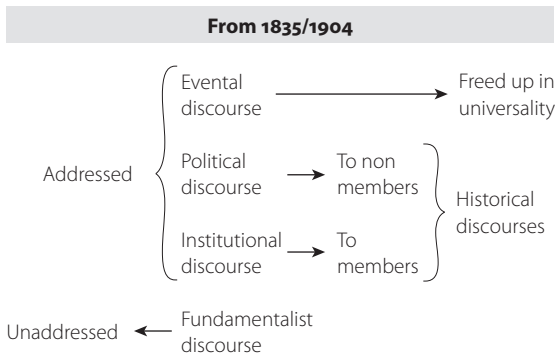
Of course, in the end, both rival positions make the same mistake: both renege on their commitment to *faith*. The appeal to Christian primitivism alone reduces Mormonism to a kind of fundamentalism, while the appeal to American political concerns alone reduces Mormonism to a kind of ecumenism.

But what is it about the introduction of the political into Mormon discourse that profoundly unsettles it? The answer, it seems to me, is that political discourse effectively de-universalizes Mormonism by giving it a particularist voice. That is, while the introduction of political discourse gave the Church a place in the world as a church, it could only do so by making a self-contradictory move: political discourse can only affirm the truth of the Church by denying its uniqueness, by making it one of so many churches rather than a genuinely universal movement. Political discourse effectively historicizes the founding events of Mormonism, instead of allowing all of history to be rewritten in light of those events. Political discourse might, for this reason, just as validly be given the title of apologetic discourse. While evental discourse offers a testimony that is unapologetically faithful to the *event*, the apologist can only testify to the truth of the *church*, of the historiopolitical entity that is the ecclesiastical unit.

Might it then be suggested that tension arises between evental and political discourse only when Latter-day Saints fail to distinguish between history and the event? A rivalry takes the place of the complementarity of these two addressed discourses of Mormonism precisely when one decides that only history or only the event deserves attention. But what could secure the difference between history and the event?

Here it is necessary to identify a fourth Mormon discourse, an *institutional* discourse. One could argue that it began to emerge as early as 1829 or 1830, when plans were first made—by revelation—to establish an ecclesiastical organization, but it seems to me that it did not really fully emerge until 1835, when it was confirmed by the official publication of the Doctrine and Covenants, the organization of the priesthood quorums, and the preparation of the Kirtland Temple and its ordinances. Even then, it did not have the full stabilizing effect that it could or should have had: it would not really be until 1904—when the so-called “Second Manifesto” was issued and the “modernization” of Mormonism was completed—that the institutionalization of the Church would fully stabilize it.⁴⁹

But how does the addition of institutional discourse—the discourse of policies and counsel, the discourse of official declarations and First Presidency statements, the discourse of correlated manuals and highly structured auxiliary organizations—secure the distinction between history and the event? It seems to me that it does so by taking up a very particular relationship with political discourse. Inasmuch as political Mormon discourse is the discourse of member-to-nonmember, institutional Mormon discourse is clearly the discourse of member-to-member. And once these are paired, historical Mormon discourse is totalized: When member-to-nonmember discourse is coupled with member-to-member discourse, it would appear that everyone has been addressed, and nothing else remains to be said. And this in turn allows for the subtraction of the event from history and eventual discourse from historical Mormon discourse, effectively handing the event over to eventual discourse alone. In essence, the stable coupling of political and institutional Mormon discourses allows eventual Mormon discourse to be addressed without respect to the addressee’s relationship to (membership in) the Church and so restores to it (as a discourse that entirely ignores the member/nonmember difference) its universality.



Mormonism thus seems to be a complex of four structurally distinct but intertwined discourses. Where any one of these is privileged, faith is compromised: a privileging of the miraculous leads to fundamentalism; a privileging of the eventual leads to fideism; a privileging of the political leads to historicism; and a privileging of the institutional leads to Pharisaism. But where all four of these discourses are balanced and held in their inspired and, indeed, revealed positions, Mormonism proceeds faithfully with regard to, hopefully in light of, and charitably by its confidence in the founding events of the Restoration.

Here I come back, briefly, to the idea that the eventual discourse, within the Mormon experience, seems to redeem the other three discourses—to, as I said before, reorient or even recode these other discourses so that they become parts of a somewhat complex quadrangle of discourses that are, all taken together, unquestionably faithful, hopeful, and charitable. It is not difficult to see how the Mormon political discourse functions as a kind of

redeemed Greek discourse, presuming with the latter that there are faithful reasons, at times, to speak the language of a fully intelligible cosmos, to presume a common historicopolitical ground in order to keep the peace. And it is not difficult to see how the Mormon institutional discourse functions as a kind of redeemed Jewish discourse, taking the Church as unique, as privileged, or even as made up of the chosen or at least foreordained, but all this without pretending to prove the truth of the Church to outsiders by appeal to miracles or signs. And it is still easier to see how the Mormon fundamentalist discourse functions as a kind of redeemed mystical discourse—talk of revelations, miracles, and signs that have followed faith—though such talk remains always private. To embrace eventual discourse without reserve, it seems, is to keep all of Mormonism’s discourses in their proper places, keeping political discourse quite distinct from institutional discourse, eventual discourse from fundamentalist discourse, and so on.

Interestingly, one might well argue that the same redemption of discourses is at work in the writings of Paul himself, not only in Mormonism.⁵⁰ Indeed, this would be a good way of making sense of the literature

Badiou’s Paul and Four Mormon Discourses



that seeks systematically to uncover a strong Greek—and even Stoic—element in Paul’s writings,⁵¹ of the still more extensive (and increasingly popular) literature that seeks systematically to uncover Paul’s essential Jewishness,⁵² and of the somewhat dated but still important literature that seeks systematically to uncover Paul’s involvement

in mysticism.⁵³ It may be that Paul himself embraced a quadrangle of redeemed discourses, and that when he described himself as being “made all things to all men, that [he] might by all means save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22), he meant to point out precisely that every “fallen” discourse could be redeemed if it were oriented by the anchor of eventual discourse. If this is right, it is something Badiou himself apparently misses.

Conclusion

I would like to come back to my original question: What does it mean to be Mormon? The strictly theoretical shape of an answer to this question

has, I think, become clear through this analysis. Recognizing that fidelity can be compromised as much by the temptation to fideism as by the temptations to Pharisaism, to ecumenism, and to fundamentalism, the faithful Mormon would be, in my reading, someone who is (1) faithfully dedicated to the unique events from which Mormonism takes its bearings, (2) consistently—but privately—exercised by the gifts of the Spirit, (3) always prepared to strike an apologetic figure when necessary to avoid compromising the force of the truth, and (4) vigilantly aware of the crucial importance of the institutional Church for the furtherance of the work. It is, perhaps, a delicate balance, one that is to be maintained through the rigorous embrace of faith, hope, and charity.

How each Latter-day Saint will weave together these three “theological virtues” in the tapestry of her or his own life, of course, remains a question *always* to be answered.

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1. It may potentially be a problem for my account here that by “Mormon” I have reference only to Mormonism as it revolves around The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, headquartered in Salt Lake City. There are, of course, other Mormonisms, and whether and how my argument bears on them is a question I do not intend to raise here.

2. See Patricia Nelson Limerick, *Something in the Soil: Legacies and Reckonings in the New West* (New York: Norton, 2000), 235–55.

3. Terry Eagleton, *The Gatekeeper: A Memoir* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2001), 148.

4. Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, trans. Ray Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 1.

5. Other studies often coupled with Badiou’s are Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia Dailey (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); and Slavoj Žižek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003).

6. Adam Miller, *Badiou, Marion and St Paul: Immanent Grace* (New York: Continuum, 2008), 151.

7. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 1.

8. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 2, 5, emphases added.

9. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 4.

10. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 14.

11. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 4–15. For more on Badiou’s understanding of the philosophical task set for the twenty-first century by the twentieth century, see Alain Badiou, *The Century*, trans. Alberto Toscano (Malden, Mass.: Polity Press, 2007).

12. It is worth pointing out as well that Badiou’s book has been recognized by scholars working in the field of Pauline studies. At a conference organized by John Caputo at Syracuse University in 2005, several eminent Paul scholars—including, most notably, E. P. Sanders and Dale Martin—were invited to respond to Badiou’s work. Though they did offer a few important criticisms, the respondents agreed that Badiou’s work presents a responsible and productive, if nonetheless philosophical, reading of Paul’s texts. See John D. Caputo and Linda Martin Alcoff, *St. Paul among the Philosophers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

13. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 40–54.

14. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 40, emphasis in original.

15. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 41, emphasis added.

16. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 41, emphasis added.

17. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 41, emphasis added. Stoicism was, of course, the dominant philosophy of the Hellenized world in which Christianity was born.

18. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 41, emphasis added.

19. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 41–42, emphases added.

20. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 42.

21. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 42, emphasis added.

22. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 42.

23. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 42, emphasis added.

24. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 45.

25. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 45, emphasis added.

26. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 45.

27. Latter-day Saints often talk about faith as if it were a question of the *future*, of committing oneself to the idea that this or that thing *will* happen. I suspect that this misunderstanding is rooted in a poor reading of Alma 32:21, where Alma explains that “if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true.” It should be noted that Alma does not, as is often said, here provide a “definition” of faith. Rather, he explains that faith is never uncoupled from hope (just as it is never uncoupled from charity) without ceasing to be faith (not “faith is hope” but “if one *has* faith, *one [also] hopes*”). For Alma, faith, as a relation to the *past*, is inevitably tied to hope, the corresponding relationship of the faithful person to the *future*. As both the New Testament and the Book of Mormon also make clear, faith and hope are not without charity, which is a question of the faithful, hopeful person’s relationship to the *present*.

28. Note that Badiou, in another of his books, works out an entirely secular interpretation of these three temptations as the three definitions of evil for an ethics of truth. See Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. Peter Hallward (New York: Verso, 2001).

29. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 51.

30. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 51.

31. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 52, emphasis in original.

32. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 53, emphasis in original.

33. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 53. In 1 Corinthians 1:21, for instance, Paul speaks of the “foolishness of preaching.”

34. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 53. Badiou stigmatizes Blaise Pascal (in the *Pensées*) as the embodiment of such a relapse. See Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 47–54.

35. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 44.

36. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 45.

37. Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 44, emphasis added.

38. Jon M. Duncan, “Multiple Discourses in Early Mormon Religion” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1998), 47.

39. Thus what, for example, in Nauvoo from the outside inevitably appeared as so many “political vacillations,” as so many “switching[s] from the Democrats to the Whigs and back again,” might be said in the end to have actually been merely the surface manifestations of Mormonism’s commitment to an event—or a whole series of events—that they believed had universal implications, regardless of political bipartisanship. See Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Knopf, 2005), 508.

40. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 119.

41. Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 12.

42. It is of (likely no more than) passing interest that in their introduction to Badiou’s *Infinite Thought*, Oliver Feltham and Justin Clemens say, regarding Badiou’s understanding of subjectivity, “[Badiou’s thought] has a dangerous ring, and one could be forgiven for comparing it at first glance to Mormon doctrine.” Alain Badiou, *Infinite Thought: Truth and the Return to Philosophy*, trans. Oliver Feltham and Justin Clemens (New York: Continuum, 2003), 7.

43. Adam Miller has spoken—and, importantly, in connection with Badiou—of the “uniquely Mormon event” (which he identifies, along with Badiou and Paul, as the Resurrection of Jesus Christ). He also states that Mormonism is “an entirely unique inflection of the event of Christ’s love into the profoundly new figure of the family.” I remain (after many conversations and much reflection) unsure about how my own conception of this event or these events maps onto his. See Adam Miller, “The Gospel as an Earthen Vessel,” *Element: A Journal of Mormon Philosophy and Theology* 1 (Fall 2005): 56–58.

44. Little, if anything, seems to have been said before 1835 among the Latter-day Saints generally concerning the First Vision and the visits of John the Baptist and Peter, James, and John. Before the happening of those events became public knowledge—and before they became veritable evental cornerstones of the Restoration—it seems that *the* event on which Mormon fidelity was based was what might be called the “Book of Mormon event.” On the importance of *this* event for early Mormonism, see Jan Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 51–55; James B. Allen, “The Significance of Joseph Smith’s ‘First Vision’ in Mormon Thought,” *Dialogue* 1, no. 3 (Autumn 1966): 29–45.

45. The most revealing record on this point is perhaps Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Far West Record: Minutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983).

46. I choose the name “fundamentalist” discourse in part because it is precisely fundamentalism that results from the isolation or misappropriation of this discourse.

47. Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 226.

48. This is now section 101 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

49. The framework of the four discourses of Mormonism actually calls for a rereading of both nineteenth-century Utah Mormonism and the transition Mormonism made in the first decades of the twentieth century. Such a study, however, would have to be undertaken at greater length and, so, elsewhere.

50. Indeed, one might even call for an explicitly Mormon reading of Paul. Lamentably, studies of Paul are few and far between in the Latter-day Saint tradition. In the vein of my own philosophically/theologically inflected interests are James E. Faulconer, *Romans 1: Notes and Reflections* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999), a volume that is soon to be succeeded by a revised and greatly expanded version entitled *Romans 1, 5–8: Notes and Reflections on the Life of Holiness*, at press with the Maxwell Institute in 2011; and Miller, *Badiou, Marion and St Paul*. More representatively LDS approaches to Paul can be found in Sidney B. Sperry, *Paul's Life and Letters* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955); Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983); Paul Y. Hoskisson, ed., *The Apostle Paul: His Life and His Testimony: The 23rd Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994); and, with a more heavily doctrinal orientation, Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973). In addition to these standard LDS approaches to Paul, more recent studies from LDS New Testament scholars deserve particular mention: Thomas A. Wayment, *From Persecutor to Apostle: A Biography of Paul* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006); and Richard Nietzel Holzapfel, Eric D. Huntsman, and Thomas A. Wayment, *Jesus Christ and the World of the New Testament* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006).

51. See, most notably, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2000). See also relevant studies of Paul's relationship with Roman politics, for example: Richard A. Horsley, ed., *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press, 2000).

52. See Krister Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976); E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1977); W. D. Davies, *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984); and, more recently, N. T. Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005) and James D. G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul* (Grand Rapids: Erdmans, 2005).

53. The definitive study is Albert Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, trans. William Montgomery (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1998).

“With the Voice Together Shall They Sing”

Laurence Paul Hemming

My title comes from the Book of Mormon,¹ from the words of Abinadi speaking of those who will receive the message of the resurrection and how the message of salvation shall be declared “to every nation, kindred, tongue and people” (Mosiah 15:28): in other words, to the whole world. That message will culminate in unity and song, the fruition of Zion.

One of my first encounters with the depth and clarity of Latter-day Saint scholarship came about when the Society of St. Catherine of Siena, an organization committed to the renewal of the intellectual tradition in Catholic Christianity (and of which I am one of the founders), invited Professor John Welch of Brigham Young University to be a respondent for the small launch conference we had organized in March 2008 in London for Dr. Margaret Barker’s then recently published *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*.² The Society of St. Catherine of Siena has, for some time, taken a strong interest in Margaret Barker’s work, for reasons not dissimilar to those that have attracted the attention of many Latter-day Saints. Like your own, Catholicism is above all a Temple tradition, although all too few Catholics are really aware of what that means. When I was first studying the liturgy of the Catholic Church in preparation for ordination, we were routinely taught that Catholic worship originated in the Jewish synagogue.³ Nothing

1. Mosiah 15:29: “Yea, Lord, thy watchmen shall lift up their voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”

2. Margaret Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship* (London: T and T Clark [Continuum], 2007).

3. This view is routinely repeated in many sources. See, for example, the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* (New York: Benziger Bros., 1917), s.v. “Christian Worship”; “Worship, Christian,” in “Catholic Encyclopedia,” <http://newadvent.org/cathen>.

Laurence Hemming is a devout Catholic who appreciates the value of worship through the repeated expression of sacred texts and songs. As a member of the London Temple Studies group, he is a friend to many Latter-day Saints who share his interest in understanding and preserving the ancient roots of temple service, recognizing that the music of the Psalms was an important part of sacred worship in the Temple of Solomon and before.

In the Catholic tradition, music draws the soul toward heaven by opening spiritual meanings behind the literal meanings of a text. In the medieval era, this worked in several ways. For example, the Cistercians simplified their worship music and architectural style, as Dr. Hemming discusses, in search of clarity and purity. At the same time, the choirmaster at Notre Dame in Paris, Léonin, and his successor, Pérotin, succeeded in weaving so many extra notes and interlaced voices into the vocalization of each syllable of the mass that it required several minutes to chant a single word (as in *Viderunt Omnes* by either composer). Their point was to invite the human imagination to engage and interact with the divine word, one syllable at a time. The same enterprise governed the elaborate surface decoration of cathedrals and the intricate illumination of manuscript pages. Under the church's direction, architects, composers, and artists represented the glory of the "Word made flesh" by filling every square inch, every sung phrase, and every blank margin with material for contemplation, prayer, and worship.

As Dr. Hemming proposes in his essay, the antecedents for these medieval practices extend back to the first two centuries of Christianity. The emphasis on the Psalms as the source for many of the earliest known sung forms of worship in the outer courts of the Temple in Jerusalem unveils a possible link (direct or indirect) between sacred music today and temple worship in the time of Christ and even earlier.

Indeed, the reverberations of songs of the heart are everlasting. Dr. Hemming quotes Abinadi in his title, but he could easily have referred to a host of LDS scriptures as well: "Their souls did expand, and they did sing redeeming love" (Alma 5:9); "how blessed are they, for they shall sing to his praise forever" (Mosiah 18:30); "for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done" (Moroni 6:9); "yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me" (D&C 25:12); and all "shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and shall see eye to eye, and shall lift up their voice, and with the voice together sing this new song" (D&C 84:98).

Sacred worship and temple service invites participants to interact with the "conversation" of the service, and the Psalms and other devotional music can draw righteous souls into divine conversation. As Hemming says, "The human voice takes up the song the Lord has given to renew creation."

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could be further from the truth. Our physical churches, consecrated to the Lord by rites some of whose origins appear to predate Christianity and are rooted in the history of Israel,⁴ are not themselves exactly temples; rather, they are meant to indicate and make present the heavenly Temple, the Temple of the New Jerusalem, here on earth, whenever the sacred rites of

Margaret Barker has a summary of these views in *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*, 19f. If we find Gregory Woolfenden writing, "The idea that we can trace a direct line between synagogue worship and that of the early church is now largely abandoned," the idea is remarkably stubborn, and the consequences of abandoning it have resulted in even more misinformation. G. W. Woolfenden, *Daily Liturgical Prayer: Origins and Theology* (Farnborough, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 4. Compare Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (1984; repr., Collegeville, Minn.: Pueblo, 1992), 58, where he speaks of the first service of the day in Christian churches occurring "as in the synagogue," or the claim that for the earliest times "the synagogue form became the basic order of worship for the Christian Church." Benjamin D. William and Harold Anstall, *Orthodox Worship: A Living Continuity with the Synagogue, the Temple, and the Early Church* (Minneapolis: Light and Life, 1990), 14.

Too many authors, of whom these are not the most egregious examples, if they have shifted the emphasis of the origins from the synagogue, have done so to the domestic space, rather than the real source. A typical example of this is Dix, who speaks of the Eucharist in two halves, the synaxis, springing from the root of "the Jewish synagogue service," and the Eucharist proper, which was based on Jewish domestic practice. Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (1945; repr., London: A and C Black, 1986), 36, 52ff.

All of this is represented by the strong view asserted by the exemplary Catholic liturgist Aimé Georges Martimort that "the development of Christian public worship was accompanied by a more or less rapid break with the liturgy of the temple and the observances of the old Law." A. G. Martimort, I. H. Dalmais, and P. Journel, *The Liturgy and Time*, vol. 4 of *The Church at Prayer: An Introduction to the Liturgy*, 4 vols. (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1986), 158. This is reinforced by Mario Righetti, who argues that "the sacrifice of the new law . . . has nothing in common with the ancient sacrificial rites of the Temple," but much of its practices are "derived from the liturgy of the synagogue and rendered Christian with the insertion of new elements." Mario Righetti, *Introduzione Generale*, vol. 1 of *Storia Liturgica*, 4 vols. (1964; repr., Rome: Ancora, 2005), 101; compare also 102 for the development of this argument.

4. See, for a full account of these rites, A. J. Schulte, *Consecranda: The Performance of the Rite of Consecration of the Roman Pontifical*, rev. by J. B. O'Connell (1907; repr., New York: Benziger Bros., 1956). One of the most mysterious of these rites is the marking of the interior with the various alphabets of the liturgical languages (see p. 48) at certain points in the sanctuary and on the altar, with the antiphon "O how much to be feared is this place, truly it is not other than the house of God and the gate of heaven" (*O quam metuendus est locus iste: vere non est hic aliud, nisi domus Dei et porta caeli*) alternated with the verses of the hymn of blessing, known as the *Benedictus* (Luke 1:68–79).

our Church are performed in them.⁵ We hold this belief in common with Orthodox Christians. What happens within our buildings, we believe, has its origins in the Jerusalem Temple. Margaret Barker has helped me see that the restoration of Temple theology that early Christianity understood itself to be was a restoration of the Temple tradition of Solomon's Temple, which was known in Israel before King Josiah made changes implementing the directives found in the book of Deuteronomy.⁶

And here is where I want to begin my conversation with you—for all my dealings with Mormon scholars and scholarship, Latter-day Saint understandings of what you have inherited from the religion of Israel, and what you believe yourselves to be restoring, have much in common—perhaps more than many in either of our religious communities are commonly apt to realize—with Catholic history and doctrine. Our traditions meet (one could say, would need to join counsel), however, on the ground of one of the most opaque and difficult-to-interpret periods of Christian history for all of us: the period of the first hundred to one hundred fifty years of Christianity. In Catholic circles in the last two hundred years, much confusion and inaccuracy has been peddled about this period, more than any other in the history of the Catholic Church: almost all of what even quite educated (and I mean religiously schooled) Catholics believe about this period is all too often derived either from the assumptions of liberal Protestantism, particularly that of the German theologians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries or, worse, from the assumptions of secular scholarship that flow from the Enlightenment and the so-called historical-critical method.⁷

It is here that I find Margaret Barker's work so promising. She shows how scripture, properly read, is conjoined to what we call the patristic period, the period of the most venerated and venerable noncanonical writers of the Early Church. Where the assumptions of modern scholarship

5. Compare John Wilkinson, *From Synagogue to Church: The Traditional Design—Its Beginning, Its Definition, Its End* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002). Based on extensive mathematical research, Wilkinson observes, "Synagogue and church design depended on the heavenly Temple, and the Temple in Jerusalem was based on the heavenly Temple" (1).

6. This is the theme of the whole of Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*, but see especially 65ff. See also Margaret Barker, "What Did King Josiah Reform?" in *Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem*, ed. John W. Welch, David Rolph Seely, and Jo Ann H. Seely (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2004), 523–42.

7. See, for a discussion of this, my book: Laurence Paul Hemming, *Worship as a Revelation: The Past, Present and Future of Catholic Liturgy* (London: Burns and Oates [Continuum], 2008), 71–74.

attest a breach, she argues for an unequivocal unity, even if it is at times difficult to see. Her conclusions have repeatedly been vindicated by the discoveries of Qumran and research into communities like the Essenes. Her claims that Rabbinical Judaism is, to some extent at least, a later reaction to Christianity and so a reworking of Judaism in order to place it outside the bounds of possible continuity with Christianity (and I am not talking of "supercessionism") are now beyond reproach.⁸

In his short but very fine paper delivered on Margaret Barker's book in 2008, John Welch laid down to Margaret what I take to be a characteristically gentle but clear provocation to all non-Mormon Christians when he said, "I would welcome from Margaret a broader definition of the term *worship*. There is no need to limit the domain of Christian worship to the three areas of worship—baptism, Eucharist, and singing." Welch noted that "the word for 'worship' in the New Testament, *latreuo*, also includes within its many meanings prayer, keeping the commandments, missionary work, healing, and confession, and it comprises the whole of Christian existence."⁹

I would be the first to concur that an all too predominant understanding of worship in contemporary Catholicism has been truncated simply to mean attendance at Holy Mass, without any understanding of the whole range of worship provided for by our sacred activities (fasts, missions, confession, penitence, service), above all our liturgy (by which we mean our church services), without which the Mass on its own barely becomes intelligible. What has touched me so deeply about Mormon lives as I have witnessed them lived, by an increasing number of Latter-day Saints whom I am privileged to count as friends, is that they are, in their religious and everyday shape, worshipful. I think this is also true for non-Mormon Christians, but I could not deny that too often there is—especially in the West—a kind of voluntarism about what worship has often come to mean for many of us: "I will choose how I worship, and when," as if worship were a sort of bargain with God: "I've been to Mass and remembered to fast from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, I've 'paid a debt' in God's direction, and I'm free to go about my daily business as I please." Few Mormons into whose lives and families I have been welcomed appear to live like this; far fewer Catholics should.

8. See, for just one example of where she presents this argument, Margaret Barker, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (London, T and T Clark [Continuum], 2003), 299–315 *passim*.

9. John W. Welch, "A Latter Day Reception of *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*," presented at the Temple Themes in Christian Worship conference, March 5, 2008, London, and printed in *FARMS Review* 21, no. 1 (2009): 5.

In the tradition of Catholicism of which I am a part, the celebration of Mass is inserted into eight other discrete events, or “Offices” (*officia*, duties, requirements) of worship every day—this is what liturgy, in practice, means. Worship begins in the night, with the office of Vigils or Matins—which has two different forms, one ordinary, one festal, but comprises many psalms, readings, and responsories, and then culminates with the service of Lauds—praise for the approaching day—which begins with seven psalms and a canticle, the arrangement of which almost certainly predates Christianity and I suspect in part goes right back *into* the Jerusalem Temple.¹⁰ These two services, together with the office of Vespers, celebrated in Near Eastern regions near sunset, and ordinarily before eating or before fasts are broken, every day, comprise the three great daily services of praise which mirror the eternal hymn of praise of the seraphim before the cherubim throne of God.

There are five other daily services of prayer, still kept, with the other three, in the most observant forms of monastic life, and by many of the most observant Catholics: the morning office of Prime (on rising), which, coupled with the evening office of Compline (on going to bed) and the day hours of Terce, Sext, and None coordinated to the third, sixth, and ninth hours of the day (roughly 9:00 a.m., noon, and 3:00 p.m.), are all for the sanctification of daily existence. These services are simpler and comprise psalms that can be learned off by heart (so that they can be recited while working if it is not possible to reach a church or oratory or place of quiet): they are in some ways the more personal prayers of the Christian soul seeking to unite his or her quotidian, ordinary, activity with the Lord. You will see that there are two cycles here: one belongs to the Temple explicitly—the hymn of praise, which is the insertion of the Christian into the service of the angels before the throne, at the center of which is the Mass (but the Mass is only a part of a greater whole), and the second cycle, which *can* be performed in a church, but can just as easily belong outside.

Of course, only monks and nuns and the clergy, people whose time is fully consecrated to God, can really fulfill these two great cycles (corresponding in some ways, perhaps, to your distinction between temple and chapel life), but there are multiple forms of simpler lay pious practices for

10. This cycle has been heavily altered and interrupted in the last one hundred years or so and remains preserved in its full original form in only a handful of Benedictine and similar monasteries. I have traced a narrative of these interruptions in several places, foremost among which is my book *Worship as a Revelation*. See also two works by László Dobszay: *The Bugnini-Liturgy and the Reform of the Reform*, vol. 5, *Musicae Sacrae Meletemata* (Front Royal, Va.: Church Music Association of America, 2003); and *The Restoration and Organic Development of the Roman Rite*, ed. Laurence Paul Hemming (London: Continuum, 2010).

ordinary Catholics, which almost without exception can be shown to have their home and origin over the centuries in one or other of these cycles. We call these "paralitururgical" practices—where *para* is taken from the Greek meaning "alongside," "together with," "trying to be the same as." These cycles, both in their formal, liturgical sense and in pious practice, are modulated through feasts, fasts, penitential seasons, and greater and lesser joys, in a structure which, if truly lived, even at the paralitururgical level, is like the breathing of God: *pneuma*, the breath of the Spirit in the soul of the faithful Catholic.

This is the "whole of Christian existence" to which I think John Welch refers—a life lived within, and outside, the Temple—a life also in the world, if not always of the world. Moreover, in common with Latter-day Saints, the three great worship services of praise can also be performed for the dead, as Holy Mass can be offered for the dead, so that the souls awaiting final judgment can have it accounted to their righteousness that they continued to sing the praises of God even though for a while their mouths were stopped and the tongues that sing those praises are not their own.

I agree entirely with Welch—at least if I can speak for Catholics—that the other things he lists can be accounted as worship (although with some of these I might want to use the other Greek term *doulia*, "veneration," in the rendering of certain servile tasks as service worthy of a life lived in God). Where I want to amplify his remarks is in the exact taxis that he proffered: Eucharist, baptism, singing. Having sung a few Mormon hymns in my time, I might agree with him that singing can occasionally seem a more muted form of worship—and I can supply some contemporary Catholic examples to rival any Mormon examples of muted praise—but I come from a tradition in which every word offered in worship out loud (and some words in our services are to be kept silent, like prayers of consecration, muttered, not because they are secret, but because they are too holy for mortals in ordinary circumstances to utter aloud) is *sung*. We even sing the scriptures, where I come from, in sacred tones that again, I suspect, have Temple roots.

If in Welch's list is confession, I would point him to one of the most beautiful chants in the Roman liturgy—when the deacon (of which I am one), in other words a Levite, sings solemnly the chant *Confiteor*, or *I Confess*, on behalf of the whole people at the Mass of a bishop—or, interestingly enough, before a bishop sings the solemn prayers that lift a sentence of interdict from a city, a land, or a region that has sinned and been successfully called to repentance. Sadly, that tone is heard all too rarely in the modern Catholic Church.¹¹

11. See *Rituale Romanum* of Benedict XIV (1752), *Ritus absolvendi et benedicensi populos et agros ex Apostolicæ Sedis indulto*.

All audible Temple worship for us is better *sung*, which is why the hymns of praise *par excellence* are Temple hymns, psalms—not the metrical commentaries of varying, sometimes questionable, theological value of much contemporary hymnody (in our case at least—I wouldn't presume to speak for yours). The cursus of our vast sacred liturgy is above all psalmodic. This has important consequences for that period of opacity in which I earlier said we Mormons and Catholics need to meet, the period AD 50–200, but more of that shortly. It seems to me that in a dialogue between us—above all a dialogue of listening, of hearing what we share—I could serve you well by introducing to you an aspect of Catholic life which is above all worth listening *to*: our sacred chant. This chant is heard all too rarely in the modern Catholic Church, and yet at one time in the Church's life it was forbidden to celebrate either the Holy Mass or the Offices of praise—Matins, Lauds, and Vespers—unless *all* their audible parts were sung.

Why did we sing as we did? Singing liturgically is a levitical work: for much of the life of the Catholic Church, it was necessary to be ordained, as at least a deacon or subdeacon, to sing. For this reason, women were discouraged from singing in church. Not because their voices were not pleasing, but because they did not hold the priesthood. Even now, a choir, to sing in a Catholic church, *should* be vested in black cassocks (to cloak their as yet unrisen forms) over which they wear white linen surplices or cottas—the heavenly apparel of angels. In her paper on Temple music in 2009 at the Temple Studies Group in London, Margaret Barker noted: “Even before the temple was built, David established musicians to serve before the ark, to invoke, to praise and to thank the Lord (1 Chron. 16:4). Their music was to invoke the divine presence.”¹² Barker adds, speaking of the earliest Church, “*The Christians worshipped in the same way as the temple Levites*. St. John said that the Word ‘tabernacled’ among us and ‘we beheld his glory.’”¹³ Significantly, Barker notes, in the Temple “the Levites, the temple singers, also made atonement, according to Numbers 8:19.”¹⁴

My purpose is not to identify a point of disagreement with John Welch. Rather, I am following a suggestion he himself made in his engagement with Margaret Barker's book: in his concluding remarks on that occasion, he asked what it would mean if we could “imagine enriching hymnody with a theology of the unity and harmony among all the people on earth.”¹⁵ In asking that question, he seems to me to be pointing to

12. Margaret Barker, “An Overview of Temple Music,” presented at Temple Music: Meaning and Influence conference of Temple Studies Group, London, May 2009.

13. Barker, “Overview of Temple Music,” emphasis in original.

14. Barker, “Overview of Temple Music.”

15. Welch, “Latter Day Reception,” 6.

what that verse in the book of Mosiah also points. If we extend hymnody to cover the kind of song that Catholics have understood to be the proper song of Church life, the chants of the liturgy that are above all psalmodic, it should be clear why I am excited by what he asks.

My suggestion is that this is precisely the theology of singing that was for centuries taken for granted, if only ever rarely—very rarely—discussed in the Churches of the East and West who, I would suggest, inherited their theology of worship *as* singing directly from the Temple and embellished it with what they drew from Greek thought. Here I want to set aside for a moment the intriguing suggestion that Pythagoras himself was a student of the First Temple (which would mean that when the Christians of the Middle Ages turned to Pythagoras for amplification of what they were doing, they were, to an extent, *returning* directly to Temple theology as his disciples received it from Pythagoras and transmitted it to subsequent centuries).¹⁶ That is certainly a suggestion worth following up, but here we do not have the time to do it.

You will note that I suggested there are two modes of the voice in such a theology: the sung and the silent (or *sotto voce*). The sung voice invokes the divine presence and places us within it: the lowered voice, therefore, is the counterposition to this, of speaking when already *in* the divine presence, uttering words so holy that the divine presence is perforce presupposed. The one point in the Catholic liturgy when classically the priest or bishop does not speak out loud is in the prayers of blessing and consecration of the Mass, the words that breathe the Spirit *into* us—the words that result in *us* drawing sacred breath.

If the sanctuary of a Catholic or Orthodox church building is meant to represent the *vision* of the holy of holies, it is also meant to render it *audible*. The language of prayer, rendered as singing, breaks the structures of rationality and representation that constitute the human person ordinarily, so that what is produced to be heard and understood is *not* the product of the human will, but the resonance of the human voice through the sung invocation of the divine.

We get a glimpse of what the theology of music and singing was through one of the great moments of musical reform in the Middle Ages. The Cistercian Reform is sometimes understood as a kind of puritanical reform, a proto-protestant moment in the history of the Catholic Church.¹⁷ It was

16. This is an intriguing suggestion of Margaret Barker's. See Barker, *Great High Priest*, 263–64. Barker concludes, "*Most of the evidence for the teachings of Pythagoras shows that it was very similar to what can be reconstructed of the teachings and practices of the first temple priesthood,*" emphasis in original.

17. Martha G. Newman, "Text and Authority in the Formation of the Cistercian Order: Re-Assessing the Early Cistercian Reform," in *Reforming the Church*

arguably nothing of the kind. The emphasis, rather, was to pare back the visual for the sake of the audibility of the divine voice, in the monastic singing of the cycles I have described to you. The musicologist Marcel Pérès has examined in detail the Cistercian musical reforms of the thirteenth century, and from his researches he concludes that “the theoretical preoccupations of the Cistercians were not vain speculations; the intention of the reformers was directed at the incarnation of the Word through the agency of the most basic laws of the resonance of the human voice.”¹⁸ In other words, the coordination of the natural to the supernatural: to place them together at the only point where they could meet. We would otherwise, in Temple theology, call this the Holy of Holies. The Cistercians had a Temple faith.

At the center of the Cistercian reform was an understanding of human being and its relation to God. This understanding was not governed by a modern conception of a spatiotemporal universe (or “individual growth”), but by the ancient cosmology in a musical system that was primarily Pythagorean. In this understanding, the reproduction of certain musical harmonies and relations proportion the human voice and the production of sound to the cosmos as a whole. This understanding was almost entirely lost from the baroque period onward—precisely, in other words, when the so-called Aristotelian cosmos collapsed into the Galilean-Newtonian universe and when all musical relations were mathematically harmonized (that is, when the scale was altered by fractions of a note to eliminate the “Pythagorean comma”) in the baroque period.¹⁹ Long before this, the Cistercians had constituted, by the harmonious collaboration of architecture and sound, an icon of the heavens that was also a figuration of the mystery of salvation and the spiritual reincarnation of the Holy of Holies.

before Modernity: Patterns, Problems, and Approaches, ed. Christopher M. Bellitto and Louis I. Hamilton (Farnborough, UK: Ashgate, 2005), 173–98. Newman both states the more traditional view and modifies it yet further by arguing that the Cistercian reform of the monastic life emphasized what are in fact the surprisingly modern notions of “personal experience and individual growth” (174), which were motivated by “a more general interest in religious experimentation and individual transformation” (175).

18. Marcel Pérès, *Chant Cistercien du XIIIe* (Paris: Fondation, 1992), 3. “Les préoccupations théoriques des cisterciens n’étaient pas de vaines spéculations: les réformateurs avaient pour dessein l’incarnation du Verbe par l’intermédiaire de lois de résonance les plus fondamentales de la voix humaine.” Compare Michel Huglo and Marcel Pérès, *Aspects de la Musique Liturgique au Moyen Age* (Paris: Éditions Créaphis, 1991).

19. For a popular account of this development, see Stuart Isacoff, *Temperament: The Idea That Solved Music’s Greatest Riddle* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), 26–42.

The principles that underlie what Pérès describes were already established in Christian practice: in the first place, the singing of the chant was understood as constitutive of *world as such*, not *a world*, an imaginary place, but the *real cosmos entire*. This is not a world into which a Cartesian agent subject enters from without, from the ideal place of a mental act: a modern self or *I*. Rather, through the work that it undertakes (worship as singing), the participant is disclosed—shown to have become and therefore to be *already* a member of the company of heaven, an angelic figure, which is why the choir should be vested (exactly as Barker notes from the book of Numbers). Singing here is analogous to the unity of the heavens even in their movement—an understanding derived directly from the Pythagorean and ancient understanding of the work of music as reflecting the movement of the heavens, a work that *lifts* the person spiritually and metaphorically into the heavens, and so to the outermost limit of the heavens, from ancient times considered to be the very “seat” of the divine. This is the *performance* of the “anagogical” as that “lifting up,” the saving purpose, which is intrinsic to all worship. We lift up our voices because our voices lift us up: “Yea, Lord, thy watchmen shall lift up their voice,” says Abinadi in the book of Mosiah (Mosiah 15:29).

This viewpoint, derived from pre-Christian antiquity, becomes Christianized in the sense that the heavens are understood as not of themselves eternal (as, for instance, Aristotle had held) but as originating from God. The chanting of the psalms—and the participation in the chants of the Mass—constitutes the form the participant takes within the heavens in his or her relation to the God who alone creates *ab initio*. This form is that of Christ.

In the second place, however, the Cistercian reform aimed to make much more explicit the natural harmony between the heavens and the earth that the atonement in Christ had restored. Pérès makes the point that the great Cistercian abbeys—Fontenay (figs. 1 and 2), Sénanque, Le Thoronet, Fontfroide, and so on—were constructed to possess particular acoustic properties that amplified the human voice in such a way as to add harmonies to it that would not otherwise be apparent to the ear. Pérès adds, “Without recourse to the artifices of polyphony, a single voice or a chorus in unison can produce harmonies that are not the work of the human will, but the effect of the fundamental laws of the vibration of resonant bodies, physical harmony, the impulse of matter that, by means of the absolute logic of its laws, renders the perennality and the magnificence of the thought of God to the human ear.”²⁰

20. Pérès, *Chant Cistercien du XIIIe*, 5. “Ainsi, sans avoirs recours à l’artifice de la polyphonie, voix seule ou chœur à l’unisson peuvent faire entendre des harmonies qui ne sont pas l’œuvre de la volonté humaine mais l’effet des

FIG. 1. (*right*) The nave of the Cistercian abbey church at Fontenay, France, constructed 1139 to 1147. Courtesy Jesse D. Hurlbut. This abbey was constructed to reflect the Cistercian ideals of simplicity and purity as well as to provide the acoustics in which the chanting monks could create harmonics and overtones.



FIG. 2 (*below*) The exterior of the Cistercian abbey at Fontenay, France. Courtesy Jesse D. Hurlbut.



This form of social relation (as an audition of the society of heaven, not earth) makes present and audible (but does not "construct") our common being in God, initiated in baptism, achieved through grace, through the gift of faith and the strenuous perfection of the virtues (the Catholic way of speaking of what John Welch was asking for in a wider sense of worship, I think). This divinized society, as singing-with-others, can never be either egotistical or interpersonal, for *my* singing is never directed towards the *thou* (towards "you") but is always a taking up of words that are presumed really to be a conversation between the Son and the Father, between heaven and earth, into which *we* are to be inserted. We relate to God by singing the words that are exchanged *within* the divine life: we are included in this *through* the Spirit, and so through the relations between Father, Son, and Spirit. This is why *what* we sing must be capable of being read as this conversation: the type of this is the psalms, whose words form the backbone of all liturgical chant.

In the liturgy, as citizens and subjects of the new, heavenly Jerusalem, our true birth (baptism) is itself heavenly: it comes from *above*, and *beyond*, not below, and in the past. It is for this reason that (in except three cases) the Catholic Church celebrates liturgically the day of death of the saints as the "heavenly birthday," not the actual date of physical birth.²¹

The liturgy actually functions by our inserting of ourselves into the words that are already given for us to speak and that we presume are already being passed between the angels. Above all, this is carried out through singing. Singing, not as performance but as chorus—strophe and antistrophe—and song, an activity that entrains us to a kind of *return*, which, in our absorbing it, our making of it our own, and returning it as having been sung, schools us and lets us into participation in the conversation that the liturgy *is*. This is why the sung forms of the liturgy were always the more basic, more ancient, and prior to the said forms. It is also why the communal activity of the liturgy is always prior to any private form. Private recitation of the liturgy is entirely dependent for its meaning

lois fondamentales de vibration des corps sonores, harmonie physique, élan de la matière qui par l'absolue logique de ses lois rend accessible à l'entendement humain la pérennité et la magnificence de la pensée de Dieu."

21. The three cases of the celebration of nativities are those of Jesus, his mother Mary, and St. John the Baptist. In Catholic tradition, Jesus is without sin as Son of God; Mary was preserved from the imputation of sin at her (therefore immaculate) conception, and St. John the Baptist was sanctified (freed from imputation of sin) in the womb, at the moment when Elizabeth and Mary met, and Elizabeth was "filled with the Holy Ghost" (Luke 1:41). These three are all therefore understood to have been born from heaven in advance of their birth on earth.

on the form of public celebration. I would go so far as to say that too much private recitation of liturgical texts has brought with it dangers for us as Catholics for understanding what prayer is at all.

The conversation which the liturgy is, is not less or other than the conversation between the Father and the Son, enacted throughout the cosmos—which is why it cannot be done as something simply “in the heart” (contrary to much modern thought about prayer); it *requires* the gift of the vision of the Temple, a physical building *adequate to the task*, “as a bride adorned for her husband,” as the Catholic liturgy speaks of it on one occasion.²² In liturgical prayer, we are inserted into that conversation. If we make it our own, at the same time we are *constituted* by it—it makes of us what we *really* are to be: heavenly beings.

Here it is important to recall one fundamental aspect of Temple singing that, again, has been much overlooked, especially in contemporary Catholic discussion. If the watchword of much liturgical change and reform in the Catholic Church in recent years has been “sing unto the Lord a new song,” there has been all too little understanding of what this means (compare Psalms 32:3; 39:3; 95:1; 97:1; 144:9; 149:1). In “sing unto the Lord a new song” (Psalms 96, 98, and 149), the Hebrew adjective rendered as “new” is *chadash*. As Margaret Barker has stressed on many occasions, *chadash* does not mean “new” as in “newly made up” (a human creation), so much as “renewing.”²³ The song that is sung to the Lord is the song that is itself the Lord’s song, a song that renews. In the context of the liturgical songs *par excellence*, this means the capacity of liturgical song as a sacred action *itself* to renew and restore creation to its place in and before God: in our case, the restoration of the Christian spirit—again, this is Temple work.

The human voice takes up the song the Lord has given to renew creation. Temple singing (which is what the Hebrew means) both orders the human voice and person to the divinely given cosmos, the whole order of creation, and at the same time renews the whole of creation. Barker notes that “the praises of the earth were vital for upholding the creation. The high priest Simeon, about 200 BC, taught that the creation was sustained by the Law, the temple service and deeds of loving kindness. The music had

22. Revelation 21:2. See *Breviarium Romanum* (1623), Office of the Dedication of a Church, Chapter at vespers and lauds. “Vidi civitatem sanctam Jerusalem novam descendentem de cœlo a Deo, paratam sicut sponsam ornatam viro suo.”

23. Compare Barker, “Overview of Temple Music.”

to be performed at the correct time."²⁴ Temple worship has both proper times and a proper place.

What I have been able to provide only in outline has, I hope, illustrated that worship *without* song is or should be (for Catholics at least) a very strange phenomenon indeed. The Catholic Church's sacred chant, both at the Mass and in the other services of praise, what I referred to earlier as the *Offices*, above all of vigils or Matins, Lauds, and Vespers, is contained in a book that at one time was the *same* book for all four events of worship, called the Antiphonary (fig. 3): the texts overlapped constantly. This remarkable hand-produced text, usually huge and often richly illustrated, possessed by every cathedral and monastery and many larger churches, stood on a large double-sided wooden lectern. Books like this can still be found in use in Orthodox churches. It is often covered in candle-grease from the lights required around it because so much of what was sung from it was sung at night or in twilight and dawn when the light was coming and departing (the proper times), and it supplied the fundamental texts which framed the verses of the psalms and connected them to the liturgical event or "day." This "day" could be a major feast, like Easter, Pentecost, Ascension; a saint's day; the day of a season of penitence (Lent, Advent, the four-yearly "Ember Days" which mark the solstices and equinoxes) or joy (Christmastide); or the "Ferial" (ordinary) days.

The Antiphonary, which has not been produced as a single book since about the fifteenth century, is perhaps one of the most important books of worship the Catholic Church ever had, and yet nowadays it is often the most neglected. The Antiphonary has fundamental connections with that period I keep returning to, the opaque period of Christian life after the death of Christ and before the emergence of the Constantinian settlement. Much of the Antiphonary is itself composed of sections or fragments of scriptural texts. It is, therefore, the juxtaposition of the texts of the Antiphonary with their corresponding psalms which can tell us how the early Church was reading, and so interpreting, the scriptures it possessed.

This text, insofar as it has been known as a *single* book from about the eighth century onwards, has been for us since about the early fifth century entirely in Latin (fig. 4). It is sometimes said in musicological study of the Antiphonary that the text is inseparable from its music, so that what was sung and to what chant melody were inseparable. In fact, this is an oversimplification, although there is a grain of truth in it. The chant of the Antiphonary exists in a series of modes that were codified in the Middle Ages to about eight, plus a ninth, the so-called "wandering" tone or *tonus*

24. Barker, "Overview of Temple Music," citing *Mishnah Aboth* 1:2.

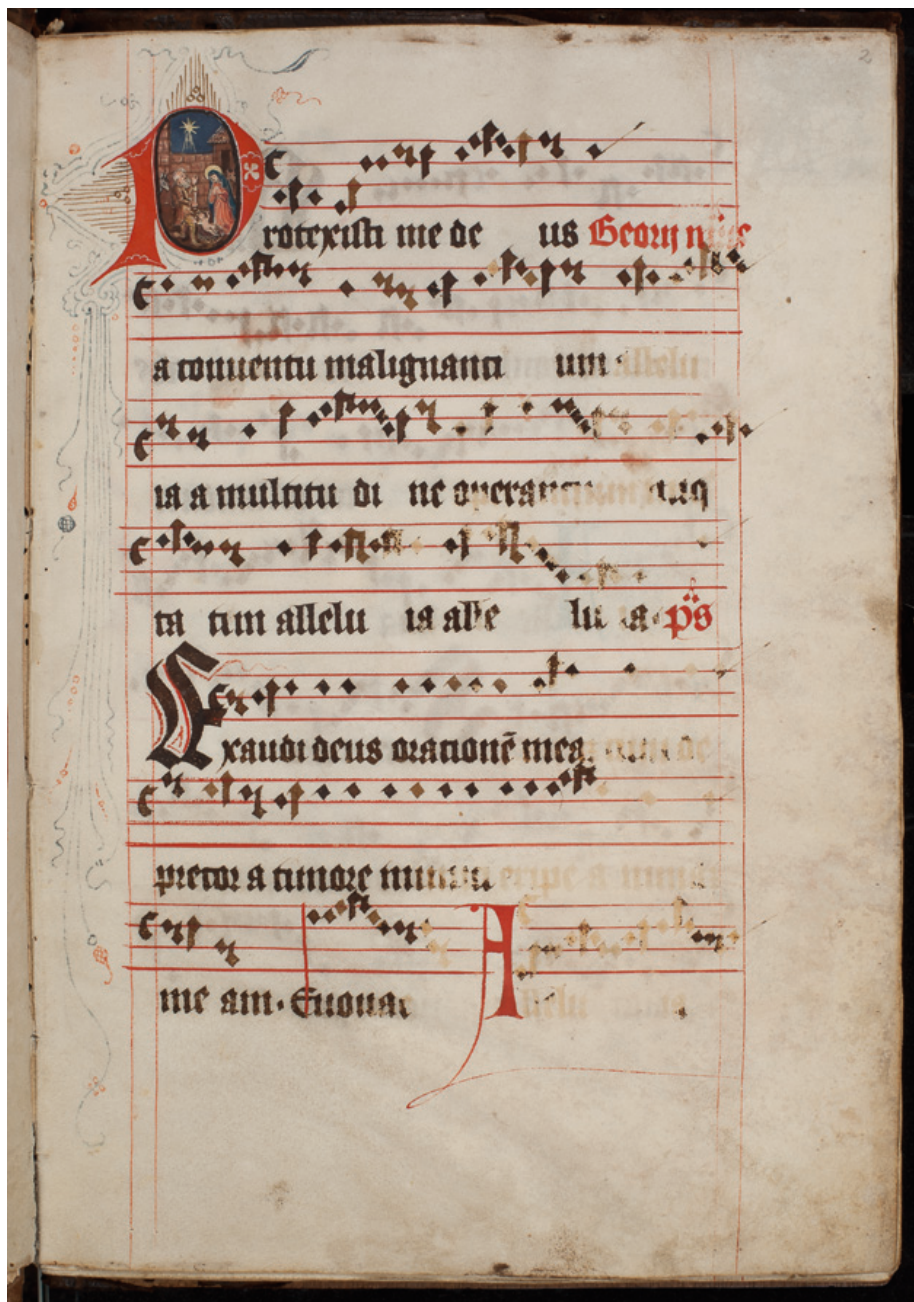


FIG. 3. A page from a Gradual. Late fifteenth century, German, probably used in a monastery. Courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University. Inside the capital P is a decoration of the Nativity. The Gradual, whose content relates to the Antiphony, is the book of Latin text and musical notation used by choirs to perform all the sung pieces of the mass.



FIG. 4. A page from *Missale Pragense*, printed in Nuremberg, Germany, in 1498 by G. Stuchs. Courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University. This book was printed in Germany for use in Prague only a half century after Gutenberg created movable type. The missal is the liturgical book containing all texts, in Latin, necessary for the performance of the Mass.

peregrinus. The Hungarian musicologist László Dobszay, with whom I have worked closely at times, has argued that the *tonus peregrinus* is arguably one of the modes that has the strongest claim to derive directly from the Jerusalem Temple.²⁵ Dobszay exercises a great deal of caution in attempting to trace back into the history of Israel the exact shape and sound of the original chant, and, indeed, it is a hazy and dangerous terrain for those who seek decisive conclusions.

A far more important period for formation of the Antiphonary as we have it in the Western Church is the period culminating in the middle to late fourth century. Those of you who work on the Latin Vulgate will, I hope, be familiar with the name of St. Damasus I, as the Pope who instructed St. Jerome (fig. 5) to translate the scriptures definitively into Latin. St. Damasus is also the Pope who decreed that the entire liturgical texts of the Roman Church should be translated into Latin. A lot has been made of this by recent Catholic scholars.²⁶ You will perhaps be aware that our liturgy was, until 1965, almost exclusively celebrated in Latin. The Second Vatican Council decided that, while Latin should be ordinarily retained, *some* parts of the liturgy could be translated into local vernaculars.²⁷ With the extraordinary gift we Catholics have for throwing the baby out with the bathwater, you would now be hard pressed to find any Catholic liturgical service in the United States that is not either in English or Spanish, but that too is a story for another day.

A major argument given for this change into the contemporary vernacular was the example of St. Damasus's decision in the fourth century. The demotic language of Christians in Rome in the fourth century was not, however, Latin: it was *koinē* Greek. St. Damasus's decree was to take the sacred liturgy and sacred scripture *out* of the vernacular and put especially the liturgy into a high, literary Latin (the Vulgate retains a simplicity and roughness), the central theological terms of which were forged by such

25. László Dobszay, "The Origin of Christian Chant," presented at Temple Music: Meaning and Influence conference of Temple Studies Group, London, May 2009.

26. See, for a full discussion of this, U. Michael Lang, "Rhetoric of Salvation: The Origins of Latin as the Language of the Roman Liturgy," in *The Genius of the Roman Rite: Historical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspectives on Catholic Liturgy*, ed. U. Michael Lang (Chicago: Hillenbrand, 2010), 22–44, esp. 32ff. Lang is heavily indebted to the magisterial work of Christine Mohrmann. See Christine Mohrmann, *Études sur le Latin des Chrétiens*, 4 vols. (Rome: Storia e letteratura, 1961–67).

27. See Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §36.1–3, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 56, 1964, 97–133; p. 109f.



FIG. 5. Saint Jerome, depicted in *Life, Death and Miracles of Saint Jerome*, French, c. 1495–1515. Courtesy L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

figures as St. Jerome, St. Cyprian, and St. Ambrose. I add as an aside that the latter two both were clearly in touch with critically important pseud-epigraphical traditions that, for instance, understood the central importance of the figure of Melchizedek in Christian life and to the meaning of Christian priesthood.²⁸

The point was to produce a sacred idiom, away from the language of the street, a language appropriate for God's address to his people. It is clear that there were already circulating various versions of the scriptures in Latin, what we now call by the generic term the *Vetus Latina*, by the time St. Jerome began his own work of translation, and that these versions were in places being used liturgically, together with texts added to them, that functioned as scriptural commentary. Although the body text of the psalms in the Roman Liturgy was almost invariably taken from the Vulgate of St. Jerome, in fact much of the Antiphonary comes from the *Vetus Latina*, despite the existence of the Vulgate. The reason given for this seems explanatory enough: the musical setting of the text was in place before St. Jerome's Vulgate was completed, and no one wanted to rearrange the melodies—perhaps they had already forgotten how. The texts in question had already been set to the *Vetus Latina*. We know very little about the principles and understanding behind the composition of the chant and how the chant in its different modes was related to the text. László Dobszay in fact rejects that there is, or ever was, a theological connection between certain modes and certain texts—you will recall he also rejects a direct link between text and chant as a unitary form.²⁹

For the word *theological*, however, we should substitute the word *rational*. That we *know* of no *rationale*, no organizing principle or multiple of principles for composition, does not mean there was not one—it simply means it remains arcane. There's that opacity of the first century and a half of Christian life again. Even here, however, things may not be as simple as the kind of historian who can always find a functional explanation for everything would like. Until 1970, many of the Basilicas in the City of Rome had the privilege, which they extracted from St. Damasus I with some determination, it seems, of *not* using the Vulgate psalter for their worship. They used, rather, the Roman psalter that predated it—one of the versions of the *Vetus Latina*. Here the reason can *not* have been musicological. This is because the psalms are sung on set tones derived from each of the Gregorian modes. Although there is an important variety of modes,

28. See, for instance, St. Ambrose, *De sacramentis* 4, 3ff; St. Cyprian, *Epistolæ sancti Cypriani ad Cæcilium*, Epist. 3.

29. Dobszay, "Origin of Christian Chant."

and a multiplicity of variations of the endings of each mode, nevertheless *any* psalm can be sung to *any* mode and *any* termination. The reasons here *must* have been theological.

Rome was inherently theologically conservative, and this is taken almost as a byword in liturgical study. The question (almost never asked) is, why: why the conservatism? Why would there be resistance to St. Jerome's Vulgate psalter? And if the argument over the Vulgate had gradually been lost in the rest of the Church with regard to the psalter, why was it not lost with regard to the texts of the Antiphony, those crucial little bits of commentary on what are above all Temple texts?

My suggestion—and it is only a suggestion—would be that some versions belonging to the *Vetus Latina* preserve important theological matters that were being forgotten by the time of St. Jerome. There were those who knew what was being forgotten, or at least knew there had been a forgetting, and resisted the change. They clung to the record of the Latin translation because it better preserved the Temple tradition that the Early Church had received. There has been far too little study of these important clues, buried in the dense thickets of the material of the Roman Rite.

This is where I want to end—to end, if you like, back at the beginning—with an invitation to you: to “join counsel” with us on that opaque ground of one of the most difficult-to-interpret periods of Christian history, and with a suggestion of one of the ways, for Catholics at least, it could be done: through a careful examination of the texts of our tradition of Temple singing. There is much, I think, we could learn from each other in a restoration of the origins and meaning not only of the sounds, but of the texts of Temple chant.

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FIG. 1. A star-forming region in the gas pillars of the Eagle Nebula. Gas pillars are columns of cool interstellar hydrogen gas and dust that are incubators for new stars. The pillar depicted here is about four light-years long from base to tip.¹ Credit: NASA, ESA, STScI, J. Hester and P. Scowen (Arizona State University).

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Worlds Come and Pass Away

Evolution of Stars and Planets in the Pearl of Great Price?

Hollis R. Johnson

In their role as teachers of the word and will of God, prophets occasionally mention natural processes or phenomena. Often these references are clearly symbolic or figurative, as when the scriptures speak of “the four quarters of the earth” to mean throughout the whole world. A nicely poetic example, “the earth rolls upon her wings” (D&C 88:45) is evocative, but hardly the basis for a scientific expedition to find those wings. Yet the Prophet Joseph Smith produced a significant corpus of writings in which are found statements regarding celestial objects. As an astronomer, I am drawn to ask: Do those statements indicate a correct understanding of nature—perhaps even beyond the science of his day? This article discusses the historical and scientific background of one such statement in the Pearl of Great Price.

Whenever conversations among Mormons turn to astronomy, many think of the Book of Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price, with its fascinating figures and the discussion of governing stars, set times, and a hierarchy of motions. Although that intriguing book is a natural springboard for all sorts of inquiries about history, language, and astronomy, this article focuses on a different part of the Pearl of Great Price, the Book of Moses.

Consider a series of statements written in June 1830 by Joseph Smith as he relived a vision given to Moses and published as chapter 1 of the Book of Moses, a sort of preface to the Joseph Smith Translation of the book of Genesis. Halfway through the chapter, Moses in vision appealed to God as to why he had made “these things” (many lands). Moses stood in the presence of God, and he heard God speak of many worlds:

And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten.

And the first man of all men have I called Adam, which is many.

Hollis R. Johnson

Growing up on a small farm in the Rockies of northern Utah and being an inquisitive lad, I wondered about everything—trees, seeds, clouds, and stars. With such dark and lovely skies, how could a person not be fascinated by the stars? At BYU, I studied chemistry, but after a mission and service in the U.S. Army, and after flirting with archaeology and language, I pursued physics instead. At some point in my college career, I learned that universities actually paid people to study and teach about the stars. That settled the matter, and I have been studying celestial objects ever since.



As a professional astronomer and enthusiastic Mormon, I naturally wondered about the astronomical ideas in the Pearl of Great Price, including the statement that new stars are created as old ones pass away. Modern astrophysics teaches that stars are formed, enjoy an enormously long “summer” as they fuse hydrogen to helium in their core, then undergo major changes as nuclear fuel runs low, and finally fade away (occasionally with grand fireworks). The sun is enjoying its glorious summer, but it will eventually also change and pass through quite different stages before it finally consumes all its nuclear fuel. In collaborative efforts, I was part of a search to find and investigate, with the International Ultraviolet Explorer satellite, certain faint, hot stars—called white dwarf stars—that are the incredibly condensed remnants of most stars. These are stars that have passed through their summer and are now in the final stage of their life; having used up all their nuclear energy, they slowly cool as they radiate away their stores of thermal energy.

Astrophysicists now understand stellar formation and evolution very well, but that knowledge has come for the most part since 1900. What did scientists and ordinary citizens know about star formation and evolution in Joseph Smith’s day? In this article, I investigate and attempt to answer that question.

... For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man; but all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them.

And it came to pass that Moses spake unto the Lord, saying: Be merciful unto thy servant, O God, and tell me concerning this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, and also the heavens, and then thy servant will be content.

And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying: The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine.

And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words.

For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. (Moses 1:33–39)

Since verse 39 outlines the goals of God himself, it is a favorite of many Mormons. Beyond that verse, LDS Church leaders and scholars have traditionally focused their attention on that part of the Moses statement relating to “worlds without number” as expressing the Mormon view that there are many inhabited worlds out in space. This discussion has been comprehensively treated by Erich Robert Paul.² An anthology of statements by LDS Church leaders on almost every verse in the Pearl of Great Price has been given by author H. Donl Peterson.³ Regarding the verses cited above, however, LDS Church leaders (some of those cited or mentioned include James E. Talmage, Marion G. Romney, Orson Pratt, Joseph Smith, Spencer W. Kimball, John A. Widtsoe, Bruce R. McConkie, Parley P. Pratt, Brigham Young, and Joseph Fielding Smith) generally emphasized the content of the scriptures and have focused on the central message that other worlds (stars and planets) were created by God to be inhabited by his children.

Although the possibility of life in other stellar systems is indeed a fascinating topic and has been discussed by several authors, my focus here is on the statement by Joseph Smith that “worlds” come into existence, live for a time, and pass away (or, at least, pass into a different state). How does this statement accord with the astronomical knowledge of Joseph Smith’s day? This article attempts to answer that question.

While one must be careful not to read too much into a short statement, Joseph Smith seems to be taking a grand view of the universe. Although the words “worlds,” “earths,” and “heavens” are used, it is difficult to read this passage as referring to anything but stars and their accompanying planets. At a time when many people assumed stars were unchanging and the frontier of astronomical knowledge involved only the study of stellar

positions and motions and even the basic facts about energy were still uncertain, the Prophet Joseph Smith wrote as Church doctrine of “earths,” “heavens,” and “worlds” coming into existence and passing away. As described in detail later, this statement is arguably the single best evidence that Joseph Smith glimpsed ideas not then clearly understood in the scientific world.

The Heavens Do Not Change

From time immemorial, people imagined that a flat earth sat immovably at the center of creation, and a hemispherical vault arched overhead (fig. 2). Sun, moon, stars, and planets were lights attached to the dome or holes in the dome through which heavenly light shone. As there was no reason to challenge this view, it held sway for ages. Even when, a few centuries before Christ, Greek scholars came to recognize the spherical nature of the earth, it still sat comfortably at the center of the solar system for centuries.

Ancient sky watchers who mastered the movements of the stars and constellations came to be regarded as scholars, priests, or wise men. Planets (literally, “wanderers”), including the sun and moon, presented a sterner test since the planets move slowly among the stars, and fanciful stories grew up in every tribe and clan about them: they were gods, or the abodes of gods, or symbols of gods. In Europe, everyday observations reinforced the teachings of the Christian Church that the heavens were unchanging.⁴ To many people, the heavens were also God’s signboards, on which, through planetary movements and frightening comets, God sent messages (usually warnings) to mortals.⁵

Scholars or priests among the Babylonians, Egyptians, and Chinese carefully recorded the appearance and movements of celestial objects. However, available documents indicate that the Greeks were the first to ponder the mechanisms behind the movements of the celestial bodies; in modern terminology, they were the first theoretical model builders. Some of their speculations were wildly incorrect, but they nevertheless took important steps forward. For example, Eratosthenes (ca. 276–ca. 195 BC) measured the size of the earth; several scholars, among them Heraclides of Pontus (ca. 390–ca. 339 BC), taught that the earth rotated on its axis (instead of the supposed daily rotation of the heavens as maintained by Plato and Aristotle); Aristarchus of Samos (ca. 310–230 BC) estimated the relative distances and sizes of the sun and moon and even dared to suggest the huge, bright sun was the center of the solar system; Hipparchus (ca. 190–ca. 120 BC) actually discovered the precession of the equinoxes (due to the wobble of the earth’s axis); and Ptolemy (ca. AD 90–ca. AD 168) famously attempted (in his *Almagest*) to account for the motions of the planets

through a complicated system of spheres and epicycles (small spheres upon larger spheres).⁶

Aristotle (384–322 BC) summarized Greek thought, and his teachings about nature and the universe held sway for eighteen centuries in Europe, where he was “The Philosopher.” Aristotle divided the world into “terrestrial” and “celestial” realms, the latter consisting of everything outside “the sphere of the moon,” that is, the hypothesized crystal-line sphere that carried the moon in its orbit around the stationary earth. Everything on earth consisted of the four elements—earth, water, air, and fire—while heavenly things consisted of the fifth element, “quintessence.”

Motion arose as elements sought their “natural” places. Comets (and even the sun), Aristotle taught, were terrestrial exhalations that ignited when they reached the celestial sphere.

The works of Aristotle were translated into Arabic and then re-entered Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, where they were amalgamated with Christian theology, most notably by Albertus Magnus (1193/1206–1280) and especially by his most famous student, St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274).⁷ The result, often called scholasticism, came to be accepted almost as scripture. As one source puts it: “It was no fault of the writer [Aristotle] that his books were accorded almost divine authority.”⁸ To oppose Aristotle was to oppose the Roman Catholic Church (as Bruno, with his infinite universe, and Galileo, with his telescopic observations, discovered), and the unchangeableness of celestial objects became an article of faith.

Although Christian theologians had long discussed the attributes of God, on one point most everyone agreed: God is changeless. If God is unchanging, his celestial creations must be unchanging as well. Objects on earth—stones, trees, and humans—naturally change, but heavenly things are as unchanging as is God. So runs the logic. Surely the moon, sun, and planets are unchangeable—they are the epitome of constancy.

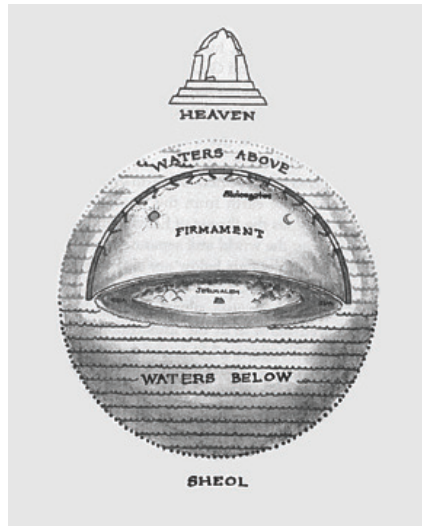


FIG. 2. A depiction of how the ancients imagined creation, with a flat earth in the center and the firmament arched overhead. Courtesy Michael Lyon.

The unchanging nature of heavenly bodies has probably remained the belief of most people from the dawn of human existence. Philosopher-mathematician René Descartes (1596–1650) presented this idea in its extreme form: the immutable nature of God requires that objects he created must also be immutable.⁹ Physicist Timothy Ferris adds, “If we were to express in a single word the principal liability of the prescientific philosophies of nature—if, to put it another way, we were to name the one among their shortcomings that science has done the most to repair—I think it would be that they presumed that the universe was *static*. Many thinkers dismissed change as an illusion.”¹⁰ Large fractions of the population throughout the world and especially in the United States cling to these medieval beliefs: that the earth and heavens were created in the last ten thousand years or so and things have remained more or less unchanged since then.

It may have been William Herschel (1738–1822) who first speculated about the birth of stars. Born in Germany, he became a musician, moved to England to further his career, became interested in astronomy, learned to cast and polish metal mirrors, and constructed the largest and best telescopes then in the world. With the assistance of his remarkable sister, Caroline, Herschel systematically observed the sky, discovered the planet Uranus¹¹ along with several comets, made the first attempt to measure the size and shape of the star system (our galaxy) and studied numerous hazy celestial clouds (nebulae). For the first time, Herschel was able to resolve some of these clouds into clusters of stars, and he at first assumed all were composed of stars. However, even with increasingly powerful telescopes, certain of these fuzzy clouds could not be resolved but remained “shining fluid.” Herschel speculated in 1811 and 1814 that “cloudy” stars might be an early stage of star formation, and these might later condense into stars or star clusters.¹²

Other philosophers and scientists of that day may also have speculated about the lives of stars, but Joseph Smith differed by announcing the coming and going (formation and dying out) of stars as a matter of Church doctrine.

What Is a Star?

To untangle the complicated story of the birth, life, and death of a star and its planetary system, if any, required a good deal of scientific knowledge about the distance, size, mass, temperature, and chemical composition of a star, and that task required decades of effort on the part of many scientists. In 1830, when Joseph Smith wrote what has become chapter 1 in the Book of Moses, there was practically no scientific understanding of these quantities even for the sun, much less the stars.

If the earth moves in an orbit around the sun, its motion must be reflected in a similar slight movement of nearby stars against the distant starry background. Such tiny changes were sought in vain by Galileo (1564–1642), who was therefore unable to answer satisfactorily his critics who maintained the earth was stationary. Finally, in 1838, the German astronomer F. W. Bessel (1784–1846)¹³ was able to measure the apparent movement (called the parallax) of a faint star in the constellation Cygnus. Combining the parallax with the known size of earth's orbit immediately gave the distance to the star. Determination of the distance to other nearby stars continues to the present, for only when the distance is known can absolute quantities such as mass, size, and power output be determined.

On the theoretical side, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) had proposed in 1755 that the solar system originated from a huge gaseous cloud that flattened as it rotated and contracted under natural forces to produce the solar system, and Pierre-Simon de Laplace (1749–1827) made the first dynamical calculation of such a process. Although based on simplified models, these were the first scientific attempts to explain the origin and evolution of the solar system.

Two intertwined problems then stood in the way of further scientific progress on the nature of stars and their life cycles: (1) to discover a star's energy stores and (2) to infer the life story (evolution) of a star. These in turn required (a) an understanding of the nature of energy and its relation to work and heat, (b) a fair estimate of the total power output of the sun and stars, and (c) knowledge of the chemical composition of the stars. These endeavors required decades of research. An understanding of the relations between electrical energy, heat, and mechanical work developed slowly through the period of 1820 to 1850; solar radiation was first measured roughly by 1837 but much more accurately by 1900;¹⁴ and the chemical composition of the sun was discovered through spectroscopy during the period 1860 to 1920. Not until 1869 did the Russian chemist Dmitri Mendelēev (1834–1907)¹⁵ publish the periodic table of the chemical elements, but even that was incomplete. For example, the element helium—crucial for stellar energy production—was first detected in spectral lines of an eclipsed sun in 1868 and was finally found on earth in 1895.¹⁶

It is easy to overlook the fact that astrophysics is a new science, the birth of which is often dated from the advent of quantitative spectroscopy in the early 1900s.

Source of the Sun's Energy

In the century following Newton, a few thinkers wondered whether the energy of the sun might need replenishment from time to time.¹⁷ If

so, one first thought of combustion or other chemical reactions, but this source was shown to be insufficient by the German physician and physicist Julius Robert Mayer (1814–1878), who agreed with others that comets (whose mass was then unknown) and meteorites striking the sun could supply the needed energy.¹⁸

One science historian divides considerations of the sources of stellar energy after Newton into four periods: (1) from Newton to about the middle of the 1800s, during which time a few thinkers wondered about possible sources for replenishing the sun's energy, should they be needed; (2) an understanding of energy and the conservation of energy, put forward in the 1840s and 1850s by Julius Robert Mayer, James Prescott Joule (1818–1889), John James Waterston (1811–1883), William Thomson (also known as Lord Kelvin, 1824–1907), Ludwig Boltzmann (1844–1906), and others,¹⁹ who investigated quantitatively the energy stores of the sun for the first time; (3) the discovery of radioactivity in the late 1890s, which presented a possible new (nuclear) energy source—this stage reached its culmination with the discovery by Hans Bethe (1906–2005) in the 1930s of an actual nuclear pathway that produced energy from the conversion of hydrogen to helium (now called the CNO cycle); and (4) the modern synthesis, since about 1950, which depends on much more knowledge of nuclear reaction rates, more complete observations, and very fast computers.²⁰

In 1854, the German physicist Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894) proposed a new theory for the sun's energy stores: gravitational contraction of the sun would supply the required energy for a few tens of millions of years,²¹ and this erroneous suggestion was widely accepted as the solution to the solar energy problem. For example, a popular American astronomy book of 1902 (revised in 1910) states: "One of the most interesting and important problems of modern science relates to the explanation of the method by which the sun's heat is maintained. . . . *Positively*, the solar radiation *can be* accounted for on the hypothesis, proposed first by Helmholtz, *that the sun is shrinking slowly but continuously.*"²² As time passed, however, discoveries by geologists, biologists, and physicists demanded a much greater age for the solar system than could be supplied by gravitational contraction.

After Einstein's theory of relativity showed that matter and energy were two sides of the same coin, it was suggested that matter annihilation might maintain the solar energy. Also, several physicists in the early 1900s proposed the fusion of hydrogen to helium as the source of stellar energy, and fierce debate ensued between the partisans of annihilation and those of fusion. Contributions to the solution of the problem came from several scientists and was finally settled in the 1930s when the German-American

physicist Hans Bethe found a viable pathway for the fusion of hydrogen to helium in stellar interiors (which garnered him a Nobel Prize).

The other half of the story is the evolution of stars. It is even more fascinating, but the modern understanding of stellar evolution has developed almost entirely since 1900 and therefore long after the time of interest for our study of the statements of Joseph Smith.

Stellar Evolution

In the early 1900s, two astronomers (Ejnar Hertzsprung from Denmark and Henry Norris Russell from America) independently plotted color and luminosity for a few dozen stars and found they fell into two groups—a large group now called the main sequence and a smaller group now called the red giants (fig. 4). The main sequence includes stars that cover the full range of absolute magnitude (a measure of brightness), but the red-giant stars are all red and bright. It was impossible to resist the notion that the largest group (the main sequence) was an evolutionary sequence, and that erroneous idea dominated the field of astrophysics for several decades. Gradually, however, astrophysicists realized that stars on the main sequence differed in mass, and mass determined a star's entire evolutionary history. Stellar birth, evolution, and death are now well understood, especially so because detailed theoretical and observational studies have proceeded hand in glove for decades.

Here's the rest of the story. For convenience, let's divide the life of a star such as the sun into four stages:

1. As gigantic clouds of gas and dust particles in the Milky Way Galaxy swirl around and collide under the action of fierce winds and ultraviolet radiation from supernovas, red giants, and young massive stars, they expand, collapse, or fragment. On occasion the resulting cloudlets become self-gravitating so that they maintain their integrity. Gravitation then quickly compresses the cloud until the outward pressure of hot gas and radiation generated by the compression and subsequent nuclear reactions balances the inward gravitational force. At that point, a star is born. Stars generally form in groups, and clouds illuminated by young, hot stars (stellar nurseries) form many of the breathtaking photographs from the Hubble and Spitzer space telescopes (figs. 1, 3, and back cover).

2. A star spends most of its life (neglecting its long end state) as a stable gaseous globe that burns hydrogen in its core—a phase astronomers call the main sequence. This is the current stage of the sun. (Scientists use the phrase “hydrogen burning” to refer to nuclear fusion; that is, the fusing of four hydrogen atoms to one helium atom with the emission of a great deal

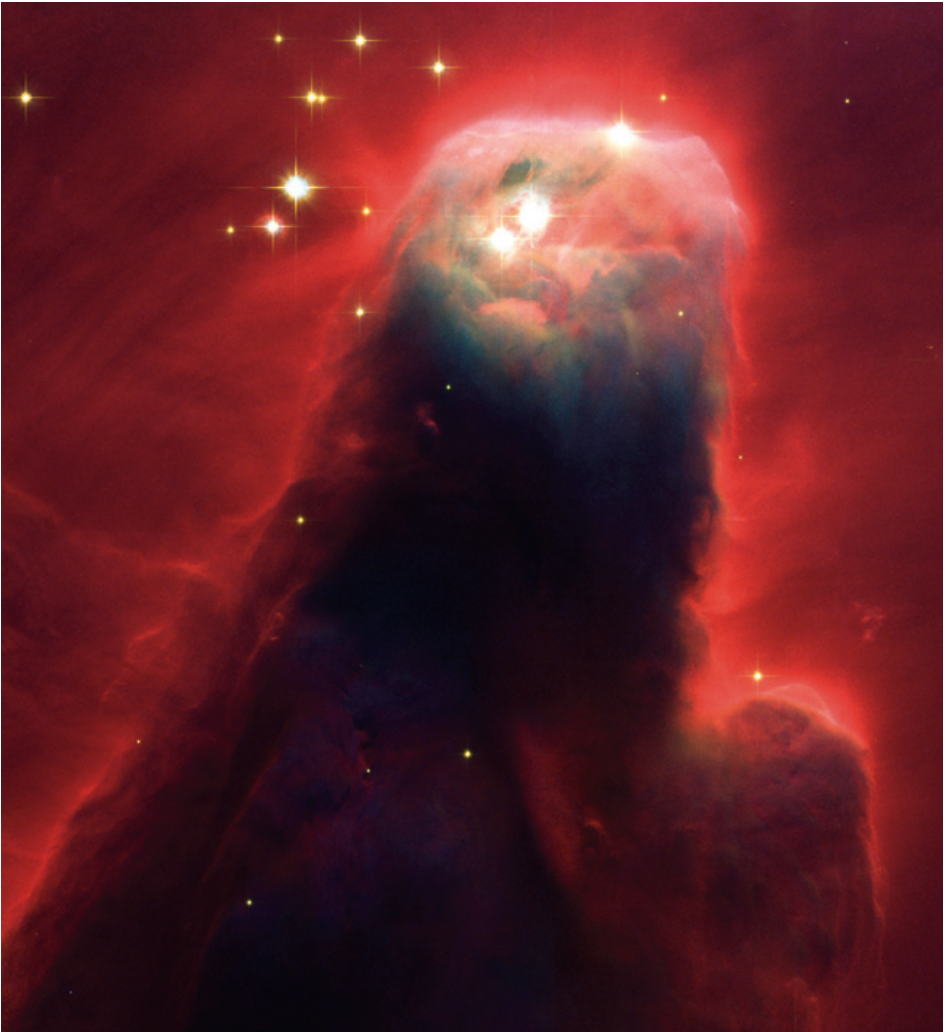


FIG. 3. A star-forming pillar of gas and dust in the Cone Nebula. Radiation from hot stars off the top of the picture illuminates and erodes this giant, gaseous pillar. Additional ultraviolet radiation causes the gas to glow, giving the pillar its red halo of light. Credit: NASA, H. Ford (JHU), G. Illingworth (UCSC/LO), M.Clampin (STScI), G. Hartig (STScI), the ACS Science Team, and ESA.

of energy.) Our sun has enough hydrogen fuel in its core to maintain its current energy output for 10 to 11 billion years, about 4.6 billion years of which have already passed.

Stars with a mass greater than that of the sun burn their nuclear fuel so much more vigorously that their main-sequence lifetimes are correspondingly shorter. Many generations of high-mass stars have therefore already come and gone. On the other hand, all stars ever formed with masses less than about one-tenth of a solar mass are still shining dimly in our skies.

3. When core hydrogen has been fused into helium, hydrogen burning takes place only in a shell around the core. Because there is no longer an outward force in the core to balance gravity, the core contracts and the energy liberated is deposited in the envelope, which swells and cools to create a red-giant star. In the red-giant stage, stars such as the sun can also burn helium to carbon and oxygen, but these fuels burn rapidly, and the red-giant stage lasts only a few hundred million years. Finally, as the star swells to an enormous size (for example, the sun will become as big as earth's orbit), convection dredges up to the surface part of the material that has been processed by nuclear reactions. Toward the end of the red-giant stage, the star throws off its outer layer, revealing an intensely hot inner core, called a white-dwarf star.

4. A star's life is governed by its mass, and mass difference is striking in the "end game." Stars with masses similar to the sun go through the stages outlined above, throw off their envelope, and leave behind hot, compact cores. Having no burnable nuclear fuel, these white dwarfs slowly radiate away their thermal energy and gradually cool down. More massive stars are able to burn heavier fuels (heavier atoms); however, no energy can be extracted from iron by nuclear burning. A star more massive than about eight solar masses burns fuel up to iron and explodes as a supernova (fig. 6). It crushes its extremely compact core into a pile of neutrons—a neutron star. Even more massive stars (greater than fifteen to twenty solar masses) explode as supernovas and leave as a remnant a black hole.

How trustworthy are the evolutionary scenarios sketched above? Theory and observation complement each other beautifully in the endeavor to understand the birth and life story of a star. Many stars in all stages of evolution have been examined, and these are always available for inspection by everyone. For example, newly formed (pre-main-sequence) stars, stable main-sequence stars (in the same phase as our sun) of all masses, red-giant stars, post-red-giant stars that have just thrown off their envelopes to reveal the white dwarf star underneath, binary stars, and even exploding stars have been carefully observed with a variety of instruments. Examples even of such short-lived phenomena as supernovae have



FIG. 4. Light echoes from red supergiant star V838 Monocerotis. This effect has been unveiling never-before-seen dust patterns ever since the star suddenly brightened for several weeks in early 2002. Credit: NASA, ESA and H.E. Bond (STScI).

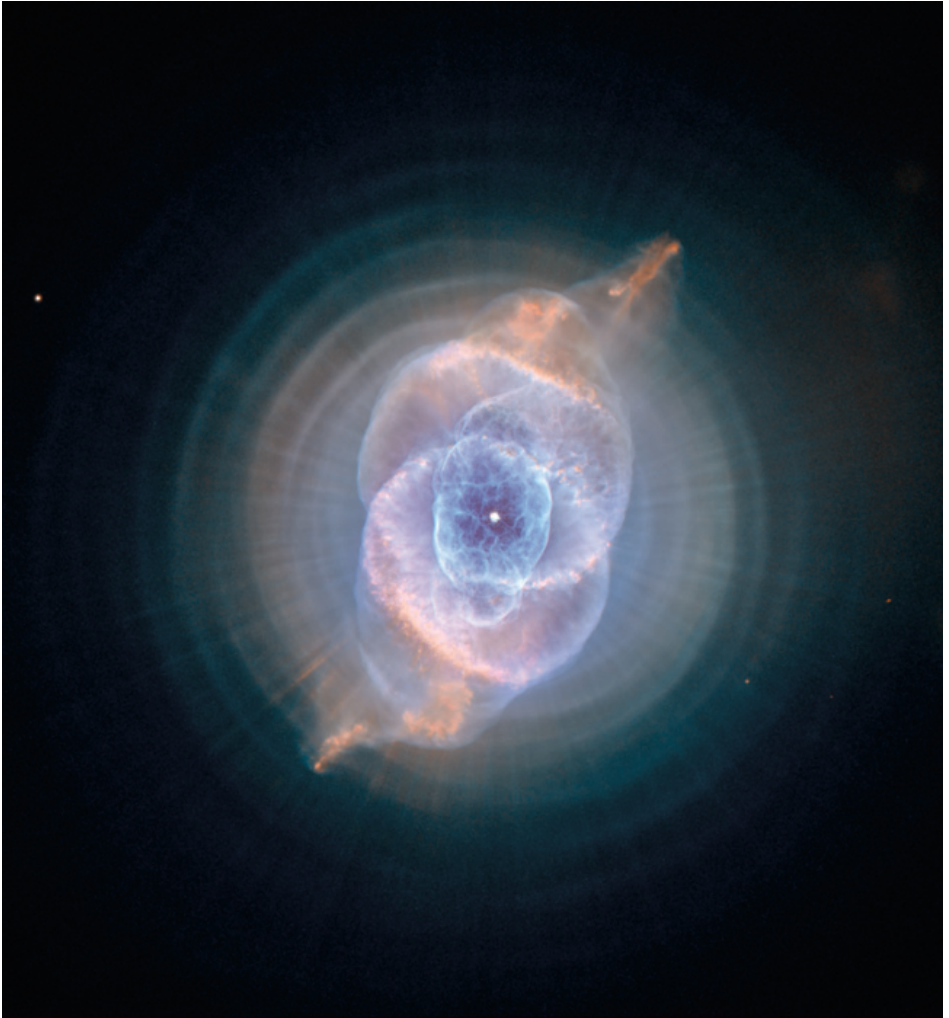


FIG. 5. The Cat's Eye Nebula, one of the first planetary nebulae discovered, also has one of the most complex forms known to this kind of nebula. Eleven rings, or shells, of gas make up the Cat's Eye. A planetary nebula forms when Sun-like stars gently eject their outer gaseous layers, creating amazing and confounding shapes. Credit: NASA, ESA, HEIC, and The Hubble Heritage Team (STScI/AURA). Acknowledgment: R. Corradi (Isaac Newton Group of Telescopes, Spain) and Z. Tsvetanov (NASA).

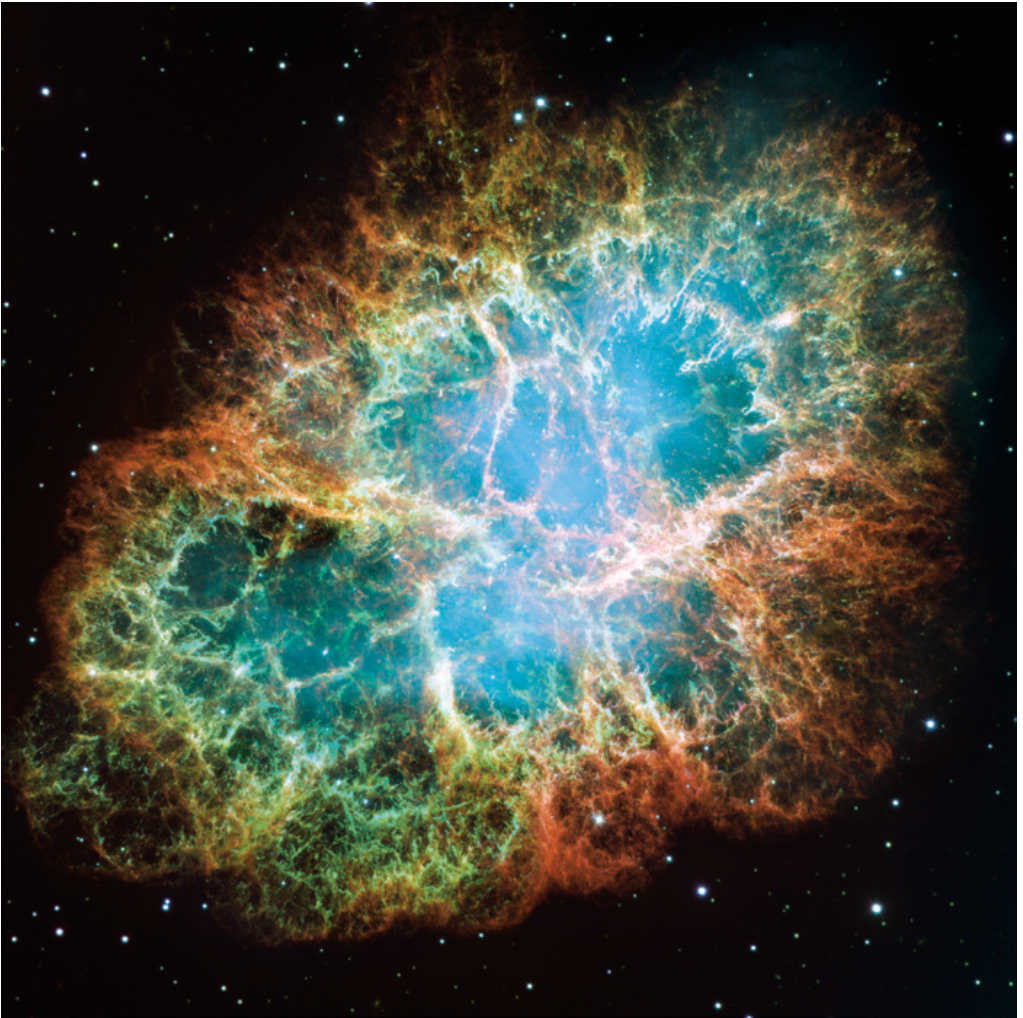


FIG. 6. The Crab Nebula is a supernova remnant, all that remains of a tremendous stellar explosion. Observers in China and Japan recorded the supernova nearly one thousand years ago, in 1054. A rapidly spinning neutron star embedded in the center of the nebula is the dynamo powering the nebula's eerie interior bluish glow. This is a mosaic image, assembled from twenty-four individual exposures, showing a six-light-year-wide expanding remnant of a star's supernova explosion. Credit: NASA, ESA, J. Hester and A. Loll (Arizona State University).

been observed, and their remnants are scattered over the sky. Careful observations of the sun at all wavelengths, methodical observations of stars of different masses, systematic observations of star clusters (where all stars are formed of about the same material at about the same time), and detailed observations of binary stars are all used to check the extensive calculations of stellar models with different masses, temperatures, and chemical compositions.

Beyond their fascinating life story, stars are valuable for another reason: they are atom factories. Hydrogen, helium, and a bit of lithium were created in the Big Bang, but heavier elements such as carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, silicon, iron, and all the rest were created from hydrogen and helium deep inside stars. Astronomers are fond of pointing out that, outside the tiny amounts of the three elements created in the Big Bang, everything on or in the earth, and even our own bodies, *is made of stardust*.

Do planets circle these stars? Are they inhabited? If so, what will happen to them? Systematic searches for planets around stars outside our solar system represent a relatively new field of astronomy, but more than five hundred exoplanets (planets outside the solar system) have already been confirmed.²³ Until 2010, only large, Jupiter-like planets had been found, and these tend to be in eccentric orbits and to pass surprisingly close to their stars. Then, in September 2010, astronomers in the Lick-Carnegie Exoplanet Survey announced that they had detected an earthlike planet in the Gliese 581 planetary system. They estimated this planet's mass to be "three to four times that of earth."²⁴ This discovery is as yet unconfirmed, and another group of astronomers has questioned the discovery.²⁵ But five months after this announcement, on February 2, 2011, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, announced that NASA's Kepler mission has discovered several hundred new planet candidates, bringing the total planet candidates Kepler has found up to 1,235. Of these, sixty-eight are approximately the size of earth, and fifty-four lie in a habitable zone (neither too near to nor too far from their stars). Again, these discovered planet candidates are not yet confirmed (this process should take another three years), but all were found in Kepler's field of view, which covers only one four-hundredth of the sky. "In one generation," said NASA Administrator Charles Bolden, "we have gone from extraterrestrial planets being a mainstay of science fiction, to the present, where Kepler has helped turn science fiction into today's reality."²⁶ Undoubtedly, as better instruments are built, more and smaller planets will be found. Yes, as the scriptures cited above indicate, in our galaxy alone there are stars without number and likely planets without number. However, in spite of intensive

searches with ever-increasing sensitivity, no signal of any kind has yet been detected from any intelligent civilization.

Astronomy in America

What was the state of affairs in American astronomy in 1830? The Louisiana Purchase had been made in 1803, Meriwether Lewis and George Rogers Clark had made their famous wilderness journey to the Pacific coast from 1804 to 1806, and the War of 1812 was still a vivid memory. Astronomy was almost unknown in pioneer America.

Lectures in astronomy (then generally considered a subfield of mathematics because it dealt almost exclusively with the motions of the planets and stars) had been given at Harvard College since its founding in 1642,²⁷ but much of the college was destroyed by a fire in a fierce snowstorm in January 1764. Although the idea of an observatory, to be the first observatory in America, was certainly discussed, lack of interest and money prevented any concrete action. Later, the matter was taken up again, and Harvard College Observatory was established in 1839. It was not until 1847, however, that their hoped-for fine telescope arrived—a refractor with a lens fifteen inches in diameter—the largest in America and perhaps in the world.²⁸

Meanwhile, other astronomical observatories were being built in several eastern states, though telescopes often came later. The first observatory building was constructed at the University of North Carolina in 1831. Other early observatories, with their dates of completion, were: Yale in 1831, Williams College in 1836, West Point in 1839, Philadelphia High School (yes, a high school) in 1840, and the public observatory in Cincinnati in 1845. Other early observatories were established in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in 1843; Georgetown, 1843; Amherst, 1847; and Shelby College, 1847.²⁹ Not a single observatory existed in America at the time Joseph Smith made his statement regarding the birth and death of stars.

Summary

In this article, we have examined the state of knowledge of stars and stellar evolution in 1830 when Joseph Smith wrote that old stars or worlds “pass away” and new stars are formed or “come” into being.³⁰ This idea is arguably one of the most prescient contributions of the Pearl of Great Price and of Joseph Smith. It contains a clear hint of stellar birth and death that appears to be ahead of common knowledge and even scientific knowledge of that time. Modern understanding of stellar evolution rests firmly upon a foundation of observational facts and a well-developed theoretical

understanding, naturally accepted by all scientists even while they continue to search for deeper understanding. The formation, life, and eventual end of stars are now well understood.

The life story of a star is a grand tale, very little of which was known at the time Joseph Smith made the statements that appear in the Book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price.

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1. An understanding of the use of color in Hubble Space Telescope photographs is important when viewing these spectacular images of objects in the universe. Hubble does not take color photographs. Its cameras record light from the universe with special electronic detectors that produce images in shades of black and white. Finished color images are combinations of two or more black-and-white exposures to which color has been added during image processing. The colors in Hubble images are not what would be seen by the human eye. Instead, color is used for three purposes: to depict how an object might look to us if our eyes were as powerful as Hubble, to bring out an object's subtle details, and to visualize features of an object that would ordinarily be invisible to the human eye. For example, infrared and ultraviolet wavelengths, which lie outside the visible spectrum, are assigned colors so that their effects can be studied. To read more about the use of color in Hubble images, see http://hubblesite.org/gallery/behind_the_pictures/meaning_of_color. To view a gallery of Hubble images, see <http://hubblesite.org/gallery>.

2. For a thorough discussion of the possibility of life on other worlds, see Erich Robert Paul, *Science, Religion, and Mormon Cosmology* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

3. H. Donl Peterson, *The Pearl of Great Price: A History and Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 102–8; of similar effect, see Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, *In God's Image and Likeness: Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Eborn, 2010), 65–68.

4. David Millar, Ian Millar, John Millar, and Margaret Millar, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Scientists*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 11.

5. Sara J. Schechner, *Comets, Popular Culture, and the Birth of Modern Cosmology* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 50.

6. Michael Hoskin, ed., *The Cambridge Concise History of Astronomy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 26, 33–34, 38–40.
7. Hoskin, *Cambridge Concise History of Astronomy*, 75.
8. Millar, *Cambridge Dictionary of Scientists*, 11.
9. John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 75; Hoskin, *Cambridge Concise History of Astronomy*, 119, 122.
10. Timothy Ferris, *The Whole Shebang: A State-of-the-Universe(s) Report* (New York: Simon Touchstone, 1997), 170.
11. Herschel's original paper is reprinted in Marcia Bartusiak, *Archives of the Universe: 100 Discoveries That Transformed Our Understanding of the Cosmos* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 130–31.
12. Arthur Berry, *A Short History of Astronomy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 323–24, 340, 420.
13. Charles Singer, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas to 1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 248 n. 1; 313; Millar, *Cambridge Dictionary of Scientists*, 36.
14. Berry, *Short History of Astronomy*, 397.
15. Millar, *Cambridge Dictionary of Scientists*, 248.
16. Singer, *Short History of Scientific Ideas*, 442–43.
17. Karl Hufbauer, "Stellar Energy Problem," in *History of Astronomy: An Encyclopedia*, ed. John Lankford (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 490–93.
18. David Dewhirst and Michael Hoskin, "The Message of Starlight: The Rise of Astrophysics," in Hoskin, *Cambridge Concise History of Astronomy*, 234.
19. See, for example, David Lindley, *Degrees Kelvin: A Tale of Genius, Invention, and Tragedy* (Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press, 2004), 260–308.
20. Hoskin, *Cambridge Concise History of Astronomy*, 266–67.
21. Hermann von Helmholtz, "On the Source of the Sun's Heat," adapted from "On the Origin of the Planetary System," in *Popular Scientific Lectures*, vol. 2 (1908), as quoted in Harlow Shapley and Helen E. Howarth, *A Source Book on Astronomy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1929), 311–15.
22. Charles A. Young, *Manual of Astronomy: A Text-Book* (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1902), 254.
23. The count by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology, online at http://planetquest.jpl.nasa.gov/atlas/atlas_index.cfm, was 528 on February 25, 2011.
24. "NASA and NSF-Funded Research Finds First Potentially Habitable Exoplanet," NASA, http://www.nasa.gov/topics/universe/features/gliese_581_feature.html.
25. See Leslie Mullen, "Doubt Cast on Existence of Possibly Habitable Alien Planet: Astronomers No Longer Sure about Gliese 581g," October 12, 2010, available at http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/39640401/ns/technology_and_science-space.
26. "Earth-Size Planet Candidates Found in Habitable Zone," NASA, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, February 2, 2011, <http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.cfm?release=2011-036>.
27. Bessie Zaban Jones and Lyle Gifford Boyd, *The Harvard College Observatory: The First Four Directorships, 1839–1919* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 1.
28. Jones and Boyd, *Harvard College Observatory*, 12, 42, 67–68.
29. Jones and Boyd, *Harvard College Observatory*, 36–38.
30. Thanks to Professor B. Kent Harrison, Brigham Young University, for helpful comments on the manuscript.

How Country Music Can Improve Your Marriage

Greg Hansen



BYU STUDIES
SYMPOSIUM

For decades I have been on a quest to become the Perfect Husband, the Ultimate Man, the Guy My Wife Dreams Of. Unfortunately, she's still dreaming. I've read all the self-help books, seen all the relationship movies, and studied every "this is what a real man should be" talk ever given by anyone with Elder or President in front of his name. I have worked hard to become kind, sensitive, gallant, spiritual, inspiring, dedicated, and romantic. With practice, I've even gotten better at crying (women seem to like that, as long as it's not when you're supposed to be saving them.)

No matter what I do, however, I come in conflict with my inner frontiersman. I seem to find alluring those bygone days when strength and honor and chivalry still meant something.

The Classic Inner Conflict

When we first moved to our little horse ranch, I discovered what all residents here have in common—our famous Eagle Mountain mud. It's so bad in the wet season, each morning I look out the window and count the horses' ears that are still sticking out of the ground to make sure they're all there.

Back then, I brought out the first load of hay in my Ford F350 one-ton, full-size-bed diesel pickup truck and promptly sank up to the axles on the dirt road to my barn, even with four-wheel drive. The homes here are spread out so far there was no one around to help. Finally, after a while, along came a nice lady driving another pickup. She stopped and said sweetly, "Need some help?"

I could see she was holding back a snicker under her breath.

"Yes, Ma'am," I mumbled.

Being prepared for most things, I had forty feet of steel tow chain in my truck box, which was about how far off the main road I was. She swung around, and told me to hook up to her trailer hitch. Staying on the asphalt, she easily yanked my heavily loaded truck back on the road like it was nothing. They make real women out here.

But here's my point: I didn't know whether to be more embarrassed about being saved by a woman or by the fact that she was driving a Dodge Ram.

Gender Role Confusion

This confusion about what an ideal man should be is more pervasive these days than we men let on. That's because men don't talk about stuff like that. So, I *will* talk about it, because I'm still working on becoming a Highly Sensitive but Manly Guy.

For example, I've learned from my many years in the music business that good values and much wisdom can still be found in the lyrics of country music. It's an acquired taste, to be sure, but since I've sunk so deeply into the ooze of frontier living, I've found out that it's the White Man's soul music. I still remember my shock when I first discovered that musicians, who are supposedly great artists, belong to the same union as dockworkers and truckers. Kind of takes the stuffing out of a fellow's shirt.

Nevertheless, all the great Everyman themes are there in country music: songs about being a good husband or a good father, love, freedom, honesty, and respecting your elders; about knowing who you are and having a good family, a good wife, and gratitude for God's blessings. Country music has its share of redneck and drinking songs, but overall it has more values-based songs than any other genre. Though I haven't taken an official survey, I'm pretty confident making this claim; there are very few kinds of music I haven't written, produced, and arranged these last twenty-five years. So, naturally, I turn to music to solve the world's problems both now and forever. (It should be pointed out here that, to my knowledge, only three careers are mentioned scripturally in the next life with any certainty: missionary, musician, and teacher.)

Having built on that solidly unstable but authoritative foundation, I will now get to the real message of this essay: how country songs can make your marriage better.

Memorizing Song Lyrics

Before becoming the Highly Improved Guy I am today, I would come home after a long day in the recording studio, ready to de-stress and download, my full ration of words completely used up for the day. My wife would want to talk, but I just wanted the remote.

Now, because I have memorized so many country songs on the way home, I always have the right thing to say. This has the effect of making me seem wise and romantic, preventing that annoying Empty Head Syndrome.

When she tells me about the troubles of her day, I quote the appropriate country lyrics. For example, when she's upset, I say:

[Honey,] loving you,
It's what I do.
It's the one thing I've found I can put my heart into.
It's who I am.
I'm a lucky man,
Living the life I choose.
Loving you,
It's what I do.¹

It helps that she doesn't know any of these country songs. But if she mentions how frustratingly stubborn I am, I say:

All of that stubbornness melts away,
When I wake with [your] head on my shoulder,
And I know I've got to love [you]
Until my life is through.
What else can I do?
Oh, I love [you]!²

When she tells me she's glad I'm home, I say:

The view I love the most
Is from my front porch looking in.³

Then, when the kids tell me all the good things they accomplished, I say:

That's something to be proud of.
That's a life you can hang your hat on.⁴

Other Important Applications

Songs also help me remember to get my wife flowers sometimes on the way home.

Every now and then, on my way home,
I stop by a place where the wildflowers grow, and I pick a few,
'Cause she don't tell me to.⁵

Or when she says I'm lost and won't ask directions, I say:

God blessed the broken road
That led me straight to you.⁶

Even though he's not a singer, sometimes a little Zane Grey helps when she's figuratively got a burr under her saddle: Even though I'm a "fire-eatin' gun-slinger, who's gone out to meet the worst of men an' come back—why, I tremble at your step an' I see your face in the clouds an' hear your voice in the wind. Don't ever miss that, lady."⁷

It Must Be Done Properly

Since lawyers are so much a part of life these days, I will add this disclaimer: improper use of country lyrics in relationships can be dangerous. You must use the right song for the proper application. This became painfully clear when my friend Spencer decided to try out my new marital relationship country lyrics cure-all.

He went home, ready to watch the game on TV, but his wife wanted to talk. So he quoted Alison Krauss singing:

You say it best when you say nothing at all.⁸

Spencer has never fully recovered.

Greg Hansen is an award-winning record producer, composer/arranger, and recording artist. He is the music review editor for *BYU Studies*. He has two new online music companies, *LDSMusicNow.com*, for easy LDS sheet music downloads, and *LDSTunesNow.com*, for LDS music mp3 downloads. This essay was presented at the 2010 *BYU Studies Symposium*.

1. "It's What I Do," written by Tom Shapiro and Chuck Jones, sung by Billy Dean, single released by Capitol #58526, January 1996.

2. "She Don't Tell Me To," written by Bob DiPiero, Tom Shapiro, and Rivers Rutherford, sung by Montgomery Gentry, single released by Columbia, October 25, 2005.

3. "My Front Porch Looking In," written by Richie McDonald, Frank J. Myers, and Don Pfrimmer, sung by Lonestar, single released by BNA, March 10, 2003.

4. "Something to Be Proud Of," written by Jeffrey Steele and Chris Wallin, sung by Montgomery Gentry, single released by Columbia, May 9, 2005.

5. "She Don't Tell Me To," written by Bob DiPiero, Tom Shapiro, and Rivers Rutherford, sung by Montgomery Gentry, single released by Columbia, October 25, 2005.

6. "Bless the Broken Road," written by Marcus Hummon and members of the country music group Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, sung by Rascal Flatts, single released by Lyric Street, November 1, 2004.

7. Zane Grey, *Raiders of Spanish Peaks* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1938), 154. The quotation is actually in third person, but it's okay for a romantic guy like me to take a little poetic license.

8. "When You Say Nothing at All," written by Paul Overstreet and Don Schlitz, originally sung by Keith Whitley, RCA, September 1988, sung by Alison Krauss, album *Now That I've Found You: A Collection*, Rounder, February 7, 1995.

A Trick of Light

You only think the butterfly is blue.

There are no natural blue
pigments
in the animal world.

See,
there are these tiny
overlapping rows of scales
on the wings.

They diffract the light
the same way an oil slick
does on a Walmart parking lot
after a first rain.

And for that matter,
Spring is only an anomaly
in the circuit of some planet
around a nondescript sun.

It warms the air,
because the air is there,
nothing more.

And that warm wisp
moist, like live breath,
only seems velvet
at your ear.

It is only meteorology and...

Oh look!
a blue butterfly.

—Kim Hancock

This poem won third place in the 2010 BYU Studies poetry contest.



Since the early years of the Church, Latter-day Saints have commonly understood that a Mother in Heaven exists, but that little has been said beyond acknowledging her reality and procreative powers. BYU Professor David L. Paulsen and Martin Pulido document Church teachings that depict a Mother in Heaven who fulfills important and varied roles in the work of salvation. *Star of Wonder* (detail) by Annie Henrie, 2010. Courtesy Annie Henrie.



“A Mother There”

A Survey of Historical Teachings about Mother in Heaven

David L. Paulsen and Martin Pulido

In the heav'ns are parents single?
No, the thought makes reason stare;
Truth is reason—truth eternal
Tells me I've a mother there.

When I leave this frail existence—
When I lay this mortal by
Father, mother, may I meet you
In your royal courts on high?¹

Penned in 1845 by Sister Eliza R. Snow (who would later serve as the Relief Society general president from December 18, 1867–December 5, 1887), these lines from our beloved hymn “O My Father” are perhaps the best-known reference in Latter-day Saint literature to a Mother in Heaven. Written and published within months of Joseph Smith’s death, these and other lines give considerable evidence that the Prophet taught of a Mother in Heaven, even if he did so only implicitly² or restrictively to certain limited audiences.³

Since the 1840s, this cherished doctrine has been an important, although relatively obscure, part of the Latter-day Saint understanding of the premortal origins and divine nature of mankind. This doctrine may well be among those that Joseph Smith anticipated, in which God would someday “reveal many great and important things” (A of F 9). Still, we feel it is appropriate to look carefully at all that has (and has not) been said about Mother in Heaven over the past 165 years, in order to promote clarity in

David L. Paulsen

For as long as I can remember, our beloved hymn “O My Father” has been a source of wonder, comfort, and inspiration. It was sung frequently in the Ephraim (Utah) North Ward where I was blessed as a baby and grew to young adulthood. It was sung—providentially, I believe—in a Sunday morning meeting of the Rock Island (Illinois) Branch when an investigator made her first visit to church. The spirit that she felt during the singing of the hymn was a



clincher in her conversion to the restored gospel. It was the favorite hymn of my sister-in-law, Barbara Bryner, and, at the request of her family, it was sung at her funeral. Her family asked me to center my funeral talk around the teachings of the hymn. I did, and we were all comforted. My dad, who lived to age eighty-eight, survived my mother by several years. In his last days, he often pulled a photograph of Mom from his wallet and asked: “Do you remember who this is? We all miss her, don’t we?” And then we would talk about our being embraced by her and Heavenly Parents when we left “this frail existence.” In my paper “Are Christians Mormon?” published by *BYU Studies* in 2006, I summarized our belief in Heavenly Mother and pointed out growing interest in the divine feminine in a number of Christian quarters.

No wonder, then, my puzzlement when recently I began to hear with increasing frequency people speaking of the need for “sacred silence” with respect to Heavenly Mother. This stricture did not square with my life experience and motivated me to search what Church leaders had historically taught about her. The Women’s Research Institute at BYU graciously provided funding, and members of my student staff, especially my coauthor Martin Pulido, have done extensive research. We reported our findings to appreciative, standing-room-only audiences at a Women’s Research Institute meeting and at the BYU Studies 50th Anniversary Symposium. This article is the outcome of those findings.

academic discussions in particular and to avert possible confusion, misunderstanding, or contention in general.

Statements by Church Presidents

In 1909, the First Presidency of the Church wrote: “All men and women are in the similitude of the universal Father and Mother and are literally the sons and daughters of Deity.”⁴ In 1995, the Church officially reaffirmed the doctrine of a Heavenly Mother in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World”: “All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of *heavenly parents*, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.”⁵

Four years earlier, President Gordon B. Hinckley (Counselor in the First Presidency, November 10, 1985–March 3, 1995) addressed at length the topic of a Mother in Heaven during the 1991 general Relief Society meeting. He taught: “Logic and reason would certainly suggest that if we have a Father in Heaven, we have a Mother in Heaven. That doctrine rests well with me. . . . The fact that we do not pray to our Mother in Heaven in no way belittles or denigrates her. . . . None of us can add to or diminish the glory of her of whom we have no revealed knowledge.”⁶ President Hinckley explained in the same address that, because of the Savior’s instructions and example, one does not pray to Heavenly Mother.⁷ In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus instructed, “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven” (Matt. 6:9; 3 Ne. 13:9); he himself always prayed to the Father (Matt. 11:25; John 17:1; 3 Ne. 17:15; 19:19); he commanded his people to pray “unto the Father, always in my name” (3 Ne. 18:21; 27:9); and he concluded, “That which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do” (3 Ne. 27:21).

Statements by Some Claiming or Advising Silence

Because the Saints are instructed to pray to the Father, and, as President Hinckley pointed out, nothing has been authoritatively revealed about Heavenly Mother, some Latter-day Saints have thought that any mention of her is discouraged by the Church. Some within Mormon culture who see discussion of our Heavenly Mother as inappropriate believe that respecting her sacredness requires silence, as if to speak of her is to risk offending God. For instance, Hoyt W. Brewster Jr. claims, “The holy name of Deity is blasphemed when used in concert with gutter language and misused in everyday expressions. . . . Is it any wonder that our Father in Heaven has been so protective of the identity of our Mother in Heaven?”⁸ Similarly, at the 1991 Women’s Conference cosponsored by BYU and the Relief Society, Mormon

Methodology

We have attempted to identify each distinct reference to Heavenly Mother as found within content endorsed in some fashion by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1830 to present. We felt a statement could be appropriately included in this survey if it was spoken by a General Authority, recorded in a general conference, included in a Church publication, or published by a Church press. Our research has yielded an enormous amount of material, and we are unable to report all the discoveries. When we have omitted material, we have not done so out of disapproval or dislike, but out of the necessities forced upon us by a print journal's limited space. We have made every effort to act simply as surveyors of the available historical data. We leave the appraisal of this data to others more suited to the task.

In an effort to provide as much information as possible, we have developed a few specific conventions within this paper relative to General Authorities. First, we refer to all General Authorities by the title of the highest priesthood office they held in their lives, out of respect for their office and service, even if they were not in that office at the time of the statement. Thus, if an individual served in the First Presidency or as President of the Quorum of the Twelve, we refer to him as "President." If an individual served in another general priesthood office, we refer to him as "Elder." We also follow the convention of referring to individuals holding leadership positions within the Relief Society as "Sister." Second, when we first quote a General Authority, we include, in parentheses, the office the individual held at the time the statement was made as well as the dates during which the individual held that office. Subsequent quotes from the same General Authority include parenthetical information only if that person's office is different from what was reported in the immediately preceding statement of the individual's office.

In performing our research, we have consulted a wide variety of sources, including Church periodicals from 1832 to present, Church Conference Reports from 1897 to present, over three hundred volumes of works from Church leaders, over five hundred volumes of works from LDS scholars, and official Church documents, such as official proclamations, hymnals, and so on. For a list of these and other sources consulted, see note 16.

scholar Kathryn H. Shirts recalled a “Primary class, in which someone asked the teacher, ‘If we have a Mother in Heaven, how come we never hear about her?’ The teacher’s reply was that God was protecting her name from the kinds of slander that human beings direct toward the names of the Father and the Son.”⁹ Likewise, in Amy Irvine’s 2008 memoir *Trespass*, a fictional visitor at the Monticello Utah Temple open house asks a guide about the feminine aspect of the divine and is told “that the Heavenly Mother was so special that God had said we must never, ever talk about her—that He held her on a pedestal where she was never to be seen or spoken to, for fear that her purity would be sullied.”¹⁰

Accounts like these have resulted in perceptions among the LDS community that Heavenly Mother deserves, or requires, a “sacred” censorship. Indeed, an informal Internet survey found that most Mormons believe that discourse about Heavenly Mother is forbidden or inappropriate.¹¹ This cultural perception has perhaps exacerbated academic claims that Heavenly Mother has *always* been, and continues to be, surrounded by a holy hush.¹² For instance, in his PhD dissertation on Heavenly Mother and Mormon women’s literature, professor Grant Tucker Smith makes the sweeping assumption that during the hundred and fifty years between the lives of Eliza R. Snow and Terry Tempest Williams “the Mother in Heaven was for all intents and purposes ignored, silenced, and forgotten by the male Church leadership.”¹³

While these scholars and writers admit that Latter-day Saints are not totally silent about Heavenly Mother, they lament that Latter-day Saints usually acknowledge her existence only, without delving further into her character or roles, or portray her as merely a silent, Victorian-type housewife valued only for her ability to reproduce.¹⁴ For instance, professor Barbara J. MacHaffie asserts that from the beginning of Mormonism, Heavenly Mother was “pointed to only when the community wished to glorify motherhood.”¹⁵

Overview of Research Regarding Statements by Church Leaders

These claims and expressions have persuaded us to research what Church leaders and others in Church-approved venues have actually taught about Heavenly Mother. Our investigation has led us to conclude that such claims—that the Church mandates silence or gives only simplistic portrayals of Mother in Heaven—are mostly false. In this paper, we will share important historical accounts that cast serious doubt on the specific claims that, first, a sacred silence has always surrounded this treasured Mormon doctrine and that, second, Heavenly Mother’s ascribed roles have been marginalized or trivialized. With respect to the second claim, we will share

historical portrayals of Heavenly Mother as procreator and parent, as a divine person, as co-creator of worlds, as coframer of the plan of salvation with the Father, and as a concerned and loving parent involved in our mortal probation. Finally, we will sketch portrayals of her role in the eschaton.

In this paper, we will only *report* historical portrayals of Heavenly Mother's roles. It is not our province to appraise this material. As a further disclaimer, we note that there has been much more discourse and reflection about our Heavenly Mother than we can include in this article. We have compiled over six hundred sources of all types referencing a Heavenly Mother in Mormon and academic discourse since 1844.¹⁶ While this research has been extensive, it is far from exhaustive, and we expect further investigations to uncover more information. So far, we have gathered an illuminating collection of thoughts about Mother in Heaven, her roles, her significance, and her character as given by prophets, Apostles, Church authorities, and other leaders since the restoration of the gospel. And although we do not have authoritative revelation on the specific roles and nature of Heavenly Mother, Church leaders have extrapolated much about her from our understanding of the plan of salvation, the nature of godhood, and the qualities of motherhood.

Heavenly Wife and Parent

Perhaps the most accepted and easily understood role of Heavenly Mother is her role as procreator and parent. Church leaders have frequently affirmed this point. The First Presidency under President Joseph F. Smith (Church President, October 17, 1901–November 19, 1918) published a declaration titled “The Father and the Son,” in which they assert that our heavenly parents passed through “several stages or estates by which [they] have attained exaltation” and *together* “propagate[d] that higher order of beings called spirits.”¹⁷ Apparently, neither of them alone could beget our spirit bodies.

Several Church leaders have testified how we as their offspring have learned and inherited several divine, moral, and intellectual attributes from them.¹⁸ President Boyd K. Packer (Acting President of Quorum of the Twelve, June 5, 1994–January 27, 2008) has taught that after this primordial birth each of us “lived in a premortal existence as an individual spirit child of heavenly parents,”¹⁹ where we were reared and nurtured. In the development of our characters, our Heavenly Mother was perhaps particularly nurturing.²⁰ Brigham Young's daughter, Sister Susa Young Gates (member of the YLMIA²¹ general board and famous women's rights activist) insisted that in the formation of Father Abraham's individuality, “our great heavenly

Mother was the greater molder”²²—greater than his genetics, his prenatal impressions, his cultural or natural environment, or even his earthly mother’s nurturing. Gates speculated that Heavenly Mother has played a significant role in all our lives, looking over us with “watchful care” and providing “careful training.”²³ The 1995 “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” affirms that in the eternal realms above we were reared to premortal maturity through the tutelage of our heavenly parents.²⁴

Obviously, these references to our heavenly parents show that Mormon leaders considered Heavenly Mother to be the wife of our Heavenly Father, an idea clearly explained by President George Q. Cannon (First Presidency, October 10, 1880–July 25, 1887) when he said, “God is a married being, has a wife. . . . We are the offspring of Him and His wife.”²⁵ President Spencer W. Kimball (Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve, January 23, 1970–July 2, 1972) taught that God “made women in the image of his wife-partner.”²⁶ Others have taught that Heavenly Mother’s relationship with Heavenly Father exemplifies and ennoble the office of wife. In 1938, the Church published *A Short History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* that taught, “The theological conception of a Mother in heaven as well as a Father lends dignity to motherhood and wifehood.”²⁷ Elder B. H. Roberts (First Council of the Seventy, October 7, 1888–September 27, 1933) challenged the rest of Christianity to offer a doctrine that presents a “conception of the nobility of woman and of motherhood and of wifehood—placing her side by side with the Divine Father” as does our doctrine of Heavenly Mother.²⁸ We are to emulate the family structure exemplified by our Father and Mother, because, as Sister Susa Young Gates taught, “the home is patterned after the heavenly dwelling of our Divine parents.”²⁹ President Joseph F. Smith taught that “it is marriage, sanctified and God-sanctioned, upon which a glorified home is founded—that blesses, happyfies, exalts, and leads at length to companionship with our Heavenly parents, and to eternal, united life, and increase.”³⁰

A Divine Person

Some statements by Church authorities have led to the understanding that before Heavenly Mother became exalted and helped beget us, she was once mortal and dwelt on an earth. Elder Orson F. Whitney (bishop, July 14, 1878–April 1906) explained that “there was a time when that being whom we now worship—that our eternal Father and Mother were once man and woman in mortality.”³¹ The soul-making trials of her earthly experience, coupled with continuing growth after a celestial resurrection, helped her hone the qualities of divinity to move her from “womanhood to Godhood.”³²

Several Church leaders have affirmed that Heavenly Mother is a fully divine person and have used reverential titles such as “Mother God,” “God Mother,” “God the Mother,” “God their Eternal Mother,” and “Eternal Mother” in referring to her.³³ Elder John A. Widtsoe (Quorum of the Twelve, March 17, 1921–November 29, 1952) wrote: “The glorious vision of life hereafter . . . is given radiant warmth by the thought that . . . [we have] a mother who possesses the attributes of Godhood.”³⁴ This is echoed by Elder James E. Talmage (Quorum of the Twelve, December 8, 1911–July 27, 1933): “We . . . [are] literally the sons and daughters of divine parents, the spiritual progeny of God our Eternal Father, and of our God Mother.”³⁵ Furthermore, President Brigham Young (President of the Church, December 27, 1947–August 29, 1877) taught that “we were created . . . in the image of our father and our mother, the image of our God,” indicating that calling Heavenly Mother “God” is consistent with the biblical account of the creation of both “male and female” being in “the image of God” (Gen. 1:26–27).³⁶ Sister Susa Young Gates urged that “the divine Mother, side by side with the divine Father, [has] the equal sharing of equal rights, privileges and responsibilities.”³⁷

However, at least one Mormon leader may have taken the opposite stance on these positions. President George Q. Cannon cautioned that

there is too much of this inclination to deify “our mother in heaven.” . . .

Our Father in heaven should be the object of our worship. He will not have any divided worship. . . .

In the revelation of God the Eternal Father to the Prophet Joseph Smith there was no revelation of the feminine element as part of the Godhead, and no idea was conveyed that any such element “was equal in power and glory with the masculine.”

Therefore, we are warranted in pronouncing all tendencies to glorify the feminine element and to exalt it as part of the Godhead as wrong and untrue, not only because of the revelation of the Lord in our day but because it has no warrant in scripture, and any attempt to put such a construction on the word of God is false and erroneous.³⁸

President Cannon refers to a lack of scriptural evidence and contemporary revelation as reasons for denying Heavenly Mother’s inclusion in the Godhead and for doubting (but not going so far as to deny) that her divinity is on par “with the masculine,” and he condemns referencing scripture to provide implied evidence for Heavenly Mother’s divinity. But Mormon leaders—including Cannon in other articles—used scriptures referring to the children of God, the female image of God, spiritual parenthood, and queens in heaven as testifying of a Heavenly Mother.³⁹ In reference to scriptures affirming that male and female are created in the image of God, Elder

Orson F. Whitney (Quorum of the Twelve, April 9, 1906–May 16, 1931) asked, “What is this but a virtual recognition of the feminine principle as well as the masculine principle of Deity?”⁴⁰ Furthermore, President Ruder Clawson (Quorum of the Twelve, October 10, 1909–June 21, 1943) disagreed that deifying our Heavenly Mother risked divided worship. He urged, “It doesn’t take from our worship of the Eternal Father, to adore our Eternal Mother, any more than it diminishes the love we bear our earthly fathers, to include our earthly mothers in our affections.”⁴¹ Rather, “we honor woman when we acknowledge Godhood in her eternal prototype.”⁴²

The doctrine of a Heavenly Mother appears to be in tension with Mormonism’s trinitarian heritage.⁴³ Overemphasizing the Trinity, or the Godhead, while underemphasizing a Heavenly Mother raises questions concerning the equality of deified males and females and the nature and importance of marriage. On the other hand, overemphasizing Heavenly Mother breaks with traditional Christian, and even Mormon, understandings of the Trinity, but highlights the Church’s own proclamation that the most important social unit in eternity is the family. It is no simple feat to understand how these two social relationships—the Trinity and the eternal family—can best be understood together. For one, given traditional Mormon premises, a Heavenly Mother interacts with the Trinity in a certain and irresolvable sense. As there can be no spirit children without her, presumably there would be no Son⁴⁴ without her and perhaps no Holy Ghost⁴⁵—no Heavenly Mother, perhaps no Trinity. It should be no surprise, then, that most Mormon leaders could not understand how Father or Mother could be divine alone. For either to be fully God, each must have a partner with whom to share the power of endless lives. As Elder Erastus Snow (Quorum of the Twelve, February 12, 1849–May 27, 1888) avowed:

“What,” says one, “do you mean we should understand that Deity consists of man and woman?” Most certainly I do. If I believe anything that God has ever said about himself . . . I must believe that deity consists of man and woman. . . .

There can be no God except he is composed of the man and woman united, and there is not in all the eternities that exist, or ever will be a God in any other way.⁴⁶

We may never hope to attain unto the eternal power and the Godhead upon any other principle . . . this Godhead composing two parts, male and female.⁴⁷

These sentiments were later reaffirmed by President Hugh B. Brown (Quorum of the Twelve, April 10, 1958–December 2, 1975), by Elders James E. Talmage, Melvin J. Ballard (Quorum of the Twelve, January 7, 1919–July 30, 1939), and by Bruce R. McConkie (First Council of the Seventy, October 6,

1946–October 12, 1972).⁴⁸ Given the popular contemporary LDS view that the highest form of worship is to emulate character, worship of the Father is also, indirectly, worship of the Mother, as each has equally perfect moral character. Perhaps part of the disagreement among Mormon thinkers is that most have not clearly explained what they mean by “divinity,” and they are consequently uncertain what it signifies to predicate this attribute to Heavenly Mother.⁴⁹ No one denies her omnibenevolent character or divine intelligence, so the concern seems to be with her cosmic authority or status for worship. Obviously, defining divinity demands further attention, but we do not suggest any solution, for such is not our province nor is it within the scope of this paper.

Co-creator with the Father

Regardless of the exact nature of her divinity, some authorities have described Heavenly Mother as an active participant in the process of creation. In his 1876 semiannual general conference address, Brigham Young included “eternal mothers” and “eternal daughters” as beings after the resurrection who will “be prepared to frame earth’s [sic] like unto ours and to people them in the same manner as we have been brought forth by our [heavenly] parents.”⁵⁰ *The Women of Mormondom*, written by critic and playwright Edward Tullidge and edited by Sister Eliza R. Snow, affirms that the “eternal Mother [is] the partner with the Father in the creation of worlds.”⁵¹ An article in the *Deseret News*, presumably written by President Charles W. Penrose (editor of the *Deseret News*, later ordained an Apostle on July 7, 1904) argued that there is a Mother in Heaven and cited the feminine gender of the divine Spirit in the morning of creation that moved upon the face of the waters as evidence.⁵² Elder Milton R. Hunter (First Council of the Seventy, April 6, 1945–June 27, 1975) taught that the exaltation and endless lives that celestial women and men share include “the power to create or organize mortal worlds.”⁵³ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland (First Quorum of the Seventy, April 1, 1989–June 23, 1994) and his wife, Patricia, have taught that our Mother and our Father are involved in the ongoing process of creating everything around us, and “are doing so lovingly and carefully and masterfully.”⁵⁴

Coframer of the Plan of Salvation

In addition to her participation in creation, Heavenly Mother helped the Father direct the plan of salvation. Elder M. Russell Ballard (Quorum of the Twelve, October 6, 1985–present) taught that “we are part of a divine

plan designed by Heavenly Parents who love us.”⁵⁵ The Church’s 1978 *Gospel Principles* manual adds:

Our heavenly parents provided us with a celestial home more glorious and beautiful than any place on earth. We were happy there. Yet they knew we could not progress beyond a certain point unless we left them for a time. They wanted us to develop the godlike qualities that they have. To do this, we needed to leave our celestial home to be tested and to gain experience.⁵⁶

While serving as the first counselor in the general presidency of the Relief Society, Sister Chieko Okazaki (March 31, 1990–April 5, 1997) noted that “at the end of this process, our Heavenly Parents will have sons and daughters who are their peers, their friends, and their colleagues.”⁵⁷ According to Elder Theodore M. Burton (First Quorum of the Seventy, October 1, 1976–September 30, 1989), this is “their goal, their work, and their glory.”⁵⁸

Elder Milton R. Hunter explained the way by which both our heavenly parents learned to design a plan for our progression:

Wherever there have been intelligences, . . . fundamental principles . . . have existed. They constitute . . . the laws of eternal truth. Our Heavenly Parents have through aeons of time . . . applied in Their lives an untold number of these everlasting laws. As They learned these verities and how to operate them, these laws thereby became subject unto Elohim.⁵⁹

The 1978 *Gospel Principles* manual goes on to state that as the beloved Son, Christ “was chosen to be our Savior when we all attended the great council with our heavenly parents.”⁶⁰ This would have been a moment of mixed emotion for the divine couple, when, as Sister Chieko Okazaki noted, “with . . . increased love, mingled with pride and grief, [they] accepted the willing offer of Jesus Christ.”⁶¹ According to Elder Jeffrey R. Holland (Quorum of the Twelve, June 23, 1994–present), each of us also chose to endure the hardships that would be present in mortality because we “wanted the chance to become like our heavenly parents.”⁶² Lula L. Greene Richards (Primary Association General Board) wrote that Heavenly Mother smiled on her righteous children as they voted to uphold the will of the Council in Heaven and chose to come to earth.⁶³ Elder Mark E. Petersen (Quorum of the Twelve, April 20, 1944–January 11, 1984) explained that once the council was completed and the Savior chosen, our heavenly parents “sent [us to earth] to receive further instruction under different circumstances”⁶⁴ than those of our premortal state. President Thomas S. Monson (Counselor in the First Presidency, March 12, 1995–January 27, 2008) affirmed that this instruction “could come only through separation from our heavenly parents.”⁶⁵

Heavenly Mother's role in this process has been dramatized and embellished by some Mormon authors. The fourth stanza in Sister Eliza R. Snow's "O My Father" speaks of Heavenly Mother acting in the role of sending us forth to undergo the trials of mortality.⁶⁶ Ruth May Fox composed a short dialogue entitled "The Parable of Ten Talents,"⁶⁷ which converts Christ's parable into a thinly veiled story of daughters leaving the presence of their Heavenly Mother to experience mortality.⁶⁸ Before their separation, the Mother gathers them together and grants each of them a divine character trait⁶⁹ to prepare them "for the battle of life."⁷⁰ She also advises that upon their return she will require a reporting of their accomplishments.⁷¹

Both Elder Orson F. Whitney and President Harold B. Lee (Quorum of the Twelve, April 10, 1941–January 23, 1970) taught that our farewell from our Heavenly Mother and Father was a bittersweet occasion.⁷² President Lee wrote:

There came a day, then, when Mother and Father said, "Now, my son, my daughter, it is now your time to go. This is the greatest time in the history of the world. This is the fulness of times, and now because of your faithfulness you are permitted to go down in this fulness of time upon the earth." I suppose as Father and Mother bade us good-bye, there may have been some sadness there because they knew Satan was here and one-third of all the hosts were here [with him]. We walked, as it were, through an open door. The door was closed behind us.⁷³

Elder John Longden (Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve, October 6, 1951–August 30, 1969) added, "It must be quite an occasion in heaven when our Heavenly Mother bids us a loving farewell for the time being! Perhaps, like earthly mothers, she thinks, 'They are so young, and they might forget [the rules and regulations].'"⁷⁴ Longden imagined that before we parted we promised them we would remember. President George F. Richards (Quorum of the Twelve, April 9, 1906–August 8, 1950) taught that our heavenly parents are "counting on [us] to honor them, to love them, and obey them. 'Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother.'"⁷⁵ This commandment applies to both earthly and heavenly parents.

Involved Parent in Our Mortality

Mormon leaders have affirmed that Heavenly Mother's involvement did not completely end with premortality, but continues throughout our second estate. Sister Eliza R. Snow believed in Heavenly Mother's continuing influence, and told a friend that the Saints would with "pray'r and supplication / plead for [her] before the throne / Of the great eternal mother."⁷⁶ Others have emphasized that Heavenly Mother—along with the Father—

watches over us from heaven and strives to help us in our trials. In 1963, President Harold B. Lee taught:

Sometimes we think the whole job is up to us, forgetful that there are loved ones beyond our sight who are thinking about us and our children. We forget that we have a Heavenly Father and a Heavenly Mother who are even more concerned, probably, than our earthly father and mother, and that influences from beyond are constantly working to try to help us when we do all we can.⁷⁷

After noting our Heavenly Mother's concern for us, President Lee cited the story of William Dudley Pelley, who recalled one day in his office taking "a package of cigarettes from [his] desk. About to apply a light to one of them, [he] *heard a voice as gently as any worried mother might caution a careless son*, 'Oh, Bill, give up your cigarettes!'"⁷⁸ Pelley quickly complied by throwing the cigarettes into the trash.

Sister Okazaki has written that our heavenly parents are cosufferers with us in our mortal trials.⁷⁹ Elder M. Russell Ballard (Quorum of the Twelve, October 6, 1985–present) has also taught that "Our Heavenly Parents' love and concern for us continues to this very moment," and the First Presidency under President Spencer W. Kimball (President of the Church, December 30, 1973–November 5, 1985) affirmed that this love and concern never ends.⁸⁰ Similarly, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland (President of BYU, May 1980 to April 1, 1989) has written how important his own children are to him and his wife. And yet he asks that if they, as parents, "can love so much and try so hard, what does that say of a more Godly love that differs from our own as the stars differ from the sun? On a particularly difficult day, . . . what would this world's inhabitants pay to know that heavenly parents are reaching across those same streams and mountains and deserts, anxious to hold them close?"⁸¹ Sister Okazaki explained that "when our rising love and joyful gratitude meet the shower of mercy and love from the Savior and from our heavenly parents, in that contact is the pure radiance and the brilliant light of glory."⁸²

Others state that although we are away from our Parents' celestial home, we are not completely severed from them. Elder John A. Widtsoe told members of the Church that the promises made to us in the temple "will help us understand the nearness of our heavenly parents."⁸³ Righteous living draws us toward them and their guiding influences, but as Milton R. Hunter has written, sin and ignorance draw us farther away.⁸⁴

Throughout this mortal journey, both of our heavenly parents are examples of the divine nature. In a recent address to Harvard Law School on the "fundamental premises of our faith," Elder Dallin H. Oaks (Quorum of the Twelve, April 7, 1984–present) affirmed that our theology "teaches

that our highest aspiration is to become like our Heavenly Parents.”⁸⁵ Men and women alike are to seek after and develop the divine traits exemplified by both Father and Mother. Notwithstanding this teaching that Heavenly Mother is an exemplar in our mortality, we must keep in mind the counsel given by President Gordon B. Hinckley: “I regard it as inappropriate for anyone in the Church to pray to our Mother in Heaven.”⁸⁶

Mother in Heaven in the Hereafter

Many believe that after the end of our mortal probation, each of us will return to our heavenly parents’ presence. This homecoming has been a rich topic of thought for many Mormons.⁸⁷ The fourth stanza of Joseph L. Townsend’s “O, What Songs of the Heart” describes the joyous reunion that awaits: “Oh, what songs we’ll employ! / Oh, what welcome we’ll hear! / While our transports of love are complete, / As the heart swells with joy / In embraces most dear / When our heavenly parents we meet!”⁸⁸ Elder Neal A. Maxwell (First Quorum of the Seventy, October 1, 1976–July 23, 1981) mused that “such a regal homecoming [could not] be possible without the anticipatory arrangements of a Heavenly Mother.”⁸⁹ For Elder Orson Pratt (Quorum of the Twelve, April 26, 1835–Aug 20, 1842 and January 20, 1843–October 3, 1881) and President George Q. Cannon, this reunion would include vividly recalling our former life with them.⁹⁰ Other leaders have stressed that only the pure in heart who obey the gospel will return to permanently reside in their presence.⁹¹ As Ruth May Fox imagined in her narrative, Heavenly Mother will ask for a report of our accomplishments. Matilda E. Teasdale wrote, “You . . . [will] go home to Father and Mother to ‘give an account of your labors.’”⁹²

This accounting includes our parenting. In the April 1909 general conference, Elder James G. Duffin (who previously served as president of the Southwestern and Central States Missions, 1900–1904 and 1904–1906 respectively) declared, “We, as parents, give an account to our Father and Mother in heaven of the manner in which we have conducted ourselves toward the precious souls entrusted to us.”⁹³ Charles Lowell Walker recorded how Elders Heber J. Grant (Quorum of the Twelve, October 16, 1882–November 23, 1918) and Anthony W. Ivins (who later served in the First Presidency, March 10, 1921–September 23, 1934) taught that parents are obligated to teach their children the first principles of the gospel before they reach the age of accountability; otherwise, they will stand in “condemnation before our Heavenly Parents.”⁹⁴

Some say that for the righteous Saints, the heavenly reunion will mark a new stage in their association with their Parents. Elder Orson F. Whitney believed that the knowledge of “return[ing] to them, and resum[ing] the

relations of the previous life” conquered the sting of death.⁹⁵ President Spencer W. Kimball supposed that our renewed relationship with our Heavenly Mother would be immensely influential. He reasoned, “Knowing how profoundly our mortal mothers have shaped us here, do we suppose her influence on us as individuals to be less if we live so as to return [to heaven]?”⁹⁶ Accordingly, the loving support and example of *both* Father and Mother will guide us in the eternities.

Conclusion

In this paper we have briefly shown that, historically, there has been substantial discussion and elaboration on the roles and divinity of our Heavenly Mother. Our investigation marshals evidence against some claims that General Authorities and other Church leaders have limited Heavenly Mother’s role to reproduction. It also refutes the suspicion that General Authorities have advocated a position of total sacred silence about her. As Latter-day Saints should be deeply reverent when speaking about any sacred subject, Church leaders may well caution an individual to be respectful of and to avoid teaching unorthodox views about Heavenly Mother. At the same time, we have found no public record of a General Authority advising us to be silent about our Heavenly Mother; indeed, as we have amply demonstrated, many General Authorities have openly taught about her.

While some have claimed that Heavenly Mother’s role has been marginalized or trivialized, we feel that the historical data provides a highly elevated view of Heavenly Mother. The Heavenly Mother portrayed in the teachings we have examined is a procreator and parent, a divine person, a co-creator, a coframer of the plan of salvation, and is involved in this life and the next. Certainly, consideration of these points reinforces several unquestionably important LDS doctrines: divine embodiment, eternal families, divine relationality, the deification of women, the eternal nature and value of gender, and the shared lineage of Gods and humans. Far from degrading either the Heavenly Feminine or the earthly feminine, we feel that these teachings exalt both.

In acknowledgment of this, we can think of no more fitting conclusion than the words uttered by Elder Glenn L. Pace (First Quorum of the Seventy, October 3, 1992–October 2, 2010) at a 2010 BYU devotional: “Sisters, I testify that when you stand in front of your heavenly parents in those royal courts on high and you look into Her eyes and behold Her countenance, any question you ever had about the role of women in the kingdom will evaporate into the rich celestial air, because at that moment you will see standing directly in front of you, your divine nature and destiny.”⁹⁷

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1. Eliza R. Snow, *Eliza R. Snow: The Complete Poetry*, ed. Jill Mulvay Derr and Karen Lynn Davidson (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press; Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2009), 313–14.

2. David L. Paulsen, “Are Christians Mormon? Reassessing Joseph Smith’s Theology in His Bicentennial,” *BYU Studies* 45, no. 1 (2006): 97–98.

3. Jill Mulvay Derr, “The Significance of ‘O My Father’ in the Personal Journey of Eliza R. Snow,” *BYU Studies* 36, no. 1 (1996): 97–100.

4. “The Origin and Destiny of Man,” *Improvement Era* 12 (November 1909): 78.

5. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* 25 (November 1995): 102; emphasis added.

6. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Daughters of God,” *Ensign* 31 (November 1991): 100.

7. Hinckley, “Daughters of God,” 100.

8. Hoyt J. Brewster Jr., *Behold, I Come Quickly: The Last Days and Beyond* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994), 50. Brewster is a Mormon scholar and managing director of the Church’s Priesthood Department.

9. Shirts continued: “It was a clever reply, and, at the time, we all thought it was quite satisfying. None of us realized then that this answer described a lady not quite up to taking care of herself in a tough world, an image drawn purely from certain human conventions and not from divine reality.” Kathryn H. Shirts, “Women in the Image of the Son: Being Female and Being Like Christ,” in *Women Steadfast in Christ: Talks Selected from the 1991 Women’s Conference Co-sponsored by Brigham Young University and the Relief Society*, ed. Dawn Hall Anderson and Marie Cornwall (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 95. Shirts earned a master of

theological studies degree at the Harvard Divinity School and is an author and a reviewer for *BYU Studies*.

10. Amy Irvine, *Trepass: Living at the Edge of the Promised Land* (New York: North Point, 2008), 302. Irvine is an author and wilderness activist.

11. Margaret Merrill Toscano, "Is There a Place for Heavenly Mother in Mormon Theology? An Investigation into Discourses of Power," *Sunstone* 133 (July 2004): 14–15.

12. Linda P. Wilcox, "The Mormon Concept of a Mother in Heaven," *Sunstone* 5 (September-October 1980): 9.

13. Grant Tucker Smith, "I've a Mother There: Identity, Language, and Experience in Mormon Women's Literature" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1993), 20. Smith is a professor at Viterbo University. Aaltje Baumgart also recently claimed, "The LDS Church discourages speaking of the Mother in Heaven. . . . Even articulating Her name 'is akin to profanity.'" Aaltje Baumgart, "Mormon and Feminist? Feminist Reactions to LDS Scripture, Doctrine, and Practices," *AMERICAN@* 1, no. 2 (2003): 7, <http://www.uhu.es/hum676/revista/baumgart.pdf>. Baumgart attributes the phrase "akin to profanity" to Martha Pierce, "Personal Discourse on God the Mother," in *Women and Authority: Re-emerging Mormon Feminism*, ed. Maxine Hanks (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 249. Baumgart earned her master's degree in divinity from the University of Chicago in 2008. She is currently a chaplain resident at the Advocate Christ Medical Center. Terry Tempest Williams is a Mormon author, environmental activist, and professor at the University of Utah.

14. Robert A. Rees complains, "What we are left with is an image of our Heavenly Mother staying at home having billions of children while the men—the Father and his sons—go off to create worlds, spin galaxies, take business trips to outer space. She is happy, it would seem, to let them have all the recognition, all the glory." See Robert A. Rees, "Our Mother in Heaven," *Sunstone* 15 (April 1991): 49–50. See also Jerrie W. Hurd, "The Unnamed Women in Scripture," *Sunstone* 10 (July 1985): 23–25.

15. Barbara J. MacHaffie, *Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition*, 2d ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 245. MacHaffie is a professor of history and religion at Marietta College. Susanna Morrill likewise claims, "Even in the early days of Mormonism, however, church leaders rarely described or even mentioned the Mother in Heaven." Besides a few statements by leaders, Morrill believes that Heavenly Mother appeared only in the private folk theology explored in Mormon women's journals and periodicals. See Susanna Morrill, *White Roses on the Floor of Heaven: Mormon Women's Popular Theology, 1880–1920* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 56.

Danny L. Jorgensen's survey of Mormon theological history leads him to conclude, "Everything known about the Eternal Mother confirms that she was subordinate to the Eternal Father's authority," and that she was not "equal to the Father God." See Danny L. Jorgensen, "Gender-Inclusive Images of God: A Sociological Interpretation of Early Shakerism and Mormonism," *Nova Religio* 4, no. 1 (2000): 72, 75. Carrie A. Miles's words manifest the sad fact that some Mormon women take perceptions about Heavenly Mother's supposed subordination personally, seeing their own roles as theologically marginalized: "We are faced with the possibility that woman's subordination is not only universal, it is eternal

as well." See Carrie A. Miles, "The Genesis of Gender, or Why Mother in Heaven Can't Save You," *Sunstone* 20 (July 1997): 16. While rare, there is limited precedent for what might be perceived as eternal gender subordination. See for instance, Elder S. Dilworth Young, "The Eternal Conflict" (devotional address, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, May 30, 1978), transcript available at <http://speeches.byu.edu/?act=viewitem&id=1064>. He envisages Heavenly Mother "not making earths nor giving . . . law, But doing what a heavenly mother does, Teaching her spirit children to be true . . . What do heavenly mothers say to heavenly children? Faintly to our souls we hear her sweet reply. Obey! That is the law, Hear all of His commands. Obey each one."

16. More specifically, we have consulted First Presidency messages; the *Journal of Discourses*; the *Collected Discourses*; Church manuals; the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*; Church periodicals and newspapers like *New York Messenger and Advocate*, *The Prophet*, *Times and Seasons*, *Millennial Star*, *The Seer*, *The Western Standard*, *Deseret News*, *The Mormon*, *Deseret Weekly News*, *Woman's Exponent*, *Juvenile Instructor*, *The Contributor*, *Young Woman's Journal*, *Improvement Era*, *Latter-day Saints Southern Star*, *Deseret Evening News*, *Liahona: The Elders' Journal*, *Relief Society Magazine*, *Children's Friend*, *Ensign*, *Friend*, *New Era*, *Liahona*, and *Church News*; BYU devotional speeches; Women's Conference addresses; books written by prophets, Apostles, and other General Authorities and Church leaders; books written by Latter-day Saint historians and scholars; early Mormon almanacs; personal journals and letters of prominent Latter-day Saints; Utah and Mormon journals and newspapers like *Logan Leader*, *Salt Lake Herald*, *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, and *Morgan County News*; histories of Utah; academic journals like *Church History*, *Populations Studies*, *Pacific Historical Review*, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Annual Review of Sociology*, *Sociological Spectrum*, *Women's Review of Books*, *Western Historical Quarterly*, *Journal of American History*, *Religion and American Culture*, *Religious Studies*, *Review of Religious Research*, *Nova Religio*, *Sociology of Religion*, *Journal of Feminist Studies*, *AMERICAN@*, *Intercultural Education*, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *Feminist Theology*, *BYU Studies*, *Sunstone*, *Exponent II*, and *Dialogue*; and master's theses and doctoral dissertations.

It should be noted that material from some time periods, such as the period from 1940 to 1970, are likely lower in frequency due to our inability to access digitized or more easily available sources. Thus, some trends in the historical teachings could be corrected through further research.

17. Joseph F. Smith, "The Father and the Son," *Improvement Era* 19 (August 1916): 942. The message stipulates that "so far as the stages of eternal progression and attainment have been made known through divine revelation, we are to understand that only resurrected and glorified beings can become parents of spirit offspring." See also Orson Pratt, "Celestial Marriage," *The Seer* 1 (October 1853): 158.

18. Parley P. Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology* (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855), 171; "The Origin and Destiny of Woman," *Latter-day Saints Southern Star* 1 (January 7, 1899): 45 (this article was first published on August 29, 1857, in a periodical published in New York and edited by John Taylor); Orson F. Whitney, "What Is Education?" *Deseret News* 20, no. 41 (1885): 1; Rulon S. Wells, "Believe

the Truth for Truth's Sake," *Liahona: The Elders' Journal* 10 (November 19, 1912): 338; James E. Talmage, *The Vitality of Mormonism: Brief Essays on Distinctive Doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Boston: Gorham, 1919), 244; Milton R. Hunter, *Pearl of Great Price Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1951), 105–6; "The Origin of Man," in *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint*, comp. James R. Clark, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970), 4:206; Ezra Taft Benson, *So Shall Ye Reap* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1960), 170.

19. Boyd K. Packer, "Counsel to Young Men," *Ensign* 39 (May 2009): 50.

20. Orson F. Whitney, "Latter-day Saint Ideals and Institutions," *Improvement Era* 30 (August 1927): 851.

21. Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association.

22. Susa Young Gates, "The Editor's Department," *Young Woman's Journal* 2 (July 1891): 475. Sister Susa Young Gates was Brigham Young's daughter, a famous LDS feminist, and the editor of the Church's officialized *Young Woman's Journal* and *Relief Society Magazine*.

23. Susa Young Gates, "In the Realm of Girlhood: Lesson V," *Young Woman's Journal* 17 (January 1906): 41.

24. See "Family: A Proclamation," 102; "Origin of Man," 205. See also The First Presidency, "'Mormon' View of Evolution," *Improvement Era* 28 (September 1925): 1090.

25. George Q. Cannon, "Mr. Canon's [sic] Lecture," *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, April 15, 1884, 8.

26. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, Twelfth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 25.

27. John Henry Evans, *A Short History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. Gordon B. Hinckley (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1938), 163.

28. B. H. Roberts, *Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1912), 2:439.

29. Susa Young Gates, *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1911), 234.

30. Joseph F. Smith, "Marriage God-Ordained and Sanctioned," *Improvement Era* 5, no. 9 (1902): 717–18. This quote was republished in *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998), 181.

31. Orson F. Whitney, "Bishop O. F. Whitney," *Woman's Exponent* 24 (June 15, 1895): 9. Whitney was a ward bishop and professor at the time of this pronouncement. In support of Whitney's statement, James E. Talmage claimed, "It is within [man's] power to follow in the footsteps of his celestial parents and to reach the rank and station occupied by those who have trodden that path before." See James E. Talmage, "What Mormonism Stands For," *Deseret Evening News*, January 16, 1909, 25. See also Hunter, *Pearl of Great Price Commentary*, 104–6; and Eldred G. Smith, "Opposition in Order to Strengthen Us," *Ensign* 4 (January 1974): 62. Joseph Smith taught that the Father "was once a man like us," at least in that he "dwelt on an earth" as did Jesus Christ. Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the*

Prophet Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 376. Just as the Son was more than merely mortal during his sojourn on an earth, logically Heavenly Father and Mother may have been so as well.

32. Orson F. Whitney, "What Is Education?" *Contributor* 6, no. 9 (1885): 347; Orson Pratt, "Sunday Services," *Logan Leader* 1 (November 13, 1879): 3.

33. For instance, see Melvin J. Ballard, "The Pre-existence of Man," *Liahona: The Elders' Journal* 24 (June 29, 1926): 5–10; Sarah M. Kimball, "Demonstration in Honor of Bishop Hunter," *Woman's Exponent* 8, no. 3 (1879): 22; Hunter, *Pearl of Great Price Commentary*, 104; James E. Talmage, "The Philosophical Basis of 'Mormonism,'" *Liahona: The Elders' Journal* 13 (November 9, 1915): 307; Wilford Woodruff, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 18:32; James E. Talmage, "The Eternity of Sex," *Young Woman's Journal* 25 (October 1914): 603; James E. Talmage, "Relationship of Jesus Christ to the Eternal Father," *Liahona: The Elders' Journal* 13 (August 24, 1915): 133; Milton R. Hunter, *Will a Man Rob God? The Laws and Doctrine of Tithing, Fast Offerings, and Observance of Fast Day* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1952), 183.

34. John A. Widtsoe, "Everlasting Motherhood," *Millennial Star* 90 (May 10, 1928): 298. Similarly, Widtsoe would write later that "since we have a Father, who is our God, we must also have a mother, who possesses the attributes of Godhood." John A. Widtsoe, *A Rational Theology: As Taught by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1937), 69.

35. James E. Talmage, "The Philosophical Basis of 'Mormonism,'" *Improvement Era* 18 (September 1915): 950.

36. Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, ed. John A. Widtsoe (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954), 51.

37. Susa Young Gates, "The Vision Beautiful," *Improvement Era* 23 (April 1920): 542. Sister Gates was the corresponding secretary of the Relief Society Presidency when this article was written.

38. George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of President George Q. Cannon*, ed. Jerreld L. Newquist, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Zion's Book Store, 1957), 1:135–36. Cannon's remarks were first published as "Topics of the Times: The Worship of Female Deities," *Juvenile Instructor* 30 (May 15, 1895): 314–17. Here, Cannon seems to be responding to the writings of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Stanton was in close association with Sister Emmeline B. Wells (general secretary of the Relief Society; 1888–1910), who worked as editor for the *Woman's Exponent*, an LDS-themed publication. A month and a half prior to Cannon's remarks in the *Juvenile Instructor*, Sister Wells published an excerpt from Stanton's *The Woman's Bible* in the "The Woman's Bible," *Woman's Exponent* 23 (April 1, 1895): 248. In the excerpt, Stanton claims that Genesis 1:26–27 clearly shows "a consultation in the Godhead" where "masculine and feminine elements are equally represented." This consultation involves the doctrine of a trinity, but not that of three male personages; Stanton's trinity comprises instead "Heavenly Father, Mother, and Son." Stanton claims women's dignity is being raised by this depiction and that women are recognizing that their prayers should be addressed to a Heavenly Mother as well as to a Father. She thought the biblical text made it plain that there is "a feminine element in the Godhead, equal in power and glory with the masculine." Stanton claimed that the masculine and feminine forces in the image of God . . . must have existed eternally, in all forms of matter and

mind.” Cannon’s remarks use Stanton’s wording and no doubt seem spurred by this excerpt.

39. Cannon, *Gospel Truth*, 3–4, 129. Regarding queens, many Mormons look at the “queen of heaven” mentioned in Jeremiah and the queen in Psalm 45:9 as referring to the wife of God. Benjamin G. Ferris noted this in his *Utah and the Mormons: The History, Government, Doctrines, Customs, and Prospects of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1856), 242. The Psalms reference was also noted by Appleton Milo Harmon in his journal. He copied a letter, written in May 1852 by William W. Phelps, that defended polygamy. The letter contained the following statement: “When the suffering female kind over the great globe are acquainted with the fact that ‘the daughters of Kings are among the Lord’s honour-able wives in heavn (Psalm 45) and on the right hand the Queen in Gold of Opher,’ you will hear of more honourable women clinging to the Holy priesthood than you ever thought of. . . . Brother Gordon look into my almanac for this year and you will observe an account of the ‘Eternal Mother’ on the thirty second page, and on the 37th ‘the philosophy of the heavns.’ Try a little of the mormon clasick.” See Appleton Milo Harmon, *Appleton Milo Harmon’s Early History and Journal for His Travels through the United States, England, and Scotland in 1850, 1851, and 1852* (s.l., n.d.), 292, copy in Americana Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

40. Orson F. Whitney, “Our Mother in Heaven His Theme,” *Deseret Evening News*, July 16, 1906, 5. At the time, Whitney was a newly ordained member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

41. [Rudger Clawson], “Our Mother in Heaven,” *Millennial Star* 72 (September 29, 1910): 619–20. Rudger Clawson, being editor at the time, has traditionally been assumed to be the author of the article.

42. [Clawson], “Our Mother in Heaven,” 620.

43. For discussions of LDS understandings of the Trinity, especially as contrasted with classical Christian views, see David L. Paulsen, “Are Christians Mormon? Reassessing Joseph Sith’s Theology in His Bicentennial,” *BYU Studies* 45, no. 1 (2006): 63–72; and David L. Paulsen and Brett McDonald, “Joseph Smith and the Trinity: An Analysis and Defense of the Social Model of the Godhead,” *Faith and Philosophy* 25, no. 1 (2008): 47–74.

44. Elder LeGrand Richards (Quorum of the Twelve, April 6, 1952–January 11, 1983) reported having said the following while addressing an audience of evangelical and congregational clergymen: “Toward the close of my remarks, the man in charge said, ‘Now, Mr. Richards, we’ve heard it said that you believe God has a wife. Would you explain that to us?’ I think he thought he had me over a barrel or in a corner that I couldn’t get out of. Rather facetiously I said, ‘Well, I don’t see how in the world God could have a son without a wife, do you?’ They all began to twitter, and I didn’t have any trouble with that question.” LeGrand Richards, “Missionary Experiences” (devotional address, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, October 20, 1981), available at <http://speeches.byu.edu/?act=viewitem&id=499>.

45. As to the origin of the Holy Ghost, latter-day revelation does not provide, to our knowledge, any definitive statement. Yet some Latter-day Saints have taught that he is a spiritual son of God. For instance, Mormon scholar Joseph Fielding McConkie wrote: “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that the Holy Ghost is a spirit man, a spirit son of God the Father.” See

Joseph Fielding McConkie, "Holy Ghost," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:649. However, owing to the paucity of revealed information on the subject, such cannot be claimed with complete certitude.

46. Erastus Snow, in *Journal of Discourses*, 19:269–70, March 3, 1878. There has been a history of misreading this passage to suggest that Snow was presenting a God who is a hermaphrodite. The first speculation we found started with Linda P. Wilcox in "Mormon Concept of a Mother in Heaven," *Sunstone* 5 (September/October 1980): 11. Allen W. Litchfield duplicated this error in his master's thesis, "Behind the Veil: The Heavenly Mother Concept among Members of Women's Support Groups in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (Brigham Young University, 1987), 6. Clearly these writers are not fully considering Erastus Snow's writings on the subject. The passage reads much clearer within Mormon discourse and Snow's own declarations if read from a perspective describing social unity in marriage. Snow declared, "It is left for us to infer this from what we see and know of all living things in the earth including man. The male and female principle is united and both necessary to the accomplishment of the object of their being, and if this be not the case with our Father in heaven after whose image we are created, then it is an anomaly in nature. But to our minds the idea of a Father suggests that of a Mother. . . . Hence when it is said that God created our first parents in His likeness—'in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them'—it is intimated in language sufficiently plain to my understanding that the male and female principle was present with the Gods as it is with man." Erastus Snow, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26:214, May 31, 1885. Such sentiments do not imply that God is some sort of divine hermaphrodite.

In another discourse, Snow would teach, "To [the Saints] this great truth is most precious, precious to contemplate, and it is an inexpressible privilege to be able to draw nigh unto Him and say 'Our Father' in simplicity and faith, knowing that He is indeed our Father and that we are His children. And immediately this great truth is impressed upon our minds, we very naturally begin to associate with it the idea of mother. This is a natural result of our knowledge and experience of human affairs; that earthly tabernacles owe their origin to mother as well as to father; that the two principles are associated together, and that by the union of the two principles, male and female, God has ordained an increase, not alone to his children but to all other branches of the animal kingdom . . . the two principles going hand and hand together. Without the two principles being thus united there is no increase. Further, we are taught that things on earth are organized after the pattern of heavenly things. Need it, therefore, be a marvel and a wonder to the world that we should irresistibly be carried forward to this conclusion—that if we have a Father in heaven we have also a Mother there." Erastus Snow, "Discourse by Apostle Erastus Snow," *Deseret News*, October 22, 1884, 2. The unity of the male and female principles seem to harmonize better with the statement in Genesis that male and female shall cleave one to another and "be one flesh" and Paul's affirmation that "neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord," than with urging that God is a divine hermaphrodite (Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 11:11). In the same discourse, Snow said, "That is, in the eternal power and Godhead the two principles must necessarily be connected to accomplish the objects and purposes of their being; that they cannot attain to exaltation and glory

otherwise. This is also set forth by Moses in the history of the first part of Genesis, when the Father said unto the Gods that were with Him, ‘Let us make man in our image,’ and they went to and made man in the image of God. ‘In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.’ This is the language we find in Genesis used by Moses to illustrate this great truth. ‘In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.’ That being the case—that they were created both male and female and in the likeness of the Godhead—can we come to any other conclusion than that the Godhead is composed of the two same principles—male and female—and that the Apostle Paul comprehended this truth when he said that the woman was not without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord.” Snow, “Discourse by Apostle Erastus Snow,” 2.

It also echoes the language of another statement of Snow’s that stresses marriage: “There is no Lord, there is no God in which the two principles are not blended, nor can be . . . but this Godhead composing two parts, male and female.” Erastus Snow, in *Journal of Discourses*, 19:272, March 3, 1878. Latter-day Saint scripture has taught that no person can reach the highest degree of the celestial kingdom without being sealed to a spouse (D&C 131:1–3). Nowhere in Mormon discourse is there teaching that individuals will become androgynous or hermaphroditic via deification. Rather, deification follows through the righteous social unity of husband and wife in the hereafter. For instance, Orson Pratt would affirm, “No man can be ‘in the Lord,’ in the full sense of this passage, that is, he cannot enter into all the fullness of his glory, ‘without the woman.’ And no woman can be ‘in the Lord,’ or in the enjoyment of a fullness, ‘without the man.” Orson Pratt, “Celestial Marriage,” *The Seer* 1 (April 1853): 59.

47. Erastus Snow, in *Journal of Discourses*, 19:272–73, March 3, 1878.

48. Bryant S. Hinckley, ed., *Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin Joseph Ballard* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1949), 205–6; Hugh B. Brown, *Continuing the Quest* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1961), 8; Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 516–17. James E. Talmage would write, “Neither of the sexes is complete in itself as a counterpart of Deity. We are expressly told that God is the Father of spirits, and to apprehend the literalness of this solemn truth we must know that a mother of spirits is an existent personality.” James E. Talmage, *A Study of the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1982), 442–43. Patriarch to the Church Eldred G. Smith remarked likewise in an address to BYU students on March 10, 1964: “The only one I know of who has been resurrected and had children—that I know of—is my Father in heaven and my Mother in heaven. You could not have a Father in heaven without a Mother in heaven. . . . Our Father in heaven must have gone through a life of mortality and become resurrected, and we have to have a Mother in heaven, because we could not have a Father without a Mother at any time, in any life. We were their children born after their resurrection.” Eldred G. Smith, “Exaltation,” in *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year, 1963–64* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1964), 6.

49. Orson Pratt is a noted exception to the usual lack of specificity. In defining “divinity,” Orson Pratt claimed, “Gods . . . possess a fullness of truth, of knowledge, of wisdom, of light, of intelligence. . . . The fullness of all these attributes is what constitutes God.” Then he asserted that both males and females enjoy this fullness. Orson Pratt, “The Pre-Existence of Man,” *The Seer* 1 (February

1853): 24. He would also write: "The Celestial male and female, after the resurrection, will be perfected in knowledge, and in holiness, and in pure affection and love: they will know as God knows; be pure as He is pure, and love as He loves: their knowledge, their purity, and their affections, before their celestial glorification, will increase alike, and keep pace with each other, until they are perfected, when they will enjoy in fullness every attribute and affection which God himself enjoys, and will be like Him in all these things." Orson Pratt, "Celestial Marriage," *The Seer* 1 (October 1853): 158.

50. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 18:259, October 8, 1876; italics added.

51. Edward Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877), 193–94.

52. [Charles W. Penrose], "Women in Heaven," *Millennial Star* 64 (June 26, 1902): 410. This article was originally printed in the *Deseret News*; Penrose is presumed to have been the author because he was editor of the *Deseret News* at the time.

53. Hunter, *Will a Man Rob God?* 183–84. See also Milton R. Hunter, "God's Greatest Gift," *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year, 1964–1965* (Provo: Brigham Young University, 1965), 6–7, available online at <http://speeches.byu.edu/?act=viewitem&id=973>.

54. Patricia T. Holland, "Filling the Measure of Our Creation," in Jeffrey R. Holland and Patricia T. Holland, *On Earth As It Is in Heaven* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 4.

55. M. Russell Ballard, *When Thou Art Converted: Continuing Our Search for Happiness* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2001), 62.

56. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Gospel Principles* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1978), 10.

57. Chieko N. Okazaki, *Sanctuary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997), 59.

58. Theodore M. Burton, "A Marriage to Last through Eternity," *Ensign* 17 (June 1987): 14.

59. Milton R. Hunter, *The Gospel through the Ages* (Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallis, 1945), 4. Hunter's work was written and published under the direction of the General Priesthood Committee of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

60. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Gospel Principles* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997), 19.

61. Chieko N. Okazaki, "Grace and Glory: Strength from Our Savior," in *Women in the Covenant of Grace: Talks Selected from the 1993 Women's Conference Sponsored by Brigham Young University and the Relief Society*, ed. Dawn Hall Anderson and Susette Fletcher Green (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994), 243–44.

62. Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997), 204.

63. L[ula] L. Greene Richards, "A Thread of Thought," *Woman's Exponent* 29 (August 15 and September 1, 1900): 27.

64. Mark E. Petersen, "Be Ye an Exponent of Christ," in *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year, 1965–1966* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1966), 4, available online at <http://speeches.byu.edu/?act=viewitem&id=533>. Elder Neil L. Anderson recently shared a similar message: "We are sons and daughters

of heavenly parents who love us and who have sent us on a course to become more like Them.” Neil L. Anderson, “Looking Back and Looking Forward,” *New Era* 39 (August 2009): 2–4.

65. Thomas S. Monson, *An Invitation to Exaltation* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997), 4.

66. Snow wrote this poem while living in Nauvoo, and the text was published in *Times and Seasons* in 1845 under the title “My Father in Heaven.” Snow, *Complete Poetry*, 313–14. Snow also published this as the first poem in her first published volume of poems under the title “Invocation or the Eternal Father and Mother.” See Jill Mulvay Derr, “The Significance of ‘O My Father’ in the Personal Journey of Eliza R. Snow,” *BYU Studies* 36, no. 1 (1996–97): 84–126. This hymn is frequently cited for espousing the unique doctrine of heavenly parentage; Elder Bruce R. McConkie comments: “Implicit in the Christian verity that all men are the spirit children of an *Eternal Father* is the usually unspoken truth that they are also the offspring of an *Eternal Mother*. . . . This glorious truth of celestial parentage, including specifically both a Father and a Mother, is heralded forth by song in one of the greatest of Latter-day Saint hymns, *O My Father* by Eliza R. Snow.” McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 516–17; italics in original.

67. Ruth May Fox, “The Parable of the Ten Talents: A Dialogue,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 17 (April 1906): 172–75. At the time this story was composed, Fox was the first counselor in the general presidency of the Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Association. She would later become its third president.

68. Fox chooses ten daughters to receive the ten talents. The ten daughters are ten biblical characters: Rachel, Leah, Rebecca, Sarah, Hagar, Deborah, Naomi, Hannah, Mary, and Ruth. The character traits bestowed upon each daughter generally correspond with the positive characteristic that manifests itself through the character as depicted in the biblical text. For instance, Sarah’s laughter and hope is noted, Leah is blessed with patience, and Deborah exemplifies gratitude. Fox, “Parable of the Ten Talents,” 172–75.

69. This is another instance where the Heavenly Mother is seen as responsible for the shaping of our talents and nature.

70. Fox, “Parable of the Ten Talents,” 172.

71. Fox, “Parable of the Ten Talents,” 173–75.

72. Orson F. Whitney, “Death,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 27 (April 1916): 200.

73. Harold B. Lee, *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee: Eleventh President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 20–21.

74. John Longden, “The Worth of Souls,” *Relief Society Magazine* 44 (August 1957): 492, 494.

75. “The Twelve Apostles Today,” *First Intermediate Sunday School Lessons: What It Means to Be a Latter-day Saint* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union Board, 1944), 73.

76. As quoted in Smith, *I’ve a Mother There*, 57 n. 5. Smith references the work to Sister Eliza R. Snow’s Trail Diary, which is held in the Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. The poem dates from May 2, 1847. Interestingly, the trail diary version of the poem is different from the published version, which claims the saints “Will, with “prayers and supplication, / Plead thy cause before the throne / Of the great Eternal Father, / Where

thy works of love are known.” The original trail diary suggests it can be read as “mother,” especially in light of the many other poems of Sister Eliza R. Snow that refer to heavenly parents, Heavenly Mother, or the exalted mother Eve. See Snow, *Complete Poetry*, 358.

77. Harold B. Lee, “The Influence and Responsibility of Women,” *Relief Society Magazine* 51 (February 1964): 85. At this time, Harold B. Lee was serving as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and made these remarks during the October general Relief Society meeting.

78. Lee, “Influence and Responsibility of Women,” 85, citing William Dudley Pelley, “Seven Minutes in Heaven,” *Improvement Era* 32 (July 1929): 717; italics in original.

79. Okazaki, *Sanctuary*, 149; see also Neal A. Maxwell, *If Thou Endure It Well* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 129.

80. M. Russell Ballard, *Our Search for Happiness* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993), 70; The First Presidency, “Christmas Message to Children of the Church in All the World,” *Friend* 4 (December 1974): 2–3. Sister Chieko Okazaki noted that our heavenly parents’ “hearts yearn over [us] in joy and love. They want to give [us] all the treasures of eternity, and they hope steadfastly that [we] will be the kind of [people] who will want the riches of eternity.” Okazaki, *Sanctuary*, 98. See also Spencer W. Kimball, “Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters,” *Ensign* 8 (November 1978): 101–5; Paul H. Dunn, “The Cheering Section,” *Ensign* 10 (June 1980): 4.

81. Jeffrey R. Holland, *However Long and Hard the Road* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 47. When this was published, Holland was a regional representative and president of BYU.

82. Okazaki, “Grace and Glory,” 244.

83. John A. Widtsoe, “Looking toward the Temple,” *Ensign* 2 (January 1972): 56.

84. Hunter, *Gospel through the Ages*, 44–45.

85. Dallin H. Oaks, “Fundamental Premises of Our Faith,” *Deseret News*, 7 <http://www.deseretnews.com/media/pdf/24370.pdf>. This speech was given February 26, 2010, in Ames Courtroom, Harvard Law School. Elder Oaks had previously taught this principle in general conference: “Our theology begins with heavenly parents. Our highest aspiration is to be like them.” Dallin H. Oaks, “Apostasy and Restoration,” *Ensign* 25 (May 1995): 84.

86. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Daughters of God,” *Ensign* 21 (November 1991): 100. See John 14:6: “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” See also 3 Ne. 18:19: “Ye must always pray unto the Father in my name.”

87. David C. Kimball, “Reflections on the Destiny of Man,” *Millennial Star* 7 (June 15, 1846): 184; Nephi Anderson, “A Little Visit to Glory-Land,” *Millennial Star* 67 (September 7, 1905): 562–63; Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 25.

88. “Oh, What Songs of the Heart” was first published in the *Juvenile Instructor* and then was included in the *Deseret Sunday School Song Book* in 1892. It is hymn number 286 in the current LDS hymnal. See Karen Lynn Davidson, *Our Latter-day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 288–89.

Sister Matilda E. Teasdale also thought the reunion would be very joyous. She wrote, “How proud our parents are of a son who has filled an honorable mission!

with what joy they welcome him home! Do you not think that our heavenly parents have greater joy in welcoming home their children who have been faithful and true while on their earthly missions? I think so.” M.[atilda] E. Teasdale, “To the Young Ladies of Zion,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 3 (July 1892): 472. Sister Matilda E. Picton Teasdale was the wife of LDS Apostle George Teasdale. She held responsible positions in the Relief Society and the YLMIA. At the organization of the Mexican Mission, she was sustained as president of the YLMIA of the mission, and as the secretary of the Relief Society of the mission. She was a frequent contributor to the first several volumes of the *Young Woman’s Journal*.

89. Neal A. Maxwell, “The Women of God,” *Ensign* 8 (May 1978): 11.

90. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 14:241–42, August 20, 1871; George Q. Cannon, “Discourse by President George Q. Cannon,” *Millennial Star* 51 (July 22, 1889): 450.

91. James E. Talmage, “Obtaining Divine Forgiveness,” *Millennial Star* 54 (March 28, 1892): 194. Orson F. Whitney urged that “we must be begotten and born again, in the similitude of those other begettings and births, or we cannot regain the presence of our eternal Father and Mother.” Orson F. Whitney, *Gospel Themes: A Treatise on Salient Features of “Mormonism”* (Salt Lake City, 1914), 65. Elder Hyrum G. Smith, as presiding patriarch of the Church, addressed the Saints and told them that their reunion with heavenly parents was conditional on their faithfulness. See Hyrum G. Smith, in *Ninety-fifth Semi-annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1924), 16. Elder Robert L. Simpson (member of the First Quorum of the Seventy) taught how “the lofty goal of exaltation or living eternally again in the presence of our Heavenly Parents can only be achieved as a family unit, and only after that family has developed a Christlike pattern of living within a frame work of conformity to priesthood principles.” Robert L. Simpson, “Q&A: Questions and Answers,” *New Era* 7 (July 1977): 11. See also Norma B. Smith, “Remember, Enjoy, Prepare,” *New Era* 10 (July 1980): 10–13; James T. Duke, “Marriage: Eternal Marriage,” in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 2:859.

92. Teasdale, “To the Young Ladies,” 472.

93. Elder James G. Duffin, in *The 79th Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909), 24.

94. Charles Lowell Walker, *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, ed. A. Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larson (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1980), 2:100. This journal entry is dated January 19, 1896.

95. Orson F. Whitney, “We Walk by Faith,” *Improvement Era* 19 (May 1916): 609.

96. Spencer W. Kimball, “The True Way of Life and Salvation,” *Ensign* 8 (May 1978): 6.

97. Glenn L. Pace, “The Divine Nature and Destiny of Women” (devotional address, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, March 9, 2010), available online at <http://speeches.byu.edu/?act=viewitem&id=1886>.

And glady wolde he lerne and glady teche

—Chaucer

From Holsteins I learned to recycle rinds
and gristle, and to chew meticulously.

From my father, the relationship of visions
and dirt. From my mother I learned how to polish.

From the Great Salt Lake I learned that faith
by itself can't keep you afloat.

From reading aloud in junior high, how
to pronounce *debris*, *Yosemite*, *Potomac*.

From reading a news release, that you
never know someone that well.

From marriage, that you need to trust anyway.
From Shirley McClain, that small eyes

can *cha cha*. From Andy Warhol,
to love and embrace boring things.

From motherhood, to pinch the nose and jump
even though you never learned to swim.

From literature, to live with uncertainty.
From dangling, that rungs of doubt have traction.

—Marilyn Bushman-Carlton

“The Testimony of Men”

William E. McLellin and the Book of Mormon Witnesses

Mitchell K. Schaefer

A recently discovered circa 1871 manuscript written by William McLellin, an early Mormon Apostle and, later, apostate, includes a passage that narrates how, in 1833, he engaged two of the three and one of the eight witnesses of the Book of Mormon about the nature of their experiences as witnesses. The testimonies of the witnesses printed in each copy of the Book of Mormon are some of the most compelling evidence in favor of its miraculous revelation and translation. For believers, this evidence approaches proof of Joseph Smith’s miraculous claims. But some have questioned the nature of the testimonies and made a strong counterargument that what the witnesses experienced was solely supernatural and not, therefore, credible. The witnesses, this argument asserts, only experienced the plates via an unverifiable subjective experience, rendering their statements void.

Historians have generally adopted one of two interpretations of the historical record by and about the Book of Mormon witnesses. Historians who believe the statements of the witnesses as credible usually focus foremost on the original testimonies published in the Book of Mormon and on the witnesses’ fidelity to their statements despite dissent and disaffection by many of them from the Church itself. The leading historian espousing this interpretation of the evidence is Richard Lloyd Anderson. In his work *Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses*, Anderson holds that despite the fact that the witnesses left the Church at one point or another, they never denied their testimonies of the events that solidified their belief in

the Book of Mormon.¹ More recently, scholars including Dan Peterson and Scott Faulring have also defended the evidence that the witnesses unflinchingly maintained their testimonies.²

Dan Vogel articulated a counterargument, namely that the accounts of the three and eight witnesses are unreliably subjective and cannot be taken at face value.³ This interpretation focuses on the varied and complex body of second- or thirdhand evidence to build an alternative interpretation to the one that emerges from the witnesses' direct statements and from Anderson's scholarship.

The purpose of this publication is to facilitate access to William McLellin's contribution to the historical record, a remarkable piece of little-known secondhand evidence, for consideration by everyone interested in the witnesses and the history and nature of their testimonies. McLellin held a peculiar position relative to the Book of Mormon witnesses. From his first knowledge of the Book of Mormon in the summer of 1831 until his last known writings nearly a half-century later, he affirmed his faith in the testimony of the Book of Mormon witnesses based on his personal experiences with them. When James Cobb, a Salt Lake City resident antagonistic to Mormonism, wrote to McLellin in August 1880 seeking evidence to undermine the Book of Mormon, McLellin wrote back, adamantly assuring Cobb that when he had last seen David Whitmer in 1879, Whitmer testified "to the truth of the book—as sincerely and solemnly as when he bore it to me in Paris, Ill. in July 1831. I believed him then and still believe him."⁴

William E. McLellin and the Book of Mormon Witnesses

When William E. McLellin first heard the message of the restored gospel in 1831, it came from the mouths of Harvey Whitlock and Book of

1. Richard L. Anderson, *Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981); see also Richard L. Anderson, "Attempts to Redefine the Experience of the Eight Witnesses," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 18–31.

2. For example, see Dan Peterson, review of *Mormonism*, by Kurt Van Gardon, *FARMS Review* 8, no. 1 (1996): 95–103; Scott Faulring, "The Return of Oliver Cowdery," in *Oliver Cowdery: Scribe, Elder, Witness* (Provo, Utah: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2006): 321–62. Both of these articles and more are available at maxwellinstitute.byu.edu.

3. Dan Vogel, "The Validity of the Witnesses' Testimonies," in *American Apocrypha: Essays on the Book of Mormon*, ed. Dan Vogel and Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), 79–121.

4. Stan Larsen and Samuel J. Passey, eds., *The William E. McLellin Papers, 1854–1880* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2007), 522.

Mormon witness David Whitmer. McLellin recorded in his journal that after Whitlock preached about the Book of Mormon and explained why he believed it was a divine revelation, “D[avid] Whitmer then arose and bore testimony to having seen an Holy Angel who had made known the truth of [the Book of Mormon] to him.”⁵ McLellin followed the Mormon missionaries to Independence, Missouri, where, after interviewing other witnesses and learning more from the Book of Mormon itself, he felt compelled to pray for his own testimony of it. In his August 20, 1831, journal entry he recorded, “I rose early and betook myself to earnest pray to God to direct me into truth; and from all the light that I could gain by examinations searches and researches I was bound as an honest man to acknowledge the truth and Validity of the book of Mormon.”⁶ As McLellin’s journey through Mormonism progressed, he also bore testimony of Joseph Smith’s calling and authority. Nearly a year after his baptism, McLellin wrote to his relatives that he had spent about three weeks with Joseph, “and from my acquaintance then and until now I can truly say I believe him to be a man of God. A Prophet, a Seer and Revelater to the church of christ.” Later in the same letter, McLellin related, “We belive that Joseph Smith is a true Prophet or Seer of the Lord and that he has power and does receive revelations from God, and that these revelations when received are of divine Authority in the church of Christ.”⁷ In 1835, the Book of Mormon’s three witnesses chose McLellin as one of twelve Apostles. But McLellin’s formal affiliation with the Church apparently ended in May 1838 when a bishop’s council heard his confession that he had “indulged himself in his lustful desires” after hearing that “the heads of the Church . . . had transgressed, and got out of the way.”⁸

Certainly after and perhaps even before leaving the Church, McLellin questioned his earlier conviction of Joseph’s authority and the integrity of his revelations. It is the more remarkable, then, that his conviction of the Book of Mormon endured for the remaining half century of his life. Nothing in his lifetime of writing casts doubt on or dismisses his early and profound experience with the Book of Mormon and its witnesses. The document below records yet another event in McLellin’s life, not mentioned in his other writings, that further solidified his faith in the Book of Mormon. In this document, McLellin narrates a harrowing experience as the Saints

5. Jan Shippo and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 29.

6. Shippo and Welch, *Journals of William E. McLellin*, 33.

7. Shippo and Welch, *Journals of William E. McLellin*, 79–84.

8. Dean C. Jessee, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Journals, Volume 1: 1832–1839* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2008), 268.

were forced from Jackson County in the summer of 1833. McLellin, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer feared for their lives and made a covert escape through the woods. McLellin recounted the testimony he elicited from Whitmer and Cowdery in this circumstance and then added his own views about it. McLellin recorded his account of these events sometime between January 4, 1871, and January 15, 1872. Historian D. Michael Quinn has demonstrated that at times McLellin attempted, through his later writings, to remove himself from history and place himself almost as an omniscient being, watching as others, such as Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, acted in history.⁹ That indeed seems characteristic of McLellin's later writings, including the 264-page manuscript from which the pages cited here are taken. But in this brief narrative McLellin resumes the characteristic trait of his earlier missionary journals and earlier writings. He writes of himself as one of the historical actors. This document places McLellin back in the thick of the dramatic history as a witness of the Book of Mormon witnesses, and it does so in his own words.

William E. McLellin's Papers

In 1994, Jan Shipps and John Welch published McLellin's missionary journals as *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831-1836*.¹⁰ In 2007, Stan Larsen and Samuel Passey published McLellin's later manuscripts and letters in *The William E. McLellin Papers, 1854-1880*. Larsen and Passey compiled McLellin's seven known notebooks in chronological order. They designated the 1871 notebook as Notebook 2 and titled it "On the Testimony of Book of Mormon Witnesses."¹¹ However, the copy of the record Larsen and Passey worked from was made in 1929 and is incomplete. They worked from photographs of the original document made in 1929 by C. Edward Miller, church historian of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (now Community of Christ). The poor images captured only partially the text on pages 166 and 167 of the original manuscript and proved difficult to decipher. Larsen and Passey also state, "In 1929, Paul M. Hanson quoted [in an article, 'Unwavering Testimony,' published in the *Saints' Herald*] from pages 166-67 of this particular notebook and added that it consisted of 264 pages and bore the date of 15 January 1872." Larsen and Passey claimed Notebook 2 was no longer extant, and as a result

9. D. Michael Quinn, "My Eyes Were Holden in Those Days': A Study of Selective Memory," in Larsen and Passey, *William E. McLellin Papers*, 59-82.

10. Shipps and Welch's volume won the Steven F. Christensen Best Documentary Award from the Mormon History Association.

11. Larsen and Passey, *William E. McLellin Papers*, 253-55.

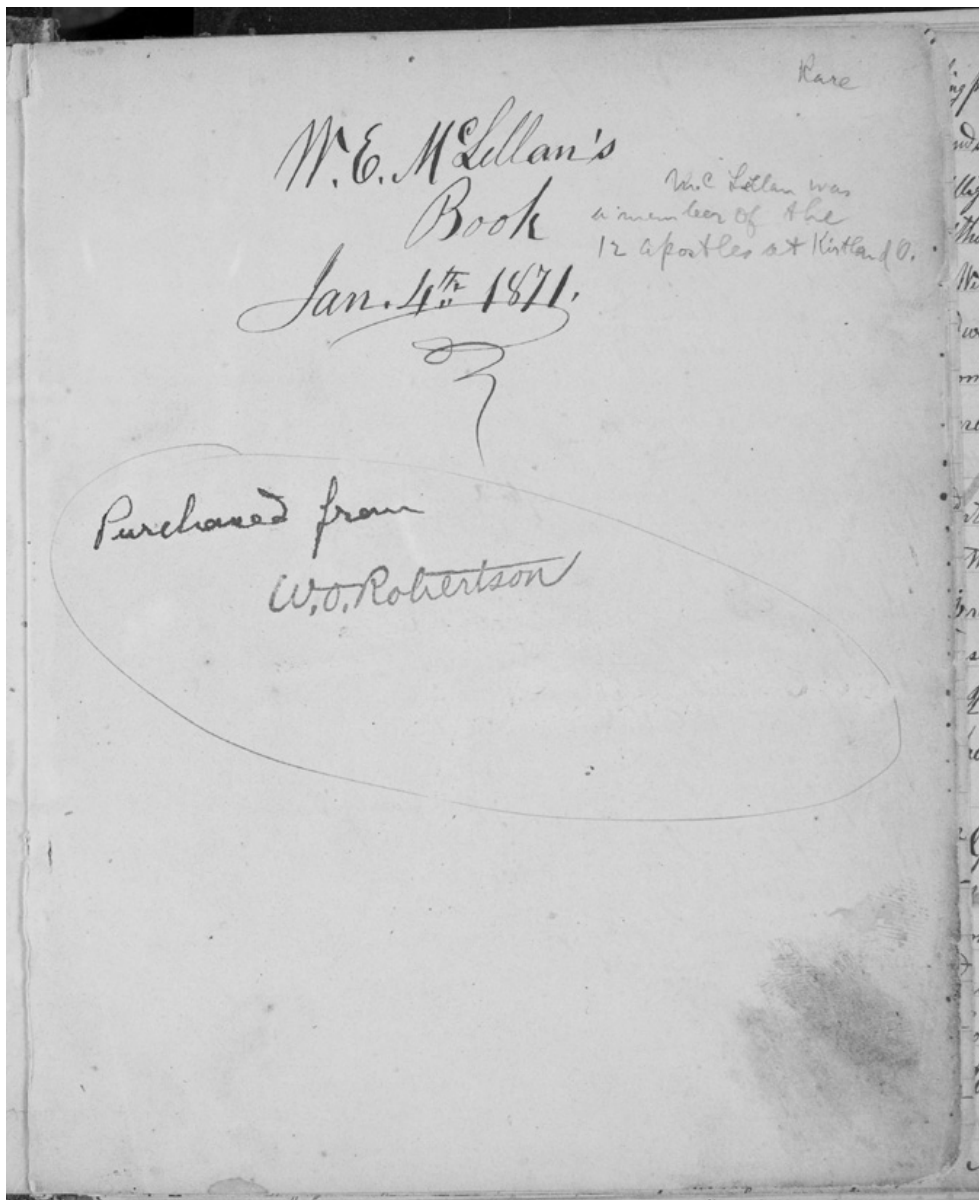
the portion of Notebook 2 they published is very small compared to the entirety of the original work.¹² Fortunately, this notebook is in fact extant. All 264 pages are intact and legible and a scholarly edition, titled *William E. McLellin's Lost Manuscript* (Eborn Books, 2011), is soon forthcoming. The document that follows is a transcription of the original pages 165–67 of the manuscript of McLellin's Notebook 2.¹³ The manuscript is in the private collection of Brent F. Ashworth.

McLellin wrote the account transcribed below and made many editorial markings and changes. The editorial method and transcription symbols for this document have been borrowed from the Joseph Smith Papers Project.¹⁴ Text that Larson and Passey were not able to include in their edition is set in **bold** typeface for easy identification. Though this document is brief, it contains valuable information pertinent to Mormon history, to McLellin's life, and to the experiences and testimonies of Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, David Whitmer, Hiram Page, and John Whitmer, all of whom are mentioned in it. McLellin's manuscript may be the only documentation of the events told therein, and as a result this account stands as a vital part of the historical record.

12. Larsen and Passey, *William E. McLellin Papers*, xvi.

13. The edge of page 167 was damaged after this transcript was made.

14. Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Joseph Smith Papers: Journals, Volume 1*, lxii–lxiv; Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford and Steven C. Harper, *The Joseph Smith Papers: Revelations and Transcriptions, Manuscript Revelation Books* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2009): xxxiv–xxxv.



Cover page of W. E. McLellan's Book, circa 1871, written by William E. McLellan, from the private collection of Brent F. Ashworth. All photos courtesy Brent F. Ashworth.

with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men: therefore behote, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, yea a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." All the above is plain and pointed, and cannot refer to any other circumstance so plainly as the coming forth of the book of Mormon. And to that it does refer specially and pointedly.

10. When old Jacob was blessing Joseph's sons between his knees, he said of Ephraim, "And his seed shall become a multitude of nations." No where on this wide earth can Ephraim be traced into a "multitude of nations," except the Indians of North and South America that multitude. And this accords with what old Jacob said in blessing Joseph as the progenitor, and head of one of the twelve tribes. He said, "The blessing of thy Father have prevailed above the blessing of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." The utmost bound from Goshen in Egypt to its farthest point east or west, would be in America, would be the Rocky mountains. Now we will hear Moses, the man of God, when he put his last blessing on the tribes. He thus said specially to Joseph, "Blessed of the Lord be Joseph's land. For the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof." No man can apply this passage so as to make it useless, it applies to Ephraim, according to the book of Mormon, and the Indians in our American land. It is the only continent where the earth contains a fulness. Where all fowl of every wing, all fruits of every tropic, all beasts and reptiles of all grades, and the "earth and its fulness," can be found. Can't find it on any continent on earth except the American. And the west American continent, where the Indians have roamed for many a century, runs from the straits of Magellan in the south, to the North Pole, containing a "fulness."

The Testimony of men.

11. In open daylight, in an open wood lot, with their sensitive powers all calm and serene, Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris testify that an angel of glorified

166.
 appearance and countenance came down from heaven, and stood before them, and took the
 the plates which Joseph Smith had possessed, from which he had translated the Book, and held
 them in his hand, and showed as many of the ^{the} leaves or plates as Joseph had ^{read the translation of the book} translated, ^{complete} to them.
 so that they saw, and looked upon them until they were entirely satisfied. And he spake to David,
 Whitmer, and said, "David, blessed is the Lord, and he that keepeth his commandments." These men
 saw his form, saw his glorified appearance, heard his words, saw all that he showed them, and
 then saw him ascend to heaven again. This was no collusion. These men could not be mistaken.
 They either told the truth, or they wilfully lied. How shall we tell which, how shall we know?
 This vision was in 1829. More than forty years ago, and what has been the conduct of those men
 since that day? Two of them are dead - ^{and} two living. Those who are dead testified to the last hour
 of their lives to the truth of their vision. Those who are still living are firm in their testimony.
 I visited David Whitmer after he was more than 60 years of age, and solemnly declared to me
 "I saw the Angel of God, I heard his voice, hence I know of a truth! Martin Harris is some over
 89 years of age, and still he carries the book of Mormon under his arm, and testifies to all
 great and small, 'I saw Martin Harris in all the world, and I know the book of Mormon
 to be verily true. And although all men should deny the truth of that book, I am not do it. My heart
 is fixed. O God, my heart is fixed! I could not know more truly, or certainly than I do!"

13. In 1833, when nothing aigned triumphant in Jackson Co. Mo. David O. Cowdery fled
 from our homes, for fear of personal violence on Saturday the 20th day of July. The mob
 dispersed, agreeing to meet again on the next Tuesday. They offered eighty dollars reward
 for any one who would deliver Cowdery or McLellan in Independence on Tuesday. On Monday
 I slipped down into the Whitmer's settlement, and then in the lonely woods I met with David Whit-
 mer and Oliver Cowdery. I said to them, "brethren I never have seen an apparition in my life,
 but you men say you have, and therefore you positively know. Now you know that our lives are
 in danger every hour, if the mob can only catch us. Tell me in the fear of God,

W. E. McLellan's Book, 1871, page 166.

is that book of Mormon true? Cowdrey looked at me with solemnity depicted in his face, and said, "Brother William, God sent his holy Angel to declare the truth of the translation of it to us, and therefore we know. And though the mob kill us, yet we must die declaring its truth". David said, "Ours has told you the solemn truth, for we could not be deceived. I most truly declare before you its truth!!" said I, boys I believe you. I can see no object for you to tell me false, now, when our lives are endangered. Eight men testify also to handling that sacred pile of plates, from which Joseph Smith ^{was the} translated that heavenly Book.

13. One circumstance I'll relate of one of these eight witnesses. While the mob was raging in Jackson Co. Mo. in 1833 some young men ran down Hiram Page ^{in the woods} ^{witness}, and commenced beating and pounding him with whips and clubs. He begged, but there was no mercy. They said he was a damned Mormon, and they meant to beat him to death! But finally one then said to him, if you will deny that damned book, we will let you go. Said he, how can I deny what I know to be true? Then they pounded him again. When they thought he was about to breathe his last, they said to him, Now what do you think of your God, whom he don't save you? Well, said he, I believe in God — Will, said one of the most intelligent among them, I believe a damned fool will stick to it, though we kill him. Let us let him go. But his life was nearly run out. He was confined to his bed for a length of time. So much for a man who knows for himself, a knowledge is beyond faith or doubt. It is positive certainty.

14. I'm company with friend, visited one of the eight witnesses ^{in 1869} — the only one who is now alive, and he bore a very lucid and rational testimony, and gave us many interesting particulars. He was a young man when he had those testimonies. He is now ^{was then} sixty eight years old, and still he is firm in his faith. Now I would ask what will I do with such a cloud of faithful witnesses, bearing such a rational and yet solemn testimony? These men while in the prime of life, saw the vision of the Angel, and bore their testimony to all people. And eight men saw the plates, and handled them. Hence these men all know the things they declared to be positively true. And that too while they were young, and now when do they declare the same things.

“The Testimony of Men,” an excerpt from W. E. McLellan’s Book, circa 1871¹⁵

The Testimony of men.

11. In open day light, in an open wood lot, with their sensitive powers all calm and serene, Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris testify that an angel of glorified [*end p. 165*] appearance and countenance came down from heaven, and stood before them, and took the the plates which Joseph Smith had possessed, from which he had translated <read <off> the translation of the book> the Book, and held them in his hand, and showed as many of <the> leaves or plates as Joseph had translated <completed>, to them. So that they saw, and looked upon them until they were entirely satisfied. And he <the angel> spoke to David Whitmer and said, “David, blessed is the Lord, and he that keepeth his commandments.” These men saw his form, saw his glorified appearance, heard his words, saw all that he showed them, and then saw him ascend to heaven again. This was no collusion. These men could not be mistaken. They either told the truth, or they wilfully lied. How **shall we tell which, how shall** we know? This vision was in 1829. More than forty years ago, and what has been the conduct of those men since that day? Two of them are dead— <and probably> two living.¹⁶ Those who are dead testified to the last hour of their lives of to the truth of their vision. Those who are still living are firm in their testimony. I visited David Whitmer after he was more than 65 years of age, and <he> solemnly declared to me “I saw the angel of God, I heard his voice, hence I know of a truth! Martin Harris is some over 89¹⁷ years of age, and still he carries the book of Mormon under his arm, and testifies to all great and small, “I am Martin Harris in all the world, and I know the book of Mormon to be verily true. And although all men should deny the truth of that book, I dare not do it. My heart is fixed. O God, my heart is fixed! I could not know more truly or certainly than I do.”

15. McLellan titled this notebook W. E. McLellan’s Book. McLellan himself wrote his name with variant spellings.

16. Joseph Smith Jr. died in Carthage, Illinois, on June 27, 1844, and Oliver Cowdery died in Richmond, Missouri, on March 3, 1850. Martin Harris and David Whitmer were the two witnesses of the Book of Mormon plates still alive when McLellan wrote. Harris and Whitmer died on July 10, 1875, and January 25, 1888, respectively. Jesse, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Joseph Smith Papers: Journals, Volume 1*, 405, 412, 446.

17. Harris was most likely eighty-eight at the time of McLellan’s writing.

12. In 1833, when mobbing reigned triumphant in Jackson Co. Mo. I and O. Cowdery fled from our homes, for fear of personal violence on Saturday the 20th day of July. The mob dispersed, agreeing to meet again on the next Tuesday. They offered eighty dollars reward for any one who would deliver Cowdery or McLellan in Independence on Tuesday. On Mond[a]y I slipped down into the Whitmer's settlement, and there in the lonely woods I met with David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery. I said to them, "brethren I never have seen an open vision in my life, **but you men say you have, and therefore you positively know. Now you know that our lives are in danger every hour, if the mob can only catch us. Tell me in the fear of God, [end p. 166]** is that book of Mormon true?" Cowdery looked at me with solemnity depicted in his face, and said, "Brother William, God sent his holy angel to declare the truth of the translation of it to us, and therefore we know. And though the mob kill us, yet we must die declaring its truth." David said, "Oliver has told you the solemn truth, for we could not be deceived. I most truly declare ~~declare~~ to you its truth"!! Said I, boys I believe you. I can see no object for you to tell me false <hood> now, when our lives are endangered. Eight men testify also to handling that sacred pile of plates, from which Joseph Smith <read off the> translation [of] that heavenly **Book**.

13. One circumstance I'll relate of one of these eight witnesses. While the mob was raging in Jackson Co. Mo. in 1833 some young men ran down Hiram Page <in the woods> one of the eight <witnesses,> and commenced beating and pounding him with whips and clubs. He begged, but there was no mercy. They said he was <a> damned Mormon, and they meant to beat him to death! But finally one then said to him, if you will deny that damned book, we will let you go. Said he, how can I deny what I know to be true? Then they pounded him again. When they thought he was about to breathe his last, they said to him, Now what do you think of your God, when he dont save you? **Well said he, I believe in God—Well, said one of the most intelligent among them, I believe the damned fool will stick to it though we kill him. Let us let him go. But his life was nearly run out. He was confined to his bed for a length of time. So much for a man who knows for himself. Knowledge is beyond faith or doubt. It is positive certainty.**

14. I in company with <a> friend, <I> visited one of the eight witnesses <in 1869>—the only one who is now alive, and he bore a very lucid and rational testimony, and gave us many interesting particulars.¹⁸ He was a young man when he had those testimonies. He is **now** <was

18. John Whitmer was the last surviving of the additional eight witnesses to the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. He died at Far

then> sixty eight years old, and still he is firm in his faith. Now I would ask what will I do with such a cloud of faithful witnesses, bearing such a rational and yet solemn testimony? These men while in the prime of life, saw the vision of the angel, and bore their testimony to all people. And eight men saw the plates, and handled them. Hence these men all knew the things they declared to be positively true. And that too while they were young, and now when old they declare the same things.

West, Missouri, on July 11, 1878. Jessee, Ashurst-McGee, and Jensen, *Joseph Smith Papers: Journals, Volume 1*, 447.

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Diversity in Nineteenth-Century St. Louis

A Scotsman's Description

Rachel Cope and Robert D. Palmer III

On February 26, 1840, Douglas Miln, a Scotsman visiting St. Louis, Missouri, wrote a letter to Reverend William Beckett of Aberdeen, Scotland. This document, 3¼ pages on 10" x 16" paper, has been preserved in the collections of the Filson Historical Society in Louisville, Kentucky. Specific details, such as whether the letter ever made its intended transatlantic voyage and how it ended up in this particular repository, remain unknown. It is clear, however, that during his sojourn in St. Louis, Miln penned keen observations of antebellum American culture, including a lengthy and straightforward description of early Mormonism. Consequently, the document reveals how The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was being discussed and exemplifies how geographically vast such conversations could be. Even more significantly, in a culture where Latter-day Saints struggled to gain a fair hearing, Miln's document, which relies heavily on John Corrill's history of Mormonism, suggests that the Saints sometimes succeeded in telling their own story to fair-minded inquirers. The letter is reproduced below with permission of the Filson.

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, St. Louis stood at the center of "trade and culture for the great western waterway system of the upper and lower Mississippi, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois Rivers." River traffic made St. Louis less dependent economically on rural Missouri and Illinois and caused the city to thrive despite the economic downturn that began in 1837.¹

1. Stanley Kimball, "The Saints and St. Louis, 1831–1857: An Oasis of Tolerance and Security," *BYU Studies* 13, no. 4 (1973): 489; Thomas Scharf, *History of St. Louis*

Miln used his letter to assess American society and culture. He wrote of taxes, mob violence, and slavery, but used most of his ink to detail the religious diversity so prevalent in the American republic. He noted the stunning variety of denominations, described the religious practices of slaves, and compared Scottish and American Presbyterianism, but he seemed most interested in describing Mormonism. His fascination with the array of America's denominational choices may have been influenced by Scotland's simultaneous experience with religious diversity.

Beginning in the eighteenth century, rapid industrialization and resulting urbanization revolutionized Scotland's political, economic, and social landscapes. Poverty, disease, crime, and infant mortality rates increased, and religiosity waned. Many Scots were discouraged about the Presbyterian Church, Scotland's national denomination, which seemed "unable or unwilling to use its influence to mitigate the evils of the industrial age."² One result of the economic and social upheaval, according to historian Callum Brown, was a "belated but very rapid and extensive process of pluralisation in religion."³

In the 1820s and 1830s, Edward Irving and other Scottish clergymen fostered a revival; they believed Presbyterianism had strayed from primitive Christianity. Such meetings drew large crowds, evidencing a dramatic religious shift. The groundswell became strikingly evident in 1834, when the Evangelical Party gained the majority of seats in the General Assembly for the first time in a century. As a result, a long debate ensued, known as the Ten Years' Conflict.⁴ By May 1843, Presbyterianism had fractured. More than four hundred ministers defected to form the Church of Scotland Free.

Mormonism joined the increasingly varied religious scene in Scotland during this tumultuous decade. Although Miln and probably Beckett were not likely aware of it, LDS missionaries were active in Scotland as Miln composed his letter. In the mid-1830s, Scotsmen Alexander Wright and Samuel Mulliner had joined the Church in Upper Canada. In 1839, they sent a copy of Parley P. Pratt's *Voice of Warning* to relatives in their homeland, where they were subsequently called to serve as missionaries. By May

City and County from the Earliest Periods to the Present Day (Philadelphia: L. F. Everts, 1883).

2. Frederick S. Buchanan, "The Ebb and Flow of Mormonism in Scotland," *BYU Studies* 27, no. 2 (1987): 28.

3. Callum G. Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland Since 1707* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 17.

4. N. Cameron and others, eds., *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1993), 816.

1840 they had baptized eighty individuals. Shortly thereafter, Orson Pratt organized in Paisley the first Scottish branch of the Church. By the end of the century, ten thousand Scots had embraced Mormonism; approximately half of this group emigrated to Utah.⁵

Writing in the middle, if not the midst, of the decade-long religious dispute in Scotland, Miln described early Mormonism at great length. He had been unaware of this church before his visit to the United States, but in St. Louis, a location that historian Stanley Kimball dubbed as “the most important non-Mormon city in Church history,” knowledge of the Church came readily to hand. For example, newspapers in St. Louis often detailed the conflict between Mormons and Missourians. Some Latter-day Saints appear to have sought employment and safety in St. Louis after an October 1838 executive order from the governor demanded that they leave Missouri. Many residents of St. Louis expressed sympathy and support for the Mormon exiles. Dissident Mormons also found a safe haven in St. Louis. Later, the burgeoning city served as an “emigrant center” for those migrating west.⁶

The only obvious source of Miln’s knowledge of Mormon history and doctrine is John Corrill’s fifty-page booklet titled *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, (commonly called Mormons;) including an account of their doctrine and discipline; with reasons of the author for leaving the church.*⁷ Much of what Miln wrote about Mormonism is quoted verbatim from Corrill’s work. An early convert to the Church, Corrill served in the bishopric in Missouri and was frequently asked to keep church records. He accepted an assignment to write a church history after dissident John Whitmer refused to give his account to Joseph Smith.⁸ But as the title of Corrill’s booklet conveys, he too was disaffected from Mormonism by the time he filed for copyright on February 11, 1839. He was excommunicated on March 17.

5. Buchanan, “Ebb and Flow of Mormonism,” 32–41.

6. Kimball, “Saints and St. Louis,” 489–519.

7. John Corrill, *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, (commonly called Mormons;) including an account of their doctrine and discipline; with the reasons of the author for leaving the church*, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. The text of Corrill’s booklet can also be seen at <http://www.olivercowdery.com/smithhome/1830s/1839Corl.htm>.

8. Lyndon W. Cook and Donald Q. Cannon, eds., *Far West Record: Minutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 157; Joseph Smith Jr., *The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 3:15–16.

Corrill's history is richly autobiographical. The first three chapters detail his conversion; the last chapter describes his alienation. Chapters 4–15, meanwhile, depict the divine origin and contents of the Book of Mormon, followed by a discussion of Mormon doctrine and some history. Taking Corrill's descriptions at face value, Miln quoted freely from the central part of the booklet, saying nothing of Corrill's more personal chapters.

Miln's evenhanded treatment of Mormonism is highly unusual given how controversial Mormonism was in antebellum America. Reports of the Church in newspapers and correspondence were often charged with emotion and overwhelmed by the vituperative editorial tone of the times. There is none of that in Miln's report, even though he clearly had Corrill's more emotional material at his disposal. By choosing to so straightforwardly cite Corrill's admittedly miraculous history, Miln becomes an example of a seldom-seen approach to Mormonism in the antebellum period: a truly dispassionate inquiry into the origins and significance of Mormonism.

What follows is a verified transcription of Miln's letter, including original spelling, syntax, capitalization, and punctuation. Angle brackets <like these> enclose words added by Miln. Strikeouts ~~like this~~ indicate words or characters deleted by Miln. Square brackets [like these] indicate editorial insertions for clarification. Bolded type **like this** indicates words quoted directly from John Corrill's history, described above.

Letter from Douglas Miln to William Beckett

St. Louis, 26th February 1840

My Dear Sir,

I was duly favoured with your kind letter of the 30th September & 10 October, for which I tender you my best thanks. I value it more highly as it was a volunteer one. I not having fulfilled my part of the agreement in writing you first. I have also to apologize for not acknowledging its receipt sooner, but really the state of money matters has been such in this country, since I received it, that my whole time & energies have been occupied in the business in which we are engaged.⁹ I trust however that this will be a sufficient excuse and I shall endeavour to make up by length & quantity for the time I have apparently negl[e]cted you.

An immense distance now separates us, and I think it would be putting pen ink & paper, not to mention time, to the worst possible use, to employ them in the discussion, of party or political questions and I shall not therefore make any comparison between this, & the Country of my birth in a political view, but simply remark that the more I see and compare this “The Land of Freedom!!!” with “the Aristocracy ridden & taxed devoured land” I have left behind the more I become confirmed in and the more I cherish my old Tory notions.¹⁰ The Land of Freedom forsooth Wherein does the freedom consist? In the freedom with which mobs commit their riots—In the freedom of the Citizens abusing, robbing, stabbing, & murdering one another with impunity—In the freedom with which every unpopular law is broken, the Mobbocracy well knowing that the Government dare not enforce such, however just—In

9. In May 1837, the banks in New York City stopped payment by specie. Peter L. Rousseau has noted that it was “the *inability* of the Specie Circular to halt land speculation quickly that strained the reserves of the New York banks and contributed to a loss of confidence in their notes.” Subsequent bank failures and high unemployment levels led to a five-year depression. Thus, “the Panic of 1837 was the culmination of a series of policy shifts and unanticipated disturbances that shook the young U.S. economy at the core of its financial structure.” Peter L. Rousseau, “Jacksonian Monetary Policy, Specie Flows, and the Panic of 1837,” *Journal of Economic History* 62 (June 2002): 460, 486.

10. The term Tory referred to a member or supporter of a major British political group in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Tories initially favored the Stuarts and later supported royal authority and the established church. They wanted to preserve the traditional political structure and defeat parliamentary reform.

the freedom of the rich tyrannising over the poor—and in the freedom which the political parties in power have of enriching themselves & their friends & harassing their oponents—and “therefore. I’ll none of it.”¹¹ The Government is weak & imbecile—It cannot, nor dare not enforce its own decrees, but must run & shift with every blast of popular clamour, however unwise & impolitic that course may be. This follows as a natural consequence seeing that the political & numerical majority of the country are one, and that the Rabble is the most numerous body. The Aristocracy (for it is absurd to speak of all men being free & equal) are the worst in the world, for they consist wholly of the rich. They have acquired riches, perhaps not by the most honorable means & they take pride, & glory in their illgotten gain, scarcely concealing their contempt & scorn of the poor. If a Stranger came amongst them, the question is not Is he honest or respectable? But it is Is he rich? Every one strives to be of this favoured class, and thinks himself better than his neighbours, and thus a mean jealousy & hatred continually subsists between them, which destroys all pleasures arising from social intercourse. You may think, and it may be the case, that I put the worst view before you or at least that I exaggerate but I am sorry to say it is correct in the main feature. There are [no] doubt many, very many, who act and do other wise, but these are only exceptions. It is true a man in this country, however lowly he may have been born, or however poor, may raise himself to, and fill the highest offices in the State but, how are these honors acquired? Seldom by honest & straightforward conduct. Every means however base & muckling¹² and every plan however deceitful is put in requisition

11. David Grimsted has suggested that “1835 represented the crest of rioting in the United States.” During that year, 147 riots were reported, 109 of which occurred between July and October. Approximately two-fifths of these riots were connected to sectional tensions: 46 were proslavery and 15 were racial. David Grimsted, *American Mobbing, 1828–1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 4.

Speaking further about the prevalence of riots in nineteenth-century America, Theodore M. Hammett wrote, “The 1830s were a decade of heightened concern and disorder in the United States. . . . Mob violence of various motivations—religious, ethnic, and ideological—was increasing. Mayor Samuel A. Eliot of Boston noticed a ‘spirit of violence’ abroad in the city and in the nation.” Theodore M. Hammett, “Two Mobs of Jacksonian Boston: Ideology and Interest,” *The Journal of American History* 62 (March 1976): 845.

For example, the Broad Street riot of June 1837 was widely publicized; it started when a volunteer English fire company ran into an Irish funeral procession. This situation escalated into a thousand-person street brawl. Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 68; Carl E. Prince, “The Great ‘Riot Year’: Jacksonian Democracy and Patterns of Violence in 1834,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 5 (Spring 1985): 1.

12. Muckling means “dirty, slovenly, disorderly.” Joseph Wright, *The English Dialect Dictionary* (1905), at Google books.

to obtain the object in view, but I have said enough, the very thought of such things is debasing.¹³

You say I am becoming the apologist of American Slavery. I solemnly deny the charge. No one would more gladly see or use their endeavours to procure the abolition of Slavery than I. By saying that it existed only in name, I meant that Slavery did not bear that hideous and distorted form, set forth by Mr. Thomson and the other Abolitionists of Britain.¹⁴ The slaves here are well clothed, well fed, and appear to be happy[.] they dress as well, if not better than the whites and far better than the free Negroes[.] If they are sick they are well attended to, and in their old age when unable to work they are protected and cherished.¹⁵ At

13. Karen Halttunen discusses the social and cultural development of the upwardly mobile middle class in her book *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830–1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

14. Miln likely refers to British Abolitionist and member of Parliament George Thompson (1804–78), who, in 1831, joined the Anti-Slavery Society in London. Thompson was asked to spread the message of “immediatism,” the idea that slavery was a sin and had to be abolished right away. In 1832, he traveled to Scotland, where he met William Lloyd Garrison and became committed to the abolition of slavery in the United States and other parts of the world. Consequently, Thompson toured the United States as an antislavery lecturer in 1834 and 1835. In 1840, he played a leading role in the World Anti-Slavery Convention. Later, in 1846, he joined with American abolitionists, including Frederick Douglass, to help lead the “send back the money” campaign. He returned to the United States in 1850 with the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law. He met with President Abraham Lincoln and participated in the flag raising at Fort Sumter in April 1865. For additional information, see, C. Duncan Rice, “The Anti-Slavery Mission of George Thompson to the United States, 1834–1835,” *Journal of American Studies* 2 (April 1968): 13–31. For information on earlier British Abolitionists, see D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *John Newton and the English Evangelical Tradition: Between the Conversion of Wesley and Wilberforce* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); William Hague, *William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner* (London: Harper Press, 2007).

15. Miln describes slavery as a paternalistic system; his comments essentially imply that slaveholders assumed a parental role in the lives of their slaves. Paternalistic perceptions of slavery are explored thoroughly by historian Eugene Genovese, who contends that this ideology affected the master-slave relationship in the antebellum South. He explains, “Southern paternalism, like every other paternalism, had little to do with Ole Massa’s ostensible benevolence, kindness, and good cheer. It grew out of the necessity to discipline and morally justify a system of exploitation.” Noting the complexity of this system, slaves “turned the dependency relationship to their own limited advantage. Their version of paternalistic dependency stressed reciprocity.” Within the context of their limitations, they “drew their own lines, asserted rights, and preserved their self-respect.” In particular, they asserted their autonomy in the religious choices they made.

their work they are forever singing—the jest and the laugh is constantly in their mouth and they are as merry as the day is long.¹⁶ Some with whom I have conversed tell me that they would not accept of their freedom if their masters would give it them.¹⁷ In the city they have a church of their own & a preacher of their own colour.¹⁸ Those who belong to

By combining Christianity with African traditions, they created a “religion of resistance that accepted the limits of the politically possible.” Despite the many oppressive problems that resulted from the paternalistic view, slaves embraced the “spiritual power and ability to make a harsh world as pleasurable as possible.” Eugene Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), 146–47, 254, 544.

16. Lawrence Levine explained, “Throughout slavery black workers continued to time their work routines to the tempo of their music in much the same manner as their African ancestors.” He further concluded, “Slave music, slave religion, slave folk beliefs—the entire sacred world of black slaves—created the necessary space between the slaves and their owners and were the means of preventing legal slavery from becoming spiritual slavery.” Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 7, 80; see also Lawrence W. Levine, *The Unpredictable Past: Explorations in American Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 35–58.

17. The slave trade played a significant role in St. Louis. For example, William W. Brown a man who had escaped slavery and later became a conductor on the Underground Railroad in Buffalo, New York noted, “Though slavery is thought, by some, to be mild in Missouri, when compared with the cotton, sugar and rice growing states, yet no part of our slaveholding country is more noted for the barbarity of its inhabitants than in St. Louis. It was here that Col. Harney, a United States officer, whipped a slave woman to death. It was here that Francis McIntosh, a free colored man from Pittsburg, was taken from the steamboat Flora and burned at the stake. During a residence of eight years in this city, numerous cases of extreme cruelty came under my own observation; to record them all would occupy more space than could possibly be allowed in this little volume.” Brown also explained, “Missouri, though a comparatively new state, is very much engaged in raising slaves to supply the southern market.” William Wells Brown, *The Narrative of William W. Brown, A Fugitive Slave* (Boston: Anti-Slavery Office, 1847; Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1969), 8, 36.

18. The First African Baptist Church, organized in 1826, was the first fully independent black church in St. Louis. John Berry Meachum, a skilled former slave, pastored this church until his death in 1854. Slaves had to have certificates from their masters to attend black churches, and preachers were not allowed to speak about the emancipation of slavery. Some preachers encouraged obedience and loyalty to masters, suggesting that the enslaved could anticipate better things in the life hereafter; others focused on obedience to God. Slaves were most responsive to the latter. They wanted to receive comfort and inspiration—many viewed religion as a “survival mechanism.” See Henry H. Mitchell, *Black Church Beginnings: The Long-Hidden Realities of the First Years* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 87; Lewis G. Jordon, *Negro Baptist History, USA, 1750–1930*

this church are of the Baptist persuasion but many of them attend the churches of their owners, where they have a gallery set apart for themselves.¹⁹ Selling is the worst feature of Slavery, but then it is generally the worst Slaves who are sold—no one will sell or part with a good or well behaved servant.²⁰

(Nashville: Townsend, 1930), 89; Charles V. Hamilton, *The Black Preacher in America* (New York: William Morrow, 1972), 44–45, 37.

19. Albert Raboteau explored the centrality of religious belief and practice to slaves. He explained, “One of the most durable and adaptable constituents of the slave’s culture, linking African past with American present, was his religion.” Some slaves formed their own churches while others attended religious services with their masters. Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The ‘Invisible Institution’ in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 4. In St. Louis, several churches allowed slaves to attend church meetings with their masters. Although slaves were assigned to specific pews, “the blacks and whites were taught together and took communion together as members of the same congregations until after the war.” Donnie D. Bellamy, “The Education of Blacks in Missouri Prior to 1861,” *The Journal of Negro History* 59 (April 1974): 147.

Speaking of slave religion, William Brown noted, “It is not uncommon in St. Louis to pass by an auction-stand, and behold a woman upon the auction-block, and hear the seller crying out, ‘How much is offered for this woman? She is a good cook, good washer, a good obedient servant. She has got religion!’ Why should this man tell the purchasers she has religion? I answer, because in Missouri, and as far as I have any knowledge of slavery in other states, the religious teaching consists in teaching the slave that he must never strike a white man; that God made him for a slave; and that, when whipped, he must not find fault—for the Bible says, ‘He that knoweth his master’s will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes!’ And slave-holders find such religion very profitable to them.” Brown, *Narrative of William W. Brown*, 37.

20. Two million slave sales took place in the antebellum South. Walter Johnson noted, “In the four decades before the Civil War, the tiny capillaries of trade that distinguished the early years gave way to a new pattern of trade. Although much of the trade remained rural and the majority of the traders itinerant, the tributaries of trade were increasingly gathered into a pattern of trade between large urban centers. This new intercity commerce was dominated by well-organized permanent firms, as opposed to one-time speculations and itinerant trade that constituted the continuing rural trade. Slaves were gathered in Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Norfolk, Nashville, and St. Louis and sent south, either overland in chains, by sailing ships around the coast, or by steamboats down the Mississippi. These slaves were sold in the urban markets of Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, Natchez, and especially New Orleans. Contrary to the popular image, most of these slaves were not sold quickly at large public auctions but in extended private bargains made in the slave pens maintained by slave dealers.” Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 7, 17.

Slave William W. Brown was hired out on a year contract to a slave trader (or “soul driver”) Mr. Walker of St. Louis. Brown worked as a steward on the boat that

By the bye speaking about selling human flesh—what do you think of selling a white man such a thing now & then occurs here, and I think it would be a good thing if something similar were done in Britain.²¹ When a person in this country is convicted of vagrancy and has no visible means of supporting himself, his services for 6 months are sold to the highest bidder—a much better and less expensive plan, in my opinion, than sending him to prison. Since my arrival here some four or five of these sales have taken place—the last was on the 15th instant when a vagrant or loafer, as the term here is, of the name of James Clark was sold. What price he brought or who bought him, I have been unable to learn but I understand that his predecessor was purchased for the mighty sum of fifty cents about $\frac{2}{3}$ ^d sterling.²²

I now turn to a more pleasing and I have no doubt especially to you a more interesting subject—religion. In this small city containing only about 20,000 Inhabitants the number of religious sects is incredible.²³ We have Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, two different sects of Presbyterians, two of Methodists, Baptists, Unitarians, Jews & some others

transported slaves from St. Louis to New Orleans. Describing this experience, he wrote: “There was on the boat a large room on the lower deck, in which the slaves were kept, men and women, promiscuously—all chained two and two, and a strict watch kept that they did not get loose.” In Natchez, the slaves were kept in slave pens, and several were sold. They then embarked upon the remainder of the journey to New Orleans. Brown recalled, “Here the slaves were placed in a negro-pen in a small yard, surrounded by buildings, from fifteen to twenty feet wide, with the exception of a large gate with iron bars. The slaves are kept in the building during the night and turned out into the yard during the day. After the best of the stock was sold at private sale at the pen, the balances were taken to the Exchange Coffee-House Auction Rooms, kept by Isaac L. McCoy, and sold at the public auction.” Brown, *Narrative of William W. Brown*, 14–15.

21. William Brown noted that he had met a young white man in St. Louis who had been sold into slavery as a young boy by a store he had worked for. The man informed the boy’s poverty-stricken widowed mother that her son had passed away of yellow fever. Brown, *Narrative of William W. Brown*, 26.

22. Michael Hoffman explained, “Most so-called indentured servants were forced into servitude involuntarily, sometimes as punishment for crimes they committed. Let it be said, in many cases Blacks in slavery had it better than poor Whites in the antebellum South. This is why there was such strong resistance to the Confederacy in the poverty-stricken areas of the mountain south, such as Winston County in Alabama and the Beech mountains of North Carolina. Those poor Whites could not imagine why any White laborer would want to die for the slave-owning plutocracy that more often than not, gave better care and attention to their Black servants than they did to the free white labor they scorned as trash.” Michael A. Hoffman, *They Were White and They Were Slaves* (Wiswell Ruffin House: 1993), 54. Miln is being sarcastic in his reference to the “mighty sum.”

23. The U.S. Federal Census of 1840 reports that St. Louis had a population of 16,469.

whose names I forget, besides a good number who attend no church & make no professions as also <professed> Deists and Infidels. The most numerous as they indeed are in all the <South> Weste[r]n States are the Catholics. The next are the Presbyterians—the third in numbers are the Episcopalians—the Baptists, Methodists & Unitarians are about equal & the Jews are also pretty numerous—the Presbyterians as I have before mentioned are divided into two sects and style themselves First Presbyterians & 2nd Presbyterians but the difference in their peculiar tenets I have been unable to discover.²⁴ The 1st are the most numerous of the two, & have two churches—the latter only one. The Church which I attend is the 2nd Presbyterian of which the Rev^d. M. Potts is pastor.²⁵ They are altogether different from those of Scotland. The Totalism is made a church question & one cannot be a member without joining that society. Convi[vi]al parties, Cards, Novels, The Theatre, and the innocent dance are also forbidden. Likewise cooking & other such things on Sunday. If a member is known to have committed any of these enormous sins, he is first reprimanded and if the offense is repeated, expulsion follows. This appears to me to be “righteuos overmuch.” M. Potts is a good preacher, as long as he keeps teatotalism, Novels, the Theatre & but once he touches on these things he is apt to get into extremes. I cannot say I like them—and I often feel inclined to attend the Episcopal Chapel. The other sects are I suppose similar to those of the same persuasion at home but they all seem more or less inclined to fanaticism—In fact they seem rather to be acting hypocritically than under the influence of true religion.

The different religious sects in this country are innumerable and new ones are springing up every day. There is one sect which I believe you have not heard of, at least I never did until my arrival here. they call themselves “Mormons” or “Church of Christ latter day saints.”²⁶ Their origin is said to be thus—**Sometime in 1825 one Joseph Smith Junior was informed by an angel that there was a valuable record concealed in the earth and that the time had now arrived for it to be brought forward**

24. For a discussion of religious diversity in nineteenth-century America, see William R. Hutchison, *Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

25. The Second Presbyterian Church was founded in 1838. It met temporarily at Fifth and Pine Streets. From 1840 to 1870, church meetings were held in a Greek Revival structure at Fifth (Broadway) and Walnut Streets. William Stevens Potts served as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in St. Louis from 1828 to 1835. He then served as pastor of the newly formed Second Presbyterian Church from 1839 to 1855.

26. As noted in the introduction, Miln’s descriptions of Mormonism are essentially extensive quotes from John Corrill’s fifty-page pamphlet, *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints (commonly called Mormons)*. **Bold** words indicate word-for-word quotations.

& published to the world.²⁷ After being warned several times he went to the place pointed out by the Angel & found the record engraved on leaves or plates of gold-fastened together by rings. These plates were about 6 by 8 inches square and very thin. They were carefully enclosed in a stone box provided for that purpose, which Smith broke open. After he obtained the plates and before he left the place he began to contemplate the vast riches he would acquire by their means. While thus thinking and contemplating upon the subject, the Angel hid the plates from his view and chastised him for his wickedness in acting contrary to the commandment for the Angel had informed him that it was for the bringing about of gods purposes in the salvation of his people that the Lord gave him access to the plates, but as he thought to become rich & aggrandize himself, that therefore he should not obtain the plates again until he had repented of his folly. About two years elapsed before he again got possession of the plates—after which through much difficulty on account of persecution & poverty, he translated them by degrees, with the assistance of others who wrote as he dictated.²⁸ One Martin Harris who contributed much towards the publication of the Book, drew off several of the characters written on the plates which were said to be the reformed Egyptian and took them to the learned in New York to see if they could be translated but he was requested to bring them the plates, which Smith was forbidden to do of the Lord, but was commanded to translate them himself which he did by the help of what he calls the Urim & Thummim—two stones set in a bow and furnished him by an Angel for that purpose. After finishing the translation the plates & stones of Urim & Thummim were again taken and concealed by the Angel for a wise purpose and the translation was published to the world 1829 & 1830.²⁹ I have obtained a copy of this Book, it is about the size of a common pocket bible & contains 620 closely printed pages—its title runs thus

“The Book of Mormon: An account written by the hand of Mormon, upon plates taken from the plates of Nephi. Wherefore it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi; and also of the Lamanites; written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and

27. Corrill’s pamphlet incorrectly states that Joseph learned of the gold plates in 1825. Joseph received this message from the angel Moroni on September 21, 1823.

28. Joseph Smith waited four years after receiving the first message from Moroni before getting possession of the plates. He did, however, receive them in 1827, as Corrill noted.

29. On June 11, 1829, Joseph Smith obtained a copyright for the Book of Mormon from the U.S. district court for the Northern District of New York in Utica, New York. Two months later, Oliver Cowdery delivered the first twenty-four pages of the manuscript to Grandin’s print shop in Palmyra, New York. The first copies of the Book of Mormon were printed and available for sale in March 1830. The entire 5,000-copy print run of the first edition was not completed until the summer of that same year.

also to Jew and Gentile; written by way of commandment and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation. Written and sealed up and hid up unto the Lord that they might not be destroyed; to come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof: sealed by the hand of Moroni and hid up unto the Lord to come forth in due time by the way of Gentile: the interpretation thereof by the gift of God. An abridgement taken from the book of Ether: also which is a record of the people of Jared: who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people when they were building a tower to get to heaven: which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great thing the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever, and also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God manifesting himself unto all nations. And now if there are faults, they are the mistakes of men; wherefore condemn not the things of God; that ye may be found spotless at the judgment seat of Christ.”

In the course of the translation, the plates were shown to eleven persons by the special command of God—three of whom had it manifested and shown to them by an Angel from heaven who declared the truth of the book and the other eight saw the plates and handled them, and all were commanded to bear testimony to the world of the truth of what they had seen and handled—their affidavits are therefore published in the end of the book. The Book of Mormon contains an account of the posterity of Joseph who was sold into Egypt. It gives the history of their journey from Jerusalem across the ocean to this land (America) and their settlement here, with their manners, customs wars and more especially their religion, which was the same as existed among the Jews both under the law of Moses which they brought with them and also the gospel after Christ in its purity.

The Mormons believe in the same God, in the same Saviour and in the same Gospel that other professions do and they believe as firmly in the scripture of the Old and New Testaments as any other people. They look upon their new revelations only as bringing about the fulfilment of the Bible. The main difference between them & other professions is that they believe rather more firmly in the promises of God, especially those that require great faith for their fulfilment. They believe on the subject of prophets, prophesying and the gifts of revelation in modern times. They believe in and constantly practice they laying on of hands & praying for the healing of the sick, and if unsuccessful they blame the patients want of faith. They believe that baptism by immersion is for the remission of Sins & they laying on of hands for <the gift of> the Holy Ghost.

Smith gives out that he is and is believed by the others of the sect to be a prophet He receives revelations direct from God, Consecrates High Priests, Bishops, Priests, Elders, Teachers and Deacons—and dispenses his gifts by the laying on of hands.

Soon after the publication of the Book of Mormon they increased rapidly & emigrated in a body to this State. Great numbers flocked to join them and the surrounding Inhabitants grew jealous of their increased power & strength and persecuted & harassed them. One of the High priest after the order of Melchisedeck (for they have different grades of priesthood) at a fourth of July oration stirred up the people to **resist & follow to their houses**, any, who would abuse them, and to make it **a war of extermination to one or the other party**.³⁰ These feeling were much fostered & party spirit at last grew so high that at the next election, when one of the Mormans & another citizen quarrelled—sides were taken and a general conflict ensued. **This affray increased the excitement on both sides** and meetings were held at which very inflammatory speeches were delivered. At length the Mormans declared war & took the field in open & armed defiance of the laws of the state. They had a company organized called the Destructionist whose commander was named the Destroying Angel. This companys duty was to burn & destroy whomsoever and whatsoever fell into their hands. Several battles took place sometimes with success to the one party and sometimes to the other. The Governor of Missouri was at last obliged to call out all the force under his command and after a severe conflict the Mormons were driven out of the state. They have since taken refuge in Illinois where they still remain. They are now peacable & are increasing rapidly in numbers & wealth. On the 6th of April 1830 they numbered but six members but now they are estimated at from twenty to thirty thousand.

In relation to church matters at home, I am glad that you are in so prosperous a condition and hope for a long continuance. The new Entrance, railing & Gate I have no doubt will improve the appearance of the Relief Church very much but I am afraid it is much in the same state as the Irishmans gun, requiring a new Stock, a new lock and a new barrel. The present site & building is a great drawback to your success but I hope that by the time I return to Aberdeen that this will be remedied. The Churches on the whole in this country are mean on the outside but inside they are elegantly fitted up with mahogany sofa seats & they are rather too comfortable for they make one feel inclined to take a nap. They want however the solemnity & gloomy grandeur of our old Gothic Churches.

In regard to my own personal affairs—I am weal, stout, & hearty, have never been better in my life and <am> fatter than ever I was—the

30. Corrill is referring to an oration given by Sidney Rigdon, then serving as First Counselor in the First Presidency, during a Fourth of July celebration held in Far West, Missouri, in 1838. In this fiery speech, Rigdon suggested that Church members should no longer tolerate mob violence or anti-Mormon persecution. Although he contended that Mormons should not be the aggressors, he encouraged his audience to fight for their rights, even to the point of extermination. This speech alarmed non-Mormons who attended the celebration; antagonism mounted upon its publication. See Mark F. McKiernan, “Sidney Rigdon’s Missouri Speeches,” *BYU Studies* 11, no. 1 (1970): 90–92.

climate seems to agree with me well and of course I will also try & do my utmost to keep on good terms with it—The cold this winter I am told has been more severe here than it has been known for many years past.³¹ The winter is now nearly over, the rivers are beginning to open, & business is becoming brisk. Steam Boats are puffing away at a great rate, the streets are groaning under the weight of the heavily laden wagons.³² Emigrants are arriving & the streets are crowded, yea almost impassable.

Expecting to hear from you soon and again thanking you for your letter and kind wishes

I remain

My Dear Sir

Yours very

sincerely

Douglas E. Miln

P.S. I saw your Brother at Toronto several times, but I had only the pleasure of seeing Mr. Beckett once—the night I spent at their house—but you know or at least have heard of such a thing as love at first sight. When you write them, be so kind as send my best respects.

D. E. M.

paid Single Sheet

The Rev^d. William Beckett

22 S. Andrews Street

Aberdeen

Scotland

Via New York & Liverpool

31. According to the NOAA's National Weather Records, the average temperature for the month of January 1839 was 37.2 degrees Fahrenheit, whereas in January 1840 the average temperature was 26.3 degrees Fahrenheit. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, "National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office, St. Louis, MO," http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lxx/?n=cli_archive.

32. Steamboats were first used in 1817.

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Temple Elements in Ancient Religious Communities

Brent J. Schmidt

Temple teachings were well known and widely dispersed throughout antiquity as a means of forming good communities within religious groups. Indeed, temple themes and practices enlightened charismatic leaders and led to the establishment of several religious communities in lands surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.¹ Legendary and historical sources bear witness to the centrality of such elements in the formation and daily workings of four ancient Mediterranean “utopian” or ideal communities. Temples provided a stabilizing center in these communities as (1) their sacred teachings became a basis of authority and boundaries, (2) their precincts became places of instruction, (3) their regimes of common ownership of property formed them into economic centers, and (4) their functions allowed them to serve at the heart of these communities in many specific ways. For example, in antiquity, temple covenants helped individuals abstain from evil practices as defined by their charismatic leader. Care for the poor and unfortunate was intimately associated with the temple in these religious communities. Likewise, temple themes—deeply rooted in Near Eastern, Hebrew, Christian, and Greek texts; semihistorical late antique sources; legends; and other traditions—are intertwined with notions of ritual purity, education, asceticism, religious initiation, charity, community building, and service to others. In sum, temples set the moral, economic, and educational standards for both ancient utopian societies and their members, as can be seen in the following examination of the four groups founded by Pythagoras in southern Italy in the sixth century BC, by the Essenes at Qumran in the second century BC, by Pachomius in Egypt in the fourth century AD, and by Proclus in Athens during the fifth

Brent J. Schmidt

As a college student, I began wondering about charismatic individuals in antiquity who left their mainstream cultures and established religious communities of their own. This interest led me into my chosen field of study, to a dissertation on this subject (2008), and to my recent book, which I dedicated to Hugh Nibley, entitled *Utopian Communities of the Ancient World* (2010). In exploring ancient ideal societies, I have found it most productive to utilize comparative sociological models to examine a broad array of topics, including utopian practices, types of utopian leadership, treatment of dissenters, expansion of communities, and other ancient and modern utopian ideals.



In addition to being interested in the applied concept of Zion, I have long been fascinated by the apologetic genre. In particular, Nibley's works strengthened my testimony and were always intellectually stimulating to me. While writing my dissertation, I encountered many largely overlooked ancient ritualistic temple texts, which confirmed for me Joseph Smith's restoration of lost temple ordinances and precepts. In the first instance, I wanted to make this information available to scholars who have typically paid little attention to this temple-related material either because they do not understand it, dislike religious topics, or have never paid any attention to these obscure texts. Moreover, I was eager to bring this material to the awareness of an LDS audience. The present article distills several of the main points and sections in my dissertation that I think will be most interesting to general LDS readers.

In a postmodern, deconstructionist literary environment, in which many people are open to a variety of views and interpretations of various texts, there is room for an informed apologetic stance—and this is the stance I use to explain the role of temple elements in the classic blueprint of ancient utopian communities. LDS scholars may find my section on Pythagorean temple rituals a starting point for further inquiry. I hope all readers may gain new insights about how temples can help produce stronger societies, both individually and collectively.

century AD, each offering interesting comparisons to the formation of early Christian and Latter-day Saint covenant communities.

Pythagoras's Community

Ancient sources demonstrate that in the religious mindset of the time, temple teachings often formed the basis of education for religious leaders. After receiving temple instruction, enlightened leaders in antiquity were able to eventually form utopian communities. Pythagorean sources, while they admittedly are very late, semihistorical, and perhaps even legendary, describe in great detail how the temple played a central role in Pythagoras's teaching and community. Iamblicus, for instance, stated that Pythagoras (who was born around 570 BC) learned all forms of excellence (*arête*) in Egyptian temples for twenty-two years, beginning in a Phoenician temple at Carmelus Mountain, and was later initiated into all the temple teachings of Byblus, Tyre, Syria, and Morgos.² He also learned Orphic teachings at Mt. Pangaeus and acquired more knowledge of numbers there.³ Finally, Pythagoras was taken to Babylon by soldiers of Cambyses, where he studied with the magi and learned the ancient wisdom of the gods.⁴ Even though the accounts of these visits to ancient temples are semihistorical at best, it is clear that the temple was thought to have been an important revelatory source of inspiration for Pythagoras as a charismatic leader. Indeed, the temple became a model for his ideal community.

According to ancient sources, these Egyptian and Near Eastern temple rites became the center of Pythagoras's education.⁵ In his work *On the Life of Those Who Excelled in Virtue*, Antiphon described how Pythagoras had to meet difficult ascetic requirements in order to enter into and be initiated in Egyptian temples. This knowledge seems to have not been available in its purity in Greece.⁶ Antiphon stated:

[Since Pythagoras] approved the way of life of the Egyptian priests and was anxious to participate in this, he besought the tyrant Polycrates [of Samos] to write his friend and former host Amasis king of Egypt, and ask that he [Pythagoras] might be permitted to share in the training of these aforesaid priests. Coming to Amasis, he received letters to the priests and, when he had spent some time with those at Heliopolis, was sent on by them to Memphis, as if to their seniors, though in fact this was merely a pretense of the Heliopolitans, and from Memphis, as a result of the same pretense, he went to the priests of Diospolis [ancient Thebes, in upper Egypt]. They were not able, from fear of the king, to allege any causes [for refusing to initiate him]. However they thought to turn him away from his attempt by the greatness of the hardship it would entail. Therefore they ordered him to submit to harsh rules that were quite alien to the Greek way of life. But when he willingly

accomplished these things, they so admired him that he was authorized to sacrifice to the gods and to be present when they were taken care of, something not known to have happened in the case of any other alien.⁷

Likewise, according to Philostratus, this ritual initiation in Egyptian temples enlightened Pythagoras's soul. Pythagoras became empowered as he came to know who he was, who he had been, and who he would become.⁸ As part of living these ancient temple teachings, Pythagoras later wore linen, let his hair grow long, cultivated wisdom, followed a vegetarian diet, and tried to live a silent, sober, purposeful, and ascetic life.⁹

Pythagoras then traveled to southern Italy to found a new community based on these acquired temple teachings. When he arrived in Croton (in southern Italy), he immediately attracted six hundred followers through temple wisdom. His followers studied philosophy, held goods in common, and were called the *Cænobitæ*.¹⁰ Pythagoras attracted even more followers by just one powerful oration based on wisdom.¹¹ Porphyry (AD 234–305), using Nicomachus, a much older source, described how Pythagoras converted many:

By one single lecture that he gave when he arrived in Italy he captured by his words more than two thousand men. They did not return home, but together with children and wives, establishing a great school of fellow hearers, built a city in that country everyone calls Magna Graecia in Italy. They received from him laws and commandments as if they were divine covenants, and would do nothing whatever in transgression of these. They both communized their possessions and counted Pythagoras among the gods.¹²

Timaios, writing in the fourth century BC, also confirmed that Pythagoreans held all possessions in common.¹³

After contributing their possessions, Pythagoreans became friends. Apollonius mentions that “his friends he considered equal to the blessed gods, but the others were hardly worth mentioning, and counted nothing at all.”¹⁴ Plato, who may have been following the precedent of Pythagoras's early community in his ideal republic, had guardians use public property to help other members of the community.¹⁵ Pythagoras organized and committed these new converts to his ascetic lifestyle based on temple principles. Converts were later called *Acusmatici*, who subsequently founded a city called Magna Graecia. They lived in harmony by following all of Pythagoras's laws and precepts, which included sharing possessions.¹⁶ Ritual clothing helped the *Acusmatici* remember these covenants. Diogenes Laertius added that Pythagoras introduced this ritual since “his robe was white and spotless with quilts of white wool because linen had not yet reached those parts.”¹⁷ Soon Pythagoras and his disciples used only white linen clothing,

both symbolizing and reminding them of the pure life they had covenanted to live in ancient temples.¹⁸ Other notable temple precepts and ideals these early converts followed included worship of the gods, piety to the dead, legislation, erudition, silence, continence, temperance, sagacity, divinity, and all things pertaining to the love of learning.¹⁹ His first disciples had to purge themselves of all evil practices in the ancient temple tradition since “dense thickets full of briars surround the intellect.” These disciples were required to abstain from wine, be moderate in their intake of food, and sleep only as much as needed, demonstrating contempt for glory and wealth as Pythagoras did.²⁰ Pythagoras’s personal authority was derived from his adherence to these temple principles.

A variety of ancient sources emphasize that temple teachings were essential in strengthening Pythagorean communities. Iamblichus reported:

When the things said were reported by the youths to their fathers, the Thousand called Pythagoras to the council. After first praising him for the things said to their sons, they urged that if he had anything advantageous to say to the Crotoniates, to declare this to those presiding over the community. He first advised them to dedicate a temple to the Muses in order that they might preserve their existing concord; for these goddesses all have the same title (that of “Muse”), and they have been handed down in a common tradition with one another and especially delight in common honors. In general, the dance of the Muses is always one and the same, encompassing unison of sound, harmony and rhythm, and all things which provide for concord. He showed that their power extended not only to the finest arts and sciences, but even to the concordance and harmony of existing things.²¹

Then, after Pythagoras educated these young followers through mathematics, he had them make a sacred oath to become part of his community:

Therefore, choosing one detail of their secret teachings—a subtle concept, however, and related to many solutions of physical problems, the sum of the first four numbers—by means of this they invoked Pythagoras, like some god, in their oaths, all of them uttering, after all things which asseverated, “Verily, by him who gave the sum of the first four numbers to our generation, that which contains the source and root of eternal nature.”²²

This oath was also referred to by Sextus Empiricus (late second century CE) who says they “swear their most characteristic oath: ‘No, by him who handed down to our company the fourthness (*tetraktys*), the font which holds the roots of ever-flowing nature.’”²³ These oaths officially made candidates members of Pythagoras’s community after they had accepted certain temple ideals.

Once Pythagoras had a group of loyal disciples who had sworn an oath to follow his temple teachings, he required that they give their wealth to the community.²⁴ Strict requirements of commonality of possessions among members of the community controlled capricious envy and excess in the community while providing the means of taking care of poorer members. This law of consecration encouraged a spirit of harmony among initiated members.²⁵

Even though Pythagoras's focus on ritual forms of the temple was viewed with suspicion of self-aggrandizement, it created harmony in other ways among his new followers. Early material culture accompanied by later sources claim that Pythagoras used parts of the Orphic religion to educate his community. A relief of a bearded man representing Pythagoras was found on a stone block, dating to the fourth century BC, and depicted Pythagoras being instructed by Orpheus.²⁶ Ion of Chios claimed that Pythagoras ascribed some of his writings to Orpheus.²⁷ Herodotus of Halicarnassus concurred with Ion in stating, "This custom agrees with the ritual prescriptions known as Orphic and Bacchic which are actually Egyptian and Pythagorean; for anyone initiated into these rites is similarly debarred from burial in a garment of wool. 'They have a sacred discourse' [*hieròs lógos*] which explains the reason for this."²⁸

Plato further clarified the nature of Orphic doctrines associated with Pythagoras. Pythagoras may have utilized these ritual doctrines that center on rewards and punishments in the next world in order to encourage his followers since "the Orphic books give instruction on purification, both private and communal, by means of sacrifice both for the living and the dead. These they call '*Teletai*, rites of initiation,' which if performed will save us from hurt in the next world, whereas if we fail to perform them, dire pains await us."²⁹ Pythagoras taught initiates to strive for rewards of salvation in the next life through Orphic temple rituals.

The temple itself became an orienting guide for Pythagoras and his community. Even Pythagoras's father, Mnesarchus, who was trained in sacred ritual religion, built a temple to Apollo after returning to Samos from Syria.³⁰ According to Diogenes Laertius, Pythagoras entered the holiest part of Egyptian temples and thereby received his religious initiation.³¹ Other reports held that Pythagoras often visited temples, groves, or tranquil landscapes with one or two followers.³² In *On Abstinence from Animal Food*, Porphyry states that Egyptians philosophized in their temples and sought piety and divine knowledge there. Egyptians were frugal in their diet and apparel in temple worship. They made divine works, abstained from many kinds of foods and did not laugh more than a smile since they lived near the gods.³³ Astronomy and mathematics (and their symbols) were an essential

part of Egyptian temple teachings.³⁴ In the same manner, Pythagoras required the performance of ordinances and laws to be viewed as divine precepts. Porphyry stated that the Pythagoreans' beliefs were always based on Egyptian temple ordinances.³⁵

Pythagoras transferred these Egyptian temple values to his followers. One of the first communal actions was to build a temple to the Muses as a symbol of concord, harmony, and rhythm that should prevail ideally among friends.³⁶ Pythagoreans replaced the almost ubiquitous ancient institution of ritual temple prostitution with proper temple worship.³⁷ The temple was always used as a house of learning and communal association.³⁸ We know that Pythagoras instructed the boys in the temple of the Pythian Apollo and instructed the women in the temple of Juno.³⁹ Erudition and initiation required devotion as well as passing through ritualistic temple ceremonies and testing. Before entering the temple, followers had to enter the temple on the right and leave on the left.⁴⁰ A follower could not enter the temple unshod or turn away after entering.⁴¹

Pythagoras customarily entered the temple with his disciples and tested their erudition in many ways.⁴² These included: (1) their proper association with parents and relatives; (2) laughter and proper speaking; (3) associates they kept; (4) how they spent their leisure time; (5) their temperament, including joy and grief; and even (6) how they walked.⁴³ Disciples of slow intellect or those lacking in moral qualities were not admitted to the temple.⁴⁴ After candidates passed the test, they were further tested by experiencing three years of neglect by the community in an examination of how they subjugated their tongue, gave up property, and responded to community politicians, economizers, and legislators. If they passed the test, they became *Esoterics*, who could pass through the temple veil and live with Pythagoras and the gods as immortals. *Esoterics* heard and saw Pythagoras inside the temple veil (these became interior auditors, while others who saw Pythagoras only outside the veil became exterior auditors).⁴⁵ At first, all candidates had heard Pythagoras only outside the veil.

Some candidates did not pass the rigorous religious testing and were barred from the temple. Pythagoras's disciples called *Homacoi* expelled rejected candidates from the community. Pythagoras and his followers returned to these former members their material contributions to the community and even doubled them and later raised a tomb to them as if they were then dead to the community.⁴⁶ One man who revealed Pythagorean doctrines was excommunicated and a tomb was built for him—and according to later legend, he suffered divine punishment from the gods when he drowned in the sea.⁴⁷ Diogenes Laertius tells of members being separated and rejected for speaking too much of Pythagorean doctrines to

the outside world.⁴⁸ This rejection often instilled dissension in former candidates who later became leaders of violent apostate groups. One rejected candidate named Cylon became a prominent leader of dissenters who destroyed Pythagoras's community through mob violence and reportedly killed Pythagoras in a temple.⁴⁹

Initiation into temple rituals distinguished early members of Pythagoras's community. Once initiated, Pythagoras's disciples made morning walks alone solemnly to groves and temples.⁵⁰ Their state of impurity was removed by temple ordinances of washing, sprinkling, and abstaining from certain foods.⁵¹ Ritual purity was extremely important when approaching the gods to sacrifice. One wore white clean garments symbolic of an undefiled soul.⁵² Pythagorean mathematical and astronomical symbols derived from Egypt were used to teach the initiated and erudite that they should not enter a temple negligently or carelessly stand only at the doors. Uninitiated members were separated from the initiated in learning these sacred symbols.⁵³ Initiated members were not supposed to speak of these sacred matters lightly.⁵⁴ Hipparchus, a notable initiated member, showed too much to the world of these doctrines and was severely chastised.⁵⁵

Pythagoras guided his community through continued education in the temple. Women were fortified against the desire to wear costly apparel by having their simple apparel consecrated in Juno's temple.⁵⁶ After his youthful followers made oaths and became members of his community, Pythagoras gave them further advice in the temple of Apollo to be eager to learn, to achieve moral excellence, to be worthy of the god's friendship, and to obey one's elders.⁵⁷

Members of the community were inspired according to temple ideals. Pythagoras not only taught his followers "what friends own, they own in common," and "a friend is a second self," but he practiced these teachings.⁵⁸ He even took care of the medical and physical needs of others in the spirit of charity.⁵⁹ Because he cared for everyone in his community and all members were expected to practice the ideal of friendship, most individuals became well integrated into the community. According to anthropological and sociological models, being "rich" is associated with being well integrated into a community while being "poor" is to be socially isolated.⁶⁰ Thus, by making these personal associations to care for the poor, all Pythagoreans felt fulfilled. Because all felt rich, they seem to have had no desire to acquire material goods beyond their basic necessities.

Pythagorean ritual practices were centered on the temple. Later, inexpensive white garments were used by all Pythagoreans to emphasize harmony and similarity to the gods in the ancient sense of an endowment (*enduo*—I put on clothing).⁶¹ Sextus the Pythagorean taught that all people,

especially those who were initiated, became similar to the gods. Thus, Pythagoras's initiated followers lived their lives in bodies that resembled the early Greek anthropomorphic conception of the gods.⁶² Clearly, temple worship molded Pythagoras's followers and community into a pious, tight-knit, and loyal group of followers. Temples provided a place to sacrifice to the Muses for protection against enemies.⁶³ Indeed, temples became the vehicle for introducing education, service, and initiation into Pythagoras's holy community.

Certain religious standards and prohibitions in Pythagoras's community were associated with the temple. According to Timaios, as quoted in Diogenes Laertius, "the common property of friends is equal friendship."⁶⁴ Pythagoreans prayed for the good things of prudent men in a spirit of friendship.⁶⁵ According to ancient sources, Pythagoras continued to spread these values of community by getting rid of sedition, discord, and party zeal. Pythagoras believed a harmonious community could be established only when mankind banished its evil nature.⁶⁶ Even rebellious children had to honor and obey their superiors and parents in this community.⁶⁷ Acts of reveling and taking vengeance for alleged wrongs were likewise prohibited.⁶⁸

In addition, many temple values and teachings guided Pythagorean communities. The community tried to remove contention from true friendship.⁶⁹ Women gave up costly apparel and disciples did not strive after the universal desires of money, fame, strength, or power, and their souls were tempered to asceticism through music.⁷⁰ In short, followers were urged to cultivate the simple life because extravagance often ruined a man's fortune and body.⁷¹ Women became deified in temple marriage by using the names of gods. By this ritual they went through the stages of virgins, nymphs, and finally mothers.⁷² The importance of pure forms of procreation seems to have been part of these temple rituals. Preparation for erudition through abstinence and religious rituals further fortified Pythagorean communities. According to Pythagoras's temple teachings, sex was for procreation, and a man had intercourse only with his own wife.⁷³ Regarding idle speech, Pythagoras said "that it was either requisite to be silent or to say something better than silence. Let it be more eligible to you to throw a stone in vain, than to utter an idle word. Do not say a few things in many words, but much in a few words."⁷⁴

A great deal of Pythagorean moral and scientific teaching also came from numbers and symbolism of the ancient temple. The compass and right-angled triangles measured by the Pythagorean theorem were formed through geometry or "measuring the earth." Initiates were able to live in harmony with the gods and their community through remembering the

significance of these geometric symbols. In antiquity, a *templum* was a special square cut or measured out by a priest. In ancient Greek, one also “cuts” (*temnō*) oaths or covenants. The number four was considered to be a perfect or covenant number by the Pythagoreans, who believed that all musical scales—and true harmony—are found to exist within it. This number contained the nature of all things and became the basis of their oath: “I swear by him who the *tetractys* found, whence all our wisdom springs, and which contains Perennial Nature’s fountain, cause, or root.”⁷⁵ According to some of Pythagoras’s followers, the number three represented unity and the three stages of life: premortal life, mortal life, and the afterlife. The *tetractys*, a triangle formed by arranging ten dots in four rows, represented temple wisdom and the perfectability of both their community and the universe. Ten may have symbolized the wisdom gained in Pythagoras’s temple.⁷⁶ Seven and twelve were also sacred temple numbers related to temple teachings because they come about through adding and multiplying four and three. These numbers and symbols attributed to Pythagoras represented perfection as a value embodied in religious rituals of the temple into which his community was initiated. These numbers summarized all Pythagoras’s teachings regarding perfection in making and keeping temple covenants in order to build the perfect society.

The Essenes

Among the Essenes, under the influence and leadership of their Teacher of Righteousness, the *yahad* (union or community) made a new covenant and became the nucleus of a “perfect and sacred” community based on Hebrew notions of the temple. In fact, the fifteen founding members became known as the “holy of holies,” since their leadership was associated with the temple.⁷⁷ Philo confirmed that this Teacher of Righteousness encouraged his followers to live as a community.⁷⁸

It is clear from documents discovered near Qumran that covenants, often associated with the temple, fostered unity among the Essenes. Certainly covenants had always been important in Judaism. However, for the Essenes, covenants had expanded their individual commitment to the community. Volunteers freely made a covenant to give all of their possessions and abilities to the community. When the individual made an everlasting, binding oath to obey the rigorous mundane and ritual commandments of the community, he thus became initiated.⁷⁹

All those who freely devote themselves to His truth shall bring all their knowledge, powers, and possessions into the Community of God that they may purify their knowledge in the truth of God’s precepts and

order their powers according to His ways of perfection and all their possessions according to His righteous counsel. They shall not depart from any command of God concerning their times; they shall be neither early nor late for any of their appointed times, they shall stray neither to the right nor to the left of any of His true precepts. All those who embrace the Community Rule shall enter into the covenant before God to obey all his commandments so that they may not abandon Him during the dominion of Satan because of fear or terror or affliction. On entering the Covenant, the Priests and Levites shall bless the God of salvation and all his faithfulness, and all those entering the Covenant shall say after them, "Amen, Amen!"⁸⁰

Because of the individual and communal nature of their covenant, the Essenes felt it imperative to separate themselves from "men of falsehood."⁸¹ Furthermore, a covenant was always binding on the individual and could not be annulled.⁸² All members of the Essenian community renewed their covenant "year by year" as long as the "reign of Satan" lasted.⁸³

Outside sources describe unique Essenian practices, in addition to the Law of Moses, that separated them from other Jews. Philo emphasized that the Essenes tried to live in a manner worthy of divinity.⁸⁴ While the Essenes believed their community was a living covenant, they still performed sacrifices in the temple at Jerusalem in accordance with the covenants of the Mosaic Law. However, the Essenes used a different ritual of purification there and were, according to Josephus, barred from those precincts of the temple that were frequented by all the people. In short, the Essenes had to perform their Mosaic rites in a part of the temple in Jerusalem by themselves.⁸⁵

The Qumran community consisted of priests and the multitude of men who were united by the law and possessions, symbolic of the temple.⁸⁶ The *yahad* modeled itself after Israel and the temple, dividing itself into priests and Levites on the one hand and common Israelites on the other. The covenant community became a substitute temple since the Essenes seem to have "cut off their imperfections," according to the root meaning of temple (*temnō*—I cut), by purity laws.⁸⁷ It is likely that each community applied the same rigorous standards for admission and dismissal.

Admission to the Essenes' community required a total commitment to an ascetic lifestyle of thoughts and deeds. The Dead Sea Scrolls, probably written by the Essenes at Qumran, demonstrate that only capable individual members could live according to the Book of the Community Rule, which included striving for perfection according to ideals of purification.⁸⁸ They had to obey their superiors in every way but still seem to have held some private property. "These are the ways in which all of them shall walk,

each man with his companion, wherever they dwell. The man of lesser rank shall obey the greater in matters of work and money. They shall eat in common and pray in common and deliberate in common.”⁸⁹

Provisions governed the probationary period of candidacy within the community. According to outside sources, for a full year, each candidate was expected to provide materially for his own needs and then was expected to hand over much of his wealth to the community at the end of the probation. Josephus stated that candidates were not immediately admitted and had to live one year on probation with a “hatchet and loin-cloth.”⁹⁰ Porphyry noted that while living under probation, candidates received a white undergarment.⁹¹ After one year, according to Josephus, the candidate also received other white clothes and became a part of the community, sharing in the holy water, although he was not admitted to communal meetings.⁹² Two more years of testing followed, and then terrible oaths were sworn before the candidate could touch the common food and be given a rank in the community.⁹³

Ten ritual oaths were made, ten being a number often associated with the temple even in Pythagorean thought, as I have previously shown. Josephus noted the Essenes regulated proper behavior in the community as follows: (1) piety to deity, (2) justice to men, (3) wrong no one, (4) fight for justice, (5) not abuse authority or appear eminent, (6) love truth, (7) expose liars, (8) endure tortures, (9) not rob, and (10) preserve the books and names of angels.⁹⁴ The Dead Sea Scrolls also list ten communal guidelines:

[1] They shall love each man his brother as himself; [2] they shall succor the poor, the needy and the stranger. [3] A man shall seek his brother's well being and [4] shall not sin against his near kin. [5] They shall keep from fornication according to the statute. [6] They shall rebuke each man his brother according to the commandment and [7] shall bear no rancor from one day to the next. [8] They shall keep apart from every uncleanness according to the statutes relating to each one, and [9] no man shall defile his holy spirit since God has set them apart, and [10] if they live in camps according to the rule of the land, marrying and begetting children, they shall walk according to the law.⁹⁵

After an individual made covenants to obey these ten commandments, the candidate met the requirements to become a member of the community. But the community at large had to accept every new member after two years of probation: “But when the second year has passed, he shall be examined, and if it be his destiny, according to the judgment of the Congregation to enter the Community, then he shall be inscribed among his brethren in the order of his rank for the Law, and for justice, and for the pure Meal; his property shall be merged and he shall offer his counsel and

judgment to the Community.”⁹⁶ Finally, only through individual covenants and communal consent did the individual become a full member of the Essenian community.

Various ancient sources characterize the new community of the Essenes as communitarian. The Community Rule scroll stated that “all shall bring all their knowledge, powers, and possessions into the community of God.”⁹⁷ Furthermore, the Damascus Rule scroll taught the Essenes to love each brother as himself and to “succor the poor, the needy and the stranger.”⁹⁸ Essenian covenants, rules, and membership itself in the community were founded on the blueprint of the temple.

Pachomius

Pachomius (AD 292–346), the father of Egyptian monasticism, was raised in Egyptian temple traditions and then trained in strict Christian ideologies by his ascetic mentor Palamon. Because of Pachomius’s ascetic training, he attracted many followers and formed an inspiring religious community. As his community grew larger, he built a monastery symbolic of the temple, where all could assemble, learn from the Holy Scriptures, make covenants, and thus become part of his community. The monastery also served as a place of refuge for the needy and poor, which included local shepherds and commoners.⁹⁹ Pachomius eventually built many monasteries to accommodate thousands.¹⁰⁰ He established regulations that prohibited all forms of private property since everything belonged to the community once its members had made important covenants. Twice a year all monastic communities gathered at the Great Monastery to take part in feasts and receive instruction.¹⁰¹ Pachomius’s community was based on Christian principles, with the monastery as a temple that became the stabilizing religious, economic, and social center. It also became a center for Pachomius’s and his successors’ authority; a place of refuge for travelers, the poor, and sick; and a communal economic engine all connected to the ritual of the *ascesis* or assembly prayer.

Proclus

Proclus (AD 410–485), who founded a thriving community in Athens, was trained from a young age through ritualistic teachings. As a young child, Proclus took grammar lessons in Lycia and then continued his studies in Egypt. There he lived in the household of Leonas the sophist and studied with other Egyptians. The grammarian Orion, who descended from the priestly caste of Egypt and knew of these religious temple teachings, trained Proclus in esoteric religious studies.¹⁰² Damascius summarized

these Egyptian studies in which Proclus was trained as wisdom that “is expressed in myth and quietly and slowly revealed to man” through secret temple rites that rest on the hope of heaven and the general welfare of other Egyptians.¹⁰³ Later, Proclus was trained in theurgy at Plutarch’s school in Athens, which functioned in many ways as a temple. Ancient sources claim that theurgy derived from Greek, Near Eastern, and Egyptian sources. But in this period, theurgy (or accomplishing divine acts—*theourgia*) was especially associated with Neoplatonic philosophy and the Chaldean oracles. These mysteries strove to facilitate a mystical union with the divine in the spirit of eclecticism.¹⁰⁴ After Plutarch’s death, Syrianus continued to give Proclus help with scholarly pursuits, made him his roommate, and trained him in worldly and divine matters, since Proclus was going to inherit Plutarch’s school.¹⁰⁵ Proclus read many of Aristotle’s and then Plato’s works under his teacher’s supervision in order to become initiated into pagan thought and religion, starting with the lesser mysteries or temple teachings and working up to the greater ones.¹⁰⁶ Thus, Proclus’s preparation in temple teachings was gradual and occurred over a long period of time.

Proclus’s schoolhouse, which functioned similar to an ancient temple, became the center of his community. Damascius explained that Proclus taught his student Isidore many holy discourses and mysteries there.¹⁰⁷ The architectural design of house C (an excavated rich house associated with Proclus’s school on the Areopagus) reveals a “coordinated plan and common purpose” to educate, pray, and make covenants. Statues of Hercules and Hermes, which have been recovered in recent times, were set up as symbols of righteousness and education.¹⁰⁸ Proclus encouraged his followers to perform various rituals of the Great Mother, received revelation, and fasted there.¹⁰⁹

In accordance with Proclus’s teachings, individual members contributed their money, time, and talents to the community and served the poor. Archiadas, the grandson of Plutarch, became a “private benefactor” to all and left part of his possessions to Proclus’s temple school at Athens.¹¹⁰ Theagenes, an Athenian archon and senator at Constantinople, often used his extraordinary wealth in redressing misfortunes and helping others by spending his money on “teachers, doctors and other matters relating to the welfare of Athens.”¹¹¹ Marinus remarked that Proclus cared for his companions and their children and wives as a “common father and author of their being.”¹¹²

Proclus’s religious campus was situated on the Areopagus near other temples and contained many temple symbols. He lived in a house where both Syrianus and Plutarch had lived, near the theatre and the temples of

Dionysus and Asclepius and in sight of the Acropolis.¹¹³ Archaeologists are relatively certain they have positively identified Proclus's house (House C), which includes a large room (6.6 m by 4.4 m) with elaborate marble, philosophical inscriptions, mosaic floors, geometric patterns, and an apse with a Cybele shrine.¹¹⁴ House C was situated near wells and a spring on the northeast side. Fountains of all kinds are often symbolic of purity and healing in many ancient religious traditions.¹¹⁵ The close interrelationship of the Areopagus houses and the compactness of the area suggest a planned, coordinated layout and a purpose to educate and initiate.¹¹⁶ Proclus's school, which functioned as an ancient temple, became a symbol of piety, ritual purity, moderation, education, prosperity, and philanthropy. Indeed temple rituals enabled the creation of an ideal community in late-antique Athens.

The Temple as the Center of Ancient Ideal Communities

These four examples from antiquity are not the only cases of ancient utopian societies or Zion communities, but they are among the best documented. They span a millennium, from the sixth century BC to the fifth century AD. They range from the Judean desert to southern Italy, from Athens to Egypt. The charismatic leaders of these communities always led their followers to make covenants in temples. Some of these communities were more authoritarian than others. Punishments varied according to their leaders' ideals. Some utopian experiments survived only for a short time while others prospered for centuries. Most of these communities, with the exception of Proclus's Athens, were founded in remote settings, far removed from the world. This is not surprising, since "Zion" always flees "Babylon." Covenants, often made in ritual temple settings, unified each of these communities while still allowing for individual communal differences. These communities drew dynamic strength and organic vitality from their leadership, ideals, covenants, learning, and the unifying functions of temple traditions as found in their civilizations and unique cultures. Temple elements run so deeply through the histories of these groups that one is tempted to conclude that the cohesiveness and success of any new idealistic religious movement in antiquity correlated directly with the extent to which it effectively incorporated and venerated those temple elements in their community existence and daily life.

Covenants accepted in temples have always helped mankind to progress toward the good life. Universal human foibles and problems of social inequality, war, isolation, poverty, hunger, instability, greed, envy, hate, anger, and even pride were mitigated and often eliminated when members of these religious communities made and kept their covenants. Temple

worship can even change human nature—thus allowing communities to function as utopias. As I have demonstrated in analyzing these four examples of ancient communities, it is very normal for temple-centered, religious communities to be successful. There is no better way to inspire individuals to live moral and ethical values, thereby providing a framework for ideal communities, than to set a communal goal for individuals to enter a holy temple. Problems entered these religious communities only when individuals chose not to keep the covenants they had freely contracted. These ancient temples became houses of learning, preparation, and covenant making that helped these good individuals to progressively become like God. Not surprisingly, temple-oriented communities became stable centers of peace, refuge, and harmony anciently.

Rejection of the Idea of Utopia

While the idea of an ideal or utopian society was widely embraced in the ancient world, as the Renaissance and Enlightenment spread through Europe, the notion that a perfect society could be created fell out of favor. Most Western thinkers rejected the idea of an ideal community as impossible or at least beyond the reach of modern society, embracing instead the idea of “paradise lost” and the permanent fall of Adam and Eve from a primal state of ideal existence.

The Garden of Eden appears in the Hebrew, Near Eastern, and later Western tradition as a primeval archetype of utopia and has many parallels to Middle Eastern and Far Eastern beliefs as well as a multitude of other traditions. After Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit and were cast out of the Garden, the earth naturally produced thorns and thistles instead of fruits and vegetables. Adam had to toil to gain his food since he had fallen from the paradise of God’s presence. Thus, the idea of utopia, or an ideal society, was often connected to escaping the evils of the natural world as well as a return to a pristine environment, which often symbolized man’s return to God’s presence.

Various notions of this return to an ideal state existed in antiquity and persisted through the Renaissance. Although constructing models of a perfect society has long been the pastime of philosophers and intellectuals in the Western tradition, Sir Thomas More (1478–1535) was the one who actually coined the term *Utopia*. More, who often demonstrated his Renaissance learning by using puns, made no exception with *Utopia*: *ou* (no) + *topia* (place). More cleverly came up with this compound title for his imaginative work describing the ideal and fanciful life, manners, and customs of a fictitious island community of the same name. For More, Utopia seems to have

been an ideal “good place” that did not exist. In this sense, More’s “no place” has much in common with other modern conceptions of the ideal society.

In contrast to ancient attempts at creating ideal communities, modern Western secular thought generally promulgates the notion that perfect societies can never concretely exist. Indeed, it appears that when modern experiments with utopian ideals are devoid of the temple—and the ritual worship, education, blessings, and covenants associated with it—they result, at best, only in critical fantasies or, at worst, in oppressive dystopian regimes. More’s *Utopia* (1516) firmly established the notion of an otherworldly fantasyland in the Western tradition. His work made a clean break with Plato, who argued that it was indeed possible for mankind to create an ideal society on earth. While More’s *Utopia* critiqued sixteenth-century England and suggested progressive innovations, it also introduced the notion that a good place could exist only on a remote and unrealistic island environment. Other works, such as Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* (1627), Henry Neville’s *The Island of Pine* (1668), and Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), further entrenched the motif of shipwrecked mankind’s imperfect struggle in a dangerous, natural world. Unlike the harmonizing, empowering nature of the ancient temple communities discussed above, these later “utopias” do not inspire individuals to change their own nature but only teach them to survive in their given natural surroundings.

The nineteenth century brought various attempts—by religious and secular groups—to found utopian communities, but none of these attempts succeeded in the long term, thus further entrenching the already widespread skepticism regarding the feasibility of such idealistic experiments. Ann Lee, for instance, gained a following of Shakers in New England who worked together and shared what they produced, but this group survived only until the beginning of the twentieth century. Henri de Saint-Simon, a French utopian socialist, influenced the foundations of various nineteenth-century philosophies, including Marxism and Positivism. His followers established a short-lived community based on his teachings. Charles Fourier, another French advocate of utopian experiments, grew up in the topsy-turvy environment of the French Revolution. His ideas took root in America and inspired the founding of several communities, including La Reunion in Texas and Utopia in Ohio, but none of these experiments endured long. Young Robert Owen, a wealthy and successful mill owner in Scotland, believed he could concretely reform industrial society. He criticized the entire economic, social, and religious status quo of the nineteenth century and even attacked the institution of the family. He created a utopian community at Lanmark, Scotland, but the members of his community had

trouble getting along. When he decided to move to New Harmony, Indiana, he encountered even more problems. His utopias seemed to attract self-interested loafers instead of the skilled and hardworking reformers that New Harmony needed to become self-sufficient. Although Owen gained some admirers, he eventually turned his back on industrialism and gravitated toward the growing socialist movement that was gaining strength in the 1840s.

Nineteenth-century socialist movements were led by powerful intellectuals, none more influential than Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Engels's socialism associated utopian thought with theory, and utopian experiments with fantasy. He failed to note that stable but small utopian communities had existed in antiquity. Karl Marx, on the other hand, believed that there were fundamental differences between his scientific socialism and what he argued was its earlier inchoate, utopian rival. Although Marx rejected utopianism because of its progressive belief in social improvement, his system retained a certain vision of future socialist and communist society that many scholars would still define as utopian.¹¹⁷

Unlike utopian thinkers of the nineteenth century, twentieth-century writers did not view the future with optimism. Two extremely destructive world wars accompanied by the excesses of colonialism, totalitarianism, and nationalism influenced writers to caution society against the dangers of further utopian thinking. They warned that because of excesses in science and technology, utopias inevitably degenerate into dystopias or horrible totalitarian societies. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984*, and Karl Popper's *The Open Society and Its Enemies* are examples.

In accordance with materialistic and antireligious ideologies of modern times, many secular societies conducted utopian experiments during the twentieth century that produced disastrous results. Instead of alleviating mankind's problems, megalomaniacal dictators, their followers, and their political parties have reigned with blood and horror throughout the world. The most extensive of these socialist utopian experiments were the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. After decades of oppression and unsuccessful attempts to make their respective forms of communism work, the Soviet system collapsed under the weight of its own inefficiencies and the Maoist system embraced market reforms to become one of the most vibrant modern economies, although China still suffers from certain remnants of political and military tyranny.

The Early Christian Church and the Latter-day Restoration of Temple Communities

The main modern exception to the belief that utopias are not achievable is the Latter-day Saint restoration of the early Christian vision of creating a Zion community. This exception is surely not unrelated to the one common element of successful ideal communities in the ancient world that is missing from all of the failed modern utopian efforts: the temple. We learn from the scriptures that Enoch, primitive Christians, ancient Americans, and the early Latter-day Saints were all motivated to become more righteous through covenants made in a temple setting. The temple became a blueprint for a righteous society in diverse dispensations and places. Jesus spent a great deal of time in the temple in Jerusalem. As he attracted many disciples and other followers during his ministry, he took some of them up “into the mountain,” symbolic of the temple (Matt. 5:1). Greek religious use of the verb “to be perfect” (*teleō*) may refer to being initiated into a holy temple community and making sacred covenants (Matt. 5:48). Several other similar points could be mentioned, including the Mount of Transfiguration, all leading to the report in the book of Acts of how Jesus’s disciples took these temple teachings literally in building up the Church of Jesus Christ, based on keeping the faith, sharing possessions, and serving others in practical ways (Acts 2:44–47). In fact, the temple in Jerusalem was a central feature of the earliest Christian community for twenty-five years after Jesus’s crucifixion and resurrection. Likewise, in the Book of Mormon, the Savior visited the surviving people who were gathered “round about the temple that was in the land of Bountiful” (3 Ne. 11:1). His followers made covenants to follow him, and they kept these covenants because they “were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another. And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift” (4 Ne. 1:2–3). Love, unity, and equality are all common utopian themes of Zion in ancient scripture.

Jesus’s nascent church differed significantly, however, from each of the four ancient utopian communities I have described. Jesus and his Apostles were phenomenally and often immediately successful itinerant leaders and teachers because of the influence of the Holy Ghost and later the gift of the Holy Ghost, unlike the isolated, solitary, and stationary utopian communities that usually grew very slowly under a charismatic leader such as the Teacher of Righteousness among the Essenes or Pachomius in the Egyptian desert. Jesus’s Apostles had already been changed (or converted) by the

Holy Ghost—instead of by slow transformation through living the rules of a leader in a solitary desert environment. These Apostles rigorously sought to convert large numbers of people when they preached the gospel or evangelized to the outside world. In contrast, ancient utopian communities normally gained new members only by passively attracting them instead of actively seeking them out or preaching to them. Jesus and his disciples taught their followers how to flee the world without becoming physically isolated from it, unlike individuals who lived in utopian communities. But Christians, like these four utopian communities that strove for personal purity, were bound to God and indirectly to their fellowmen through covenants made in a temple context.

The early Christian church changed over time, however, and as the Apostles were martyred, divine authority was lost, doctrines were abandoned, ordinances were altered, and the connection to the temple and its covenants was severed. Then, after many long centuries, a restoration of ancient authorities, doctrines, and ordinances burst upon the world. And with it came restored knowledge of temples and temple covenants, which laid a foundation once more for the establishment of an ideal or “Zion” society.

This notable exception to the modern utopian and dystopian writings and experiments discussed above began with Joseph Smith in upstate New York in 1830. The Book of Mormon, which Smith translated from gold plates delivered to him by an angel, describes how the ancient Americans lived peacefully and happily after a visitation of the resurrected Jesus Christ and “had all things common” (4 Ne. 1:3) among them. Smith also received through revelation an account of the ancient city of Enoch, a utopian society called Zion “because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them” (Moses 7:18). Joseph Smith and his followers also practiced for a time a form of economic egalitarianism called the law of consecration, in which they consecrated all their possessions to the Church and received back a portion, “every man equal according to his family, according to his circumstances and his wants and needs” (D&C 51:3). Significantly, the Mormon utopian or “Zion” experience had as its centerpiece the building of a temple—first in Kirtland, then in Nauvoo, and finally in Salt Lake City—accompanied by the expected covenants, rituals, teachings, and commandments.

The utopian experiment under Brigham Young in Utah, often referred to as the United Order, eventually gave way to the pressures exerted by both the U.S. government and the expanding capitalist economy, but remnants still persist in the form of the law of tithing, the collecting of fast offerings, the Church’s welfare program, and the more recent Perpetual

Education Fund. While certain aspects of the Zion ideal have been withdrawn, at least for a time, the temple is still central to Mormonism, and temples now exist or are being built in countries across the globe. Just as temple covenants empowered the four ancient communities examined in this paper, LDS temples today serve as a means of helping communities and individuals in their efforts to create Zion wherever the Church establishes wards and branches.

Ancient and Modern Parallels

When we analyze both early LDS history and the current Church, we recognize strong utopian parallels to the four ancient communities discussed earlier in this study. Under the leadership of Joseph Smith and later Brigham Young, the early Saints fled westward from their persecutors to eventually settle in the semiarid region of the western United States, much like the Essenes who established their community in Qumran. The restored Church began with only six members, similar to the few members of ancient utopian communities associated with Pythagoras, Pachomius, and Proclus. Joseph Smith, like Pythagoras, was violently persecuted and later martyred. As the community of Latter-day Saints gradually became larger, better organized, and increasingly hierarchical, it established, like ancient utopian movements, increasingly complex laws and rules that fill much of the Doctrine in Covenants and current leadership handbooks. The Word of Wisdom, the law of tithing, and other commandments sociologically define boundaries between insiders and outsiders in the form of members and nonmembers, and between the most faithful and “the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints” (D&C 89:3) in LDS communities. Missionaries attract and preach to new converts who gradually but steadily add to the membership of a statistically small but worldwide church. While doing proxy ordinances in temples for their ancestors, members of the restored gospel are continually reminded of the covenants they have made, while, on the other hand, dissenters who choose not to keep their covenants are sometimes excommunicated. These dissenters often create trouble as they attack their former church community and its members, similar to the dissenter Cylon’s destruction of Pythagoras’s community—and similar to the apostate-led attack on the Mormon temple community of Nauvoo. The covenants contracted in a temple setting can exalt or condemn a person, depending ultimately on that person’s choices. It is in the temple that one may learn most effectively God’s blueprint for the happiness of the individual and his kingdom.

The restoration of the temple and its covenants and ordinances opens up possibilities that many people yearn for but have long assumed to be unattainable in this life. Although most people in today's world have given up on the idea of utopias, or ideal societies, the gospel of Jesus Christ in its original version, as well as in its restoration, sees this as not only possible but eventually inevitable. Indeed, the gospel incorporates all of the key elements used in ancient utopias to make them work. These elements enable us to establish across the earth "communities of Saints," where we can enjoy some aspects of an ideal society even if the one true utopia may not be fully realized until the Millennium.

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1. I learned of the importance of temple blueprints for ancient utopian communities through conducting research for my dissertation, "Utopia and Community in the Ancient World" (PhD diss., University of Colorado, 2008), and while working as John W. Welch's research assistant for his book *The Sermon on the Mount in the Light of the Temple* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2009).

2. Many of the individuals and legends cited in this article are quite obscure and are only known to a few specialists. A good reference guide to the sources and places quoted in this article is the Oxford Classical Dictionary. My book *Utopian Communities of the Ancient World* (Lampeter, Wales: Edwin Mellen, 2010) explains many themes of each section in much more detail. I have also used Iamblichus, *De Vita Pythagorica Liber* (hereafter *VPyth*); John M. Dillon and Jackson P. Hershbell, *Iamblichus: On the Pythagorean Way of Life: Texts, Translations, and Notes*, Graeco-Roman Religion Series, vol. 11 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991); and Iamblichus, *Life of Pythagoras*, trans. Thomas Taylor (Rochester, Vt.: Inner Traditions International, 1986). Taylor's translation of the nineteenth century brings out many of the temple and ritual meanings of the ancient texts that modern secular translations often choose to ignore. Although he lived several centuries after Pythagoras, Iamblichus argued that his work was reliable because it was based on older and more reliable sources. See *VPyth* 23.104; and Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 56. This statement seems to have some truth since much of his work is similar to that of Porphyry and Diogenes Laertius, both of which are very dependent on earlier sources, mostly fragments, securely dated to the fourth century BC, which include Plato, Aristotle, Aristoxenus, Dicaearchus, Heraclides Ponticus, and Timaios. See Walter Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, trans. Edwin L. Minar Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 4. I consider most scholars who focus on the historical "Pythagoras problem" unproductive since they trivialize

Pythagoras's achievements. Pythagoras had immense prestige and numerous followers throughout antiquity, even up until the Renaissance, because of the utopia he was able to create through a perfect combination of religion and science. Porphyry, *Life of Pythagoras*, trans. Morton Smith, in Moses Hadas and Morton Smith, *Heroes and Gods: Spiritual Biographies in Antiquity* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 6–8, 10–12. According to Porphyry, Pythagoras was the first Greek to be initiated in Egyptian temple rites. For information about the Morgos, see Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 17; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios* (Athens: Katarti, 2001), 90.

3. *VPyth* 28.146–47; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 78–79.

4. *VPyth* 4.19; also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 9.

5. *VPyth* 3.15.

6. Christoph Riedweg, *Pythagoras: His Life, Teaching, and Influence*, trans. Steven Rendall (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002), 7, 138.

7. Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 7–8; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 78, 80; Antiphon, in *Die Fragmente Der Griechischen Historiker*, comp. Felix Jacoby (Berlin: Weidmann, 1923), 1096 F 1b (hereafter *FGrHist*).

8. Philostratus, in Carl Ludwig Kayser, *Vitae Sophistarum* (Hildesheim: G Olms, 1971), 6.11 (hereafter VS).

9. Philostratus, in VS 1.32; 6.11.

10. *VPyth* 5.28; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 13. For the aristocratic nature of Croton, see also Diodorus Siculus, in *Bibliotheca Historica*, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Lipsiae: Sumptibus et Typis, B.G. Teubneri, 1853), 12.9; and Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 18; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 90, 92.

11. Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 18; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 90, 92; see also Dicaearch fr. 40, in David C. Mirhady, *Dicaearchus of Messanan: The Sources, Texts, and Translations*, ed. W. Fortenbaugh and E. Schutrumpf (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2001) and Riedweg, *Pythagoras*, 61.

12. Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 20; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 94.

13. Timaios, in *FGrHist* 566 F 13; see also Riedweg, *Pythagoras*, 102.

14. Apollonius, in *FGrHist* 1064 F 2.259; see also Riedweg, *Pythagoras*, 102.

15. Plato, *Republic*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 3.416d, 5.462c.

16. *VPyth* 6.29–30; also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 13–14; and Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 20; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 94.

17. Diogenes Laertius, in Iamblichus, *The Life of Pythagoras*, ed. Kenneth Sylvan Guthrie (Alpine N.J.: Platonist Press, 1919), 8.19.

18. Photius, in Guthrie, *Life of Pythagoras*, 14, 80.

19. *VPyth* 6.32; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 15.

20. *VPyth* 16.69; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 36.

21. *VPyth* 45; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 21.

22. Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 20; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 94.

23. Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Professors*, 7.94–95, quoted in *The First Philosophers*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 101.

24. Timaeus. fr. 13a. in *FGrHist*, found in a scholiast from Plato's *Phaedrus*, 279c, as quoted in Waterfield, *First Philosophers*, 99.

25. Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption* (United Kingdom: Routledge, 1996) 21.

26. Riedweg, *Pythagoras*, 58–59.

27. Ion of Chios 36B 2, quoted in Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers: A Complete Translation of the Fragments in Diels' "Fragmente der Vorsokratiker"* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948), 70.

28. Herodotus *The Histories* 2.81.2, as quoted in Riedweg, *Pythagoras*, 55.

29. Plato *Republic* 363c, 364e, as quoted in Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, 1.

30. VPyth 2.9; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 4–5.

31. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. R. D. Hicks (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1925), 3; see also Guthrie, *Life of Pythagoras*, 157.

32. Antonius Diogenes, in Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 32; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 108, 110.

33. Porphyry, *On the Abstinence from Animal Food* (London: Barnes and Noble, 1965), 4.6.

34. Porphyry *On Abstinence* 4.8.

35. Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 7–8; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 108, 110; Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. A. D. Godley (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), 2.4.2, available at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0126>.

36. VPyth 9.45; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 21.

37. VPyth 9.44; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 22.

38. VPyth 21.96; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 52.

39. VPyth 25.50; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 24.

40. VPyth 23.156; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 83.

41. VPyth 28.85; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 45.

42. VPyth 30.185; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 97–98.

43. VPyth 17.71; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 37. See also Edwin L. Minar Jr., *Early Pythagorean Politics in Practice and Theory* (Baltimore, Md.: Waverly Press, 1942), 28. Minar points out that Pythagoras tried to diagnose the true character of his disciples.

44. VPyth 17.73; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 38–39.

45. VPyth 18.89; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 48.

46. VPyth 17.72–73; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 38.

47. VPyth 34.247; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 47–48.

48. Diogenes Laertius, in Guthrie, *Life of Pythagoras*, 26.

49. VPyth 17.74; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 39.

50. VPyth 21.96; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 52.

51. Diogenes Laertius, in Guthrie, *Life of Pythagoras*, 169.

52. Diodorus Siculus *Fragments* 10.9.6, in Bekker, *Bibliotheca Historica*.

53. VPyth 23.104; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 56.

54. VPyth 23.103, 105; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 57.

55. VPyth 17.75; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 39–41.

56. VPyth 11.56; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 27.

57. VPyth 10.51, 53.

58. Antonius Diogenes, in Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 33; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 110.

59. Antonius Diogenes, in Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 33; Porphyrius, *Puthagorou Bios*, 110.

60. Douglas and Isherwood, *World of Goods*, 118.

61. Diodorus Siculus Fragments 10.9.6, in Bekker, *Bibliotheca Historica*.
62. Sextus the Pythagorean, from Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 192.
63. *VPyth* 35.264; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 135.
64. Diogenes Laertius, in Guthrie, *Life of Pythagoras*, 8.10.
65. Diodorus Siculus Fragments, in Bekker, *Bibliotheca Historica*, 10.9.7.
66. *VPyth* 7.33; see also Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 16.
67. *VPyth* 8.39, 41; 10.53; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 17, 19, 25.
68. *VPyth* 10.51; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 24–25.
69. *VPyth* 22.101; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 54.
70. *VPyth* 11.56, 12.58, 16.68; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 27, 28, 35. See also Clinias, in Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 167.
71. Diodorus Siculus Fragments, in Bekker, *Bibliotheca Historica*, 10.6.7.
72. Guthrie, *Life of Pythagoras*, 160–61. Diogenes writes, “Timaeus in the tenth book of his histories tells us that he (Pythagoras) used to say that women who were married to men had the names of Gods, being successively called virgins, nymphs and then mothers.”
73. Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, trans. Christopher P. Jones (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005–6), 1.13. Senators are admonished to monogamy in *VPyth* 9.47.
74. Stobeus, in Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 189–90, 215–16.
75. *VPyth*, 28.150, 29.162; Porphyry *Life of Pythagoras* 20; Porphyrius, *Pythagorou Bios*, 94; Taylor, *Life of Pythagoras*, 80, 87. Taylor offers two different translations of the oath: “No, by him who discovered the tetraktys of our wisdom, a source having roots of ever-flowing nature” (80) and “No, by him who gave the tetraktys to our race, a source having roots of everlasting nature” (87).
76. See John W. Welch, “Counting to Ten,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 12, no. 2 (2003): 44–45.
77. Stuart A. Cohen, *The Three Crowns: Structures of Communal Politics in Early Rabbinic Jewry* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 105–6.
78. Philo, *Apologia pro Iudaeis (Hypothetica)*, 1, hereafter *Apol*, quoted by Eusebius, in *Eusebii Pamphili Euangelicae Praeparationis*, 8.6–7 (hereafter *Praep. Ev*), in *The Essenes according to Classical Sources*, trans. Géza Vermès and Martin Goodman (Sheffield, UK: Oxford Center for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, JSOT Press, 1989), 26.
79. 1QS 5.7–11, in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, trans. Géza Vermès (New York: Penguin, 1968), 79; see also Bilhah Nitzan, “The Concept of the Covenant in Qumran Literature,” in David Goodblatt, Avital Pinnick, and Daniel R Schwartz, eds., *Historical Perspectives: From the Hamoneans to Bar Kokhba in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium of the Orion Center* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 1999), 92, 98. In this text, the author quotes many passages from the Essenes’ writings to note that a covenant is a mutual act, 92; and is made by a volunteer, 98.
80. 1QS 1.11–20, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 62.
81. 1QS 5.1–5, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 78.
82. CD 16.7–8, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 92.
83. 1QS 2.19; in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 74.
84. Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber sit*, 75 (hereafter *Q.o.p.*), in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 21.

85. Josephus, *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, 18.19 (hereafter, *Ant.*), in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 55.
86. 1QS 5.2–3, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 78.
87. Jodi Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 37–38.
88. 1QS 1.1–2, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 78–79.
89. 1QS 6.5–7, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 81.
90. Josephus, *De Bello Judaico* (hereafter *BJ*), 2.137, in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 43; Hippolytus *Ref.* 9.23, in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 65, added a white robe to Josephus’s description.
91. Porphyry *On Abstinence* 4.12.
92. Josephus *BJ* 2.138, in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 43.
93. Porphyry *On Abstinence* 4.12–13; Josephus *BJ* 2.138–39, in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 43; partially noted in 1QS 6.13–23, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 81; Hippolytus *Ref.* 9.23–25, in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 67, 69.
94. Josephus *BJ* 2.139, in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 43; Porphyry *On Abstinence* 4.13.
95. CD 6.11–7.9, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 102–4.
96. 1QS, 6.16–22, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 82.
97. 1QS 1:11–12, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 72; see also Josephus and Philo’s accounts in Vermès and Goodman, *Essenes*, 39, 81.
98. CD 6.16, in Vermès, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 103.
99. “The Bohairic Life,” in Pachomian Koinonia, *Pachomian Chronicals and Rules*, trans. Armand Veilleux, 3 vols. (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 2:25; “The Greek Life,” in Veilleux, *Pachomian Chronicals*, 2:29. Excavations at Fay Qibli seem to confirm this building activity. See James Goehring, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1999), 186.
100. Veilleux, “Bohairic Life,” 2:49–51; Veilleux, “Greek Life,” 2:54.
101. Veilleux, “Greek Life,” 2:83; Veilleux, “Bohairic Life,” 2:58–59.
102. Marinus, *Proclus*, in *NeoPlatonic Saints: The Lives of Plotinus and Proclus by Their Students*, trans. Mark Edwards (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 8.
103. Damascius, *Vita Isidori 2*, in *The Philosophical History*, ed. and trans. Polymnia Athanassiadi (Athens, Ga.: Apmea Cultural Association, 1999), 75 a and b.
104. Edward J. Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 88.
105. Marinus *Proclus*, in Edwards, *NeoPlatonic Saints*, 12, 29.
106. Marinus *Proclus*, in Edwards, *NeoPlatonic Saints*, 13.
107. Damascius *Vita Isidori* 103D, in Athanassiadi, *Philosophical History*, 249.
108. Athanassiadi, *Philosophical History*, 345, appendix 1; see also Allison Frantz, *The Athenian Agora XXIV Late Antiquity: A.D. 267–700* (Princeton, N.J.: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1988), 46.
109. Marinus *Proclus* 19, in Edwards, *NeoPlatonic Saints*, 86–87.
110. Marinus *Proclus* 14, 17, in Edwards, *NeoPlatonic Saints*, 77 n. 137, notes that “the word *euergetein* is commonly used of bestowing ostentatious public

benefits and was applied in this period to civic magnates and above all to the emperor.”

111. Damascius *Vita Isidori* 100a, in Athanassiadi, *Philosophical History*, 243, 245.

112. Marinus *Proclus* 17, in Edwards, *NeoPlatonic Saints*, 82 n. 172, quotes Plato *Sophist* 241 d, where the Eleatic stranger pays the same compliment to Parmenides.

113. Marinus *Proclus* 29, in Edwards, *NeoPlatonic Saints*, 104.

114. Frantz, *Athenian Agora*, 43; a fragment of an inscription reads *sophies* and *bioton* (sophic or philosophical life) with a philosopher’s head.

115. Athanassiadi, *Philosophical History*, 343.

116. Frantz, *Athenian Agora*, 46.

117. Peyton E. Richter, *Utopia/Dystopia?* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1975), 78.



In a publishing market that demands very specific genres such as science fiction or self-help, finding authors who strive for literary excellence with little regard for marketability can present a small challenge—but they are out there. In this review essay, Jack Harrell introduces readers to a few such examples within Mormon literature.

The Search for Mormon Literary Quality

Bound on Earth, Rift, Long After Dark, and The Best of Mormonism 2009

Jack Harrell

I know a secret. For a hundred years or more, Latter-day Saints have been writing works of literary quality. We have had among us fine poets and novelists, playwrights and essayists, and, more recently, a few serious filmmakers. I'm not the only one who knows this secret. For three decades, students have taken Mormon literature courses at BYU, reading novels, poems, and plays virtually unknown to their parents and peers. I was one of those students in the early 1990s. It is difficult to see the effects this educational movement has had on LDS culture when visiting a Mormon bookstore today. But for me and thousands of others, reading works of literary quality by and about Latter-day Saints brought to our lives a treasured richness of literary appreciation and religious understanding. Still, the secret of Mormon literary writing remains untold to many Latter-day Saints all over the world.

What do I mean by works of literary quality? That is a very big question, one too complex to answer sufficiently here. The pop-culture standard is based on units sold: the more copies a particular book sells, the better it is. Literary qualities are harder to measure, but they include characteristics like a striking use of language, complex themes, and philosophical depth. Literary works lend themselves to multiple interpretations. While certain works merely reinforce what readers already feel and believe, literary works tend to challenge, expand, and refine the reader's values and assumptions. Ideally, a work of literature causes the reader to say, "I'll never be the same after reading that book."

Another quality of literature is important to mention here because, sadly, it is so absent in the fiction sections of LDS bookstores: the standard

of universality. Readers do not have to be Jewish, for example, to appreciate a book by Chaim Potok. One need not live in seventeenth-century England to understand Shakespeare. Literary works transcend boundaries and speak to people across cultures and years. Many books in LDS bookstores fail this standard, alienating readers who are not LDS or who do not fit a particular demographic. Just as an inside joke told between two people tends to alienate a third party, much LDS writing has the same effect on those outside American Mormon culture.

The works reviewed here might alienate certain readers on other grounds, however. Readers expecting Mormon characters with no inner doubts or personal conflicts may be disappointed. Readers expecting Mormon characters who always live as we all know we *ought* to live (and don't) might deem these works to be not uplifting enough. For these readers, there are many options available at LDS bookstores. The rest of you will likely need to order the following books on the Internet.

Angella Hallstrom's *Bound on Earth* opens with a conflict that assures us this book will offer no easy answers. In the novel, Beth is a young wife and mother married in the temple to a returned missionary, Kyle, a good man in his mid-twenties who has become mentally ill. Kyle will not take his medicine. In his paranoia, he is convinced that Beth and her entire family, the Palmers, are against him. After waiting down the street for hours, Kyle crashes the family's Thanksgiving gathering at Beth's parents' house, putting everyone on edge. The drama works well because Kyle is not necessarily dangerous; the author's subtle touches in characterization intensify the conflict even more. Like the members of the Palmer family, we feel as bad for Kyle as we do for Beth. Kyle asks to hold their baby, Stella. He takes Stella to sit in the backyard, on the swing. As a gentle snow falls, Kyle sings to her while Beth watches tensely from the patio door. When Beth goes out to get her baby, Kyle says, "I would give you anything, you know." Then, as narrator, Beth says, "I leave him out on the swing. I walk with my daughter toward the house, and it's lit up and warm, a deep yellow glow against the night."

Bound on Earth goes on to chronicle other stories about the Palmer family through time. Most stories are contemporary, but one reaches back to a pioneer ancestor whose dying infant daughter is healed by a miraculous visitor. This book is real family drama, where the characters are not "good guys" or "bad guys." Instead, the characters feel like friends who do not always get it right, but we care about them nonetheless. The novel poignantly shows how families are in fact united by the painful and peculiar stories of each individual member.

The stories in Todd Robert Petersen's *Long After Dark* resonate with the book's title and cover art—a nighttime shot of a paved lot and a lone light pole. This book reads like stories told late at night by a stranger you are only gradually learning to trust. The book contains sixteen stories, some as short as a couple of pages, and ends with the sixty-three-page novella "Family History." Many of Petersen's characters are Mormon, but not the kind of Mormon you might see on the cover of the *Ensign*. One character pays tithing on money won in a dog fight. Another, an Argentinean priesthood leader, is released from his calling after shooting a young intruder who broke into his home. In another story, a meth addict steals a picture of Christ from a nearby ward meetinghouse—not because he's a thief at heart, but because he vaguely recognizes a need for Christ in his life. Then Peterson takes us to another continent, where an African elder is called by his branch president to dedicate a grave in a dangerous and strange village nearby. Soon we're back to Mormondom, or Petersen's version of it, where a Utah sheriff's deputy runs over a coyote on the highway at night before having a mystical encounter with a Native American Latter-day Saint.

Petersen's characters and circumstances move toward the more familiar in his novel *Rift*, winner of the Marilyn Brown Novel Award. The main character of *Rift*, Jens Thorson (the character who opens *Long After Dark*), has maintained a years-long feud with his bishop. This feud escalates when the bishop's adult, pregnant, unwed daughter moves in with the widower Jens. Because her own father is trying to teach the girl a lesson, Jens is left to care for her as her father should. In *Rift*, Petersen generally portrays Mormons as judgmental of their neighbors, sticklers for small sins, and indifferent to the pain of those who "don't belong." Certainly many Latter-day Saints do not fit this description, but sadly, Petersen's view is accurate too often. The irony is that by taking this critical stance, *Rift* may be its own brand of preachment. But it helps that the work is lyrically written and presents the foibles of ordinary Latter-day Saints with humor and grace.

Stephen Carter's *Best of Mormonism 2009* lives up to its title. In the spirit of the well-known Best American Series, Carter has selected short works published by Mormons in LDS and other literary publications, including *Iowa Review*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Dialogue*, and *BYU Studies*. One advantage here is variety—essays, short stories, poetry, and a play. The second advantage is quality. Each of the works was previously published, and some in the finest literary journals today. The volume is solid writing, from its thoughtful introduction by Phyllis Barber, titled "Writing: An Act of Responsibility," to its last selection, a beautiful poem by Darlene Young called "Patriarchal Blessing." Joshua Foster's "Redemption in Three

Levitations,” first published in *South Loop Review*, presents us with three semi-miracles against a backdrop of Idaho farm life. Lisa Torcasso Downing’s “Clothing Esther” is a masterfully restrained short story about a woman who must clothe her mother-in-law for burial. In “We Who Owe Everything to a Name,” Lynda Mackey Wilson tells of her own mother, who found herself pregnant by a man who then fled the country. Wilson tells the story of how she was raised by the good man who married her mother, and how that experience informed her more mature understanding of our souls being adopted by Christ.

None of these volumes will sell like hotcakes, which is too bad. But despite a lack of commercial potential, I’m hopeful about the future of Mormon literary writing. Surely some Latter-day Saints—perhaps many—will recognize that commercial success is not the only, or even the best, measure of quality. Some things come at a higher price—a significant investment in time, patience, and thought. The books I’ve mentioned represent a small but meaningful movement, one that may never become widespread. Nonetheless, good literary writing by and about Latter-day Saints is out there. To you I recommend the search.

Jack Harrell (who can be reached via email at byu_studies@byu.edu) teaches English and creative writing at Brigham Young University–Idaho. His collection *A Sense of Order and Other Stories* was published by Signature Books in 2010.

The four books discussed here are Angela Hallstrom, *Bound on Earth* (Woodsboro, Md.: Parables, 2008); Todd Robert Petersen, *Rift* (Provo, Utah: Zarahemla, 2009); Todd Robert Petersen, *Long After Dark: Stories and Novella* (Provo, Utah: Zarahemla, 2007); and Stephen Carter, ed., *The Best of Mormonism 2009* (Salt Lake City: Curelom, 2009).

Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell, with Shaylyn Romney Garrett. *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010

Reviewed by James W. Phillips

American Grace is the next pivotal work within the social scientific study of religion that LDS readers should find interesting on many levels, including the extensive attention it gives to Mormonism. In this work, Robert Putnam (author of the national bestseller *Bowling Alone*) teams up with David Campbell (editor of *A Matter of Faith: Religion in the 2004 Presidential Election*) and field researcher Shayln Romney Garrett to examine the many facets of contemporary American religious pluralism. The authors use data from the nationally representative 2006 and 2007 waves of the Faith Matters survey, in addition to other surveys, alongside several in-depth observations of specific congregations.

Throughout the work, the authors manage to blend reports of macro-level trends of religious behaviors and attitudes with examples from “congregational vignettes”—richly described and detailed cases of Catholic, Jewish, African-American, Protestant, and Mormon congregations that act as a backdrop to the authors’ analyses. These descriptions offer a face and sense of immediacy to the study of American religion, which has been at times lacking in other such scholarly undertakings. In a sense, *American Grace* is both a reflection and a scrutiny of the many undercurrents involved with religion in American life, and, although the book is somewhat daunting in scope, the authors offer a mostly satisfactory analysis of both within-religion issues (religious switching, intermarriage, religious innovation, gender roles) and issues of how religion as an institution intertwines with other areas of society such as politics and ethnicity. Thus, *American Grace* offers a current treatment of several issues directly relevant both to LDS readers and to a general audience.

Throughout the work, the authors guide their analyses back to one central theme—how can American religious pluralism coexist with religious polarization? In other words, many religions have become entrenched with

one or the other side of various hot topics, such as female clergy, abortion, and gay rights, which results in a decline in “moderate” religious identities. Therefore, how can these many ideologically partitioned religions bridge their divisions and live in mutual toleration? The answer, which in a sentence does not do justice to these authors’ work, is “by creating a web of interlocking relationships among people of many different faiths” (550, see also 526–34). Through the social contact with others of different religious backgrounds—which is more and more likely in current America due to increased religious pluralism—a mutual respect and harmony arises. This premise rests much on Putnam’s social capital theory: through bridging contact with dissimilar others comes mutual exchange that can potentially benefit either party, along with the by-products of trust and understanding. Through contact with dissimilar religious groups comes harmony, or “American grace.”

The strengths of this book arise from the explanations and expounding of the contact-understanding focus. In the first several chapters, the authors offer a cogent historical background of the “shocks and after-shocks” of American religious history. From the post-World War II rise of fundamentalism, through the Civil Rights Movement, and subsequent rise of the Religious Right, the authors weave a historical context to explain the current state of affairs in American religion. For example, several historical factors help explain the rise of religious “nones” (those who claim no religious affiliation) in the last decade. The authors effectively argue that the rise in religious nones is due in part to a reaction against increased visibility of religious conservatism in the 1990s (124–27). Their historical rationale of the ebb and flow of religious movements is convincing, but their most original contribution might be in revealing several unexpected characteristics of the religiously disaffiliated. Contrary to supposition, religious nones are not “uniformly unbelievers” (125) or a product of being raised as unaffiliated—many Americans today maintain religious beliefs and behaviors but are simply less involved with an organized religion. In several examples, the authors describe religions as “fuzzy around the edges” and that every denomination has “roughly 10 percent who are liminal members, neither entirely in nor entirely out” (136). Both identifying and parsing out the staunch nones from the liminal nones is an exciting new development.¹

Additionally, the historical backdrop behind modern-day adolescent religious disaffiliation or moralistic therapeutic deism² is of particular interest. Highlighting the intertwining of religion with political issues, the authors offer several insights into why adolescents, whether Mormon, Protestant, Catholic, or otherwise, seem to lean more toward

having little or no religious identity. With sound argument, the authors explain much of the rise of adolescent disaffiliation as a reaction against what youth see as a “judgmental, homophobic, hypocritical, and too political” religious landscape (121).

The “congregational vignettes” in chapters 2, 7, and 10 offer insightful comparisons of the difficulties various American religions face. Each religion experiences issues of modernity differently, with one or more themes of ethnicity, politics, feminism, race issues, class inequality, and religious innovation at the forefront for some and not others. The Mormon vignette (351–68) offers a focus on religion and politics, the Chicago Catholic parish vignette (211–30) more on ethnicity and race issues, and the Massachusetts Episcopal vignette (37–54) on religious innovation. Other in-depth observations differ in their foci, and the comparative discussion among each offers a hands-on feeling for the primary challenges many churches confront.

At times the work is perhaps too expansive, thus leaving some topics abbreviated. For example, an explanation of various religions’ growth and decline is repeated in several sections. The treatment of this topic occurs by expounding the strict church or religious market theory—where some churches do better at “marketing” themselves to potential adherents than others who fail to innovate or become mainline and subsequently lose adherents. The authors do contribute to explaining religious growth and decline by shedding light on updated trends of religious switching and successful religious socialization/transmission of beliefs from parent to child. However, the bulk of their ideas presented on religious growth and decline are more fully developed elsewhere.³ Nonetheless, the book is highly informative, methodologically sound, and well worth readers’ attention, especially to an LDS audience, due partly to the attention that Mormonism receives.

The authors offer contemporary evidence that Mormons are most devout in terms of religiosity, most likely to stay in the religion from childhood to adulthood, most opposed to religious intermarriage, most likely to believe there is one true religion—yet most likely to believe that people not of the faith, including non-Christians, can go to heaven—and also have the highest “in-group attachment,” (504) or feelings of warmth toward others in their religion. Interestingly, the authors explain that the notion of Mormon in-group attachment is due to characteristics of ethnicity—not that Mormonism is an ethnicity per se, but that it does have “a shared history, legacy of persecution, mass migration, and geographic concentration” (504) that is characteristic of many ethnicities. Additionally, Mormons are perceived quite negatively when rated by those of various other religions. When reporting how warmly people feel toward

various religions, at the negative end of the scale are Muslims, then Buddhists, then Mormons, and *then* the nonreligious. Essentially, the average American feels warmer to someone who has *no* religion than someone who is Mormon (507–9).

The authors highlight several possible explanations for the negative perception Mormons (and Muslims and Buddhists) receive. It could be due to their relatively small size, which promotes unfamiliarity and minority group status, or the negative media portrayals of fringe elements “whether it is fundamentalist polygamists or jihadists” (506). Not fitting into America’s traditionally considered Judeo-Christian framework is another possibility. Perhaps the most compelling explanation the authors give is the argument for network homogeneity. If the “American Grace” proposition is true—through social contact comes understanding and harmony—then a religion marked with one of the highest rates of religious homogeneity among family, friends, and neighbors (525, 534) would be negatively perceived. The solution? “We would expect their image problem to disappear even more rapidly as more and more Americans count . . . a Mormon among their friends and family” (534). Religious bridging, while still maintaining strong religious identification, seems to be the issue for Mormonism in the future.

I highly recommend this book for any religious American—it is a delight for the religious leader, social scientist, or anyone with a general interest in religion, but I offer a similar caution that Bruce Chadwick and Richard McClendon⁴ have offered. When these types of books come along, LDS readers may be tempted to focus entirely on data relevant to all things LDS. It would be a mistake to miss the immensely insightful descriptions and comparisons found throughout the work.

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1. Chaeyoon Lim, Carol Ann MacGregor, and Robert D. Putnam, “Secular and Liminal: Discovering Heterogeneity among Religious Nones,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49, no. 4 (2010): 596–618.

2. This phrase comes from the work of Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). It is a label for the common religious

mind-set of American adolescents, which supposes that one is in favor with God by generally doing the right thing (moralistic), that God is there when one needs help (therapeutic), and that God steps in occasionally when one requests it but otherwise stays out of one's life (deism).

3. See, for example, Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America, 1776–2005: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005).

4. Bruce A. Chadwick and Richard J. McClendon, review of *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* by Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, *BYU Studies* 45, no. 2 (2006): 167–72.

Daniel C. Peterson. *Muhammad: Prophet of God*.
Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007

Reviewed by Thora Qaddumi

Islamic studies scholar Daniel C. Peterson has written a small book that speaks volumes about the man who, in about the year AD 610, while meditating in a cave near Mecca in Arabia, received a prophetic call that led to the establishment of a religion that today is claimed by almost a quarter of the world's inhabitants. It adds to the growing body of research by Peterson and other Latter-day Saint scholars that strengthens the Church's role as a voice of reason in an area rife with misunderstandings and ignorance—the Islamic world.¹

Although written from a strongly academic and scholarly perspective, *Muhammad: Prophet of God* is a book that offers an unusual opportunity for general readers without a firm foundation in Middle East history to gain an appreciation for the rich complexities of the culture, mores, and conflicting forces in the Arab world during the time of Muhammad.

By placing Muhammad in context—as a man of his times who was influenced by traditions and historical forces—Peterson plays a similar role to Richard Lyman Bushman in his “cultural biography of Mormonism's founder,” *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*.² Although Joseph and Muhammad are products of very different eras, each book portrays a prophet who is leading a religious restoration in a time of apostasy, and each depicts a leader who is strongly charismatic, sincere, and human.

A refreshing aspect of Peterson's account is his ability—enhanced by his linguistic credentials that enable him to go to original sources—to give glimpses into the philosophy and character of the man Muhammad, as well as of the prophet Muhammad. A few years after his death, the prophet's followers preserved in oral tradition extended conversations with Muhammad and then recorded and compiled them into the Qur'an and other records. Those who are not well acquainted with the Qur'an and accounts of Muhammad's life and sayings—called *ḥadīth*—will be impressed by the

many details Peterson includes. Readers will catch an inside glimpse into the prophet's thought processes and prophecies that affect various events.

Apart, perhaps, from Joseph Smith, Muhammad is the only major founder-prophet for whom a detailed biography exists. Peterson has used it selectively. To a nonbeliever in Islam, the broadened perspective he provides serves, in many cases, to increase respect for a man who anguishes over the death of a child, plays with his grandchildren, works to maintain peace with his wives, faces political and economic problems, makes difficult military decisions, and, through it all, has been thrust by divine intervention into the role of a prophet. Peterson notes that "Muhammad was not an ascetic, nor did he encourage asceticism in others," but he was, in no way, the "lustful debauchee" portrayed by anti-Muslim polemicists (179). Judged by the standards of his time and culture, it is fairer to categorize him as a man of honor and, in his attitudes toward women, relatively progressive.

Believers in Islam, however, may find the book's emphasis on cultural influences and the juxtaposition of mundane events relating to sacred prophecy a bit disturbing. Muhammad's earliest prophecies, received through the angel Gabriel, are general in nature, urging a return from idolatry to the worship of the God of Abraham or Allah (the Arabic equivalent to the English "God"). Later pronouncements are more specific. Muhammad reveals that, if water is not available, Muslims can use sand instead of water to clean themselves before praying—a ritual also taught to him by the angel Gabriel. Conveniently, this revelation is received exactly when his followers complain about his decision to set up camp because his wife has lost a prized necklace there in the desert.

Believers generally consider Muhammad's every action to be worthy of emulation. His every utterance, however, should not be considered from Allah. Peterson cites cases when he remains open to others' advice. During a military campaign, Muhammad orders his soldiers to halt at a well: "But one of his fighters, a member of the Media tribe of Khazraj, came to him and asked, 'O Messenger of God, this place that we are at now—Has God revealed it to you . . . or is it a matter of opinion and military strategy?'" When Muhammad says it is his own decision, the follower suggests a different strategy, and it proves, militarily, to be the right decision.

By stressing the historic and linguistic setting, Peterson sheds light on the forces that have shaped Islam and the fallacies of attributing current conflicts to religion rather than to underlying political and economic causes. Peterson lays the groundwork for the conflict by discussing the era before the birth of Muhammad, when the primary political opponents,

each seeking to control trade routes, were the Christian Byzantine Empire and the Persian-based Sassanid Empire.

Leaders of the Sassanid Empire, who resided in the Levant, an area where Muhammad conducted most of his trade, were Zoroastrians. Their subjects, living in family-based tribes, included Jews, Nestorian and Monophysite Christians, Manichaeans, Gnostics, and pagans (2). Muhammad's view of himself as the last prophet in the Abrahamic tradition emphasizes the strong parallels and shared beliefs among Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. His conflict is with pagans or idol worshippers, not with "people of the book," to whom he accords special status and protections. Peterson includes accounts of the anguish experienced by Muhammad's followers—and the prophet himself—due to his teaching that most of their venerated ancestors—even Muhammad's own mother—will be consigned to hell because they were polytheists.³

Peterson makes it clear that both Christians and Jews played a significant role in early Islamic history. In Islamic accounts, a Christian monk or hermit foretells the coming of Muhammad (42). When Muslims are allowed to enter the sacred sanctuary of the Ka'ba in Mecca and destroy the idols that are kept inside, they preserve an icon of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus that has been painted on its walls (31). The early death of the prophet's beloved son, whose mother was a Coptic Christian concubine, is one of the Prophet's deepest personal tragedies, especially since he has no other sons who survive beyond early childhood (156–57).

Jewish tribes figure strongly in the early days of Islam, mainly as traitors or political opponents of the Muslims. Muhammad is compliant in the effectual extermination of one Jewish tribe, and two other Jewish tribes are eventually exiled from the area. In other cases, he shows compassion, for example, when he pardons a Jewish woman who has attempted to poison him (139). Peterson's account helps explain the roots of the problems between the Muslims and Jews, which have been greatly magnified in modern times by the conflict for control of Palestine.

Peterson documents the rise of Islam out of the culture and traditions of the Arab tribes, including the Arabic emphasis on language, especially poetry. He explains that poets and prophets were essentially synonymous in pre-Islamic Arabia, as in the Old Testament, where poems are attributed to prophets. Arabs took their poets and poetry seriously. When the Muslims seized Mecca, it is believed that only four people were executed—and all were poets and writers who had satirized the prophet (148). Peterson also considers it significant that *sif*, the style of elevated prose in which pre-Islamic Arabian seers delivered their oracles, is used in the Qur'an, which Muslims regard as a direct revelation to Muhammad, who is said to

have been illiterate.⁴ The poetic form used has made it easier for even non-Arabic speakers to understand and memorize the Qur'an.⁵

The rise of Islam is also associated with the aforementioned Ka'ba,⁶ a shrine revered throughout the world by Muslims, who participate in the Haj, a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage designated by Muhammad as one of the "five pillars of Islam," along with profession of faith, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. In Peterson's discussion, the pilgrimage to the Ka'ba is portrayed as a continuation of ancient tradition, though the association with idol worship is removed. Muhammad was a native of Mecca, where the dominant tribe, the Quraysh,⁷ were the guardians of the Ka'ba, which, according to Islamic—and even pre-Islamic—tradition, was built by Abraham on the site (already chosen by Adam, whose shrine there had been destroyed in the flood of Noah). Arabs believe that, when their honored forefather Abraham cast Hagar and her son Ishmael out of his presence, they traveled to an arid area near the present city of Mecca, where they were saved by the miraculous appearance of a spring that became known as Zamzam. According to tradition, Abraham came to visit his son there, and in the eastern corner of the Ka'ba is a meteoric stone that was brought to Abraham by an angel from a nearby hill during that visit (23–24).

While casting much light on both the man and the historical forces that set the stage for events that continue to dominate the world's political stage today, Peterson does not attempt in his analysis to go far beyond the lifetime of Muhammad and the early days of Islam. And, although the title of his book is *Muhammad: Prophet of God*, Peterson retains an academic distance. The book does not deny Muhammad's sincerity, but, in the same way LDS believers often scrutinize outside scholars, it is not written from a position of faith. It is, after all, written by a Christian and a historian, not a Muslim believer. By placing strong emphasis on cultural and historical factors, it deemphasizes the dramatic and hugely significant changes introduced by Muhammad. It does not attempt to explain how the message shared by a simple man named Muhammad has been able to tap into eternal yearnings of not only his native Arabic tribesmen but of billions of people throughout the world and transform their lives.

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1. Daniel C. Peterson, *Abraham Divided: An LDS Perspective on the Middle East*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Aspen Books, 2001); *BYU Studies Special Issue: LDS Scholars Engage Islamic Thought* 40, no. 4 (2001).

2 Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Knopf, 2005), cover.

3. Modern Islamic interpretations offer support for a less stringent prediction of the status in the afterlife for those who were not exposed to Muslim teachings while on earth (40).

4. Peterson disputes the Muslim claim that Muhammad was unable to read or write, since these skills would have been required of a person deeply involved in the caravan trade. However, he says the Prophet probably had no direct acquaintance with Christian scriptures.

5. A native Arab speaker, raised in the language and culture, may dispute some of Peterson's points relating to the early forms of Arabic poetry, while respecting the linguistic accomplishment of any Western scholar who is able to discuss the finer points of such poetry. Each line of the ancient Arabian *qasida*, or ode, is "a separate unit, a complete thought," according to Peterson (20), making it easy for references to pagan concepts to be removed by the time the poems were recorded. In such poems published in the Arabic language as "Sharh al-M'allaqat al-'Ashr" by Al-Khatib al-Tabrizi, however, the thought is continued for several lines.

6. The sanctuary's name, the Ka'ba, refers to its shape, with its four corners directed toward the four points of the compass.

7. Muhammad's father died before he was born. Peterson writes that his grandfather brought him into the Ka'ba and "presented the infant to God, offering a prayer of thanks for the gift of this boy as a substitute for his dead son" (36). Later, even before becoming a prophet, he served as the arbitrator during reconstruction of the shrine.

Michael Coogan. *God and Sex: What the Bible Really Says*.

New York: Twelve, 2010

Reviewed by Eric A. Eliason

Once, while serving as a military chaplain, I attended a training event in Colorado Springs. There we toured the world headquarters of the Evangelical “Focus on the Family” ministry. Our friendly guide explained to us that their organization existed to promote the “biblical model” of the family in the modern world. A cheeky question popped into to my mind: “By ‘biblical model’ do you mean the polygamy practiced in the Old Testament, or the celibacy encouraged in the New Testament?” But I held my tongue, as I wanted to be a polite guest. But since this event, I have often reflected on how many ways the Bible has been used in contemporary discussions over policies regarding the family, marriage, and sexuality.

As Latter-day Saints, we have the teachings of the living prophets to help guide us through these issues. But many potential allies and adversaries use the Bible centrally in their arguments about these topics. Since we count the Bible as scripture too, it might behoove us to stay up to speed on what people are claiming the Bible says. One voice in this matter who speaks with considerable clout is Harvard’s Michael Coogan, editor of the acclaimed *Oxford Annotated Bible* and author of a slim and handy volume, *God and Sex: What the Bible Really Says*, where he brings his training to bear to explain what the Bible’s authors and earliest readers likely saw as its message about the regulation of sex and family relations.

Michael Coogan approaches the Bible from a more secular approach than many Latter-day Saints would be comfortable with. Yet he brings up several topics of specific interest to Mormons and even pronounces that, contrary to most other Christians, we have it exactly right in how we interpret certain biblical passages. Most dramatically, on patriarchal polygamy—which many Christians have tried to interpret away despite it being nowhere proscribed in the New Testament—Coogan has this to say:

So, with the authority of the Bible behind them, early Mormons argued for “plural marriage,” and some Mormon fundamentalist sects continue

to practice polygyny. They were and are right: if the Bible provides authoritative models, then a man should be allowed to have more than one wife, as did Abraham, Jacob, David, and other biblical heroes, with no hint of divine disapproval. (79)

But perhaps the most compelling issue he brings up for Mormons is the textual and archeological evidence that the earliest Israelites believed their god had a goddess wife—a belief that later Bible authors and redactors tried, somewhat unsuccessfully, to excise from the Bible. Despite the Bible’s many references to Asherah as an unauthorized foreign import, she may have actually been an earlier Israelite goddess (167) who sat on the council of the gods mentioned several times in the Old Testament (172). In an interpretation familiar to many Mormons, Coogan claims that Genesis 1:26–27—where God says “let us” create humans “in our own image,” “male and female”—is most likely a reference to a divine couple, a father god and mother goddess as heavenly parents (176). Coogan also makes a case that certain passages traditionally seen as metaphorical can justifiably be read with the presumption that their authors intended them to be read literally. The first ten chapters of Proverbs, where Wisdom is personified as a woman who has been God’s consort since the beginning and through whom the Lord made all things, and Ezekiel 16 and 23, where the prophet likens Israel to two of God’s wives who have gone astray, are two examples. For Latter-day Saints who believe that many plain and precious truths have been taken out of, or obscured in, the Bible, and who also believe in a Heavenly Mother, this should all be very provocative.

However, as Coogan explains, the Bible is a polyphony that “sings with many voices.” It is a library or discussion of not necessarily unified ideas (17), and some of these ideas, when understood as the authors intended them, will not sit well with modern sensibilities. He points to a great deal of evidence suggesting that women were seen as property and that adultery was seen as akin to theft. Adultery as defined in the Bible was not, as we define it today, sexual relations involving at least one person, male or female, who is married, but was sexual relations where one party was a married woman (102). Other sexual relations were deemed unwise, ritually impure, or even illicit but did not rise (or sink) to the level of adultery. This helps explain not only polygamy, but also the way prostitutes—either actual, such as Rahab (154) or acting, such as Tamar (111, 153)—are little condemned in the Bible (103, 158) and why primary restitution for rape was made to the victim’s father. While moderns would share biblical peoples’ sense that rape is a terrible crime, we realize we are in a different world when we read in Deuteronomy 22:28–29 that biblical provisions for the rape victim allow her to demand that her rapist marry her and forbids the rapist from divorcing

her. In a world where romantic love was secondary to financial security in marriage arrangements, this ensured that she was not left unable to marry and without long-term support (87).

This book advances several challenging readings of the Bible and demonstrates how understanding Bible-era gender roles can help us see the Bible through the eyes of its writers and first readers and not anachronistically project back in time our own modern understandings. Coogan warns of this tendency when he discusses how some feminist interpreters have claimed that the fact that women were the first to witness Jesus's resurrection indicates the honored place Christ had in mind for women. In a postfeminist (or biblically prefeminist) reading, however, this might only show that burial duty was women's work, and they had to come back on early Sunday morning since they would have been prohibited from finishing their work on the Sabbath. Relevant to assessing women's somewhat advanced roles among Jesus's followers, Coogan points out that Jesus's message to Mary and Martha was still to immediately go and inform male authorities (57).

Mormons might also be thankful for the role that modern prophets—and modern attitudes for that matter—play in the regulation of contemporary sexual practices when Coogan informs us that nowhere in the Bible does it explicitly prohibit a man from sleeping with his own daughter or marrying his cousin (71), nor does it speak about lesbian relationships (135). As Coogan explains, the Bible is another country where their ways are not always our ways. Its people and their God have little regard to our tender contemporary sensibilities. This is borne out multiple times in his book. Coogan suggests that if we try to tame or Americanize the Bible into something we find easier to digest, we change it into something that may be useful politically but we warp its message and stretch the most likely historical meanings of the text. If this is so, we may have cause to wonder how useful it can be by itself, without the Holy Spirit and modern prophets, as a guide for regulating family relations in our own country and in the international arena.

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By What Authority? The Vital Questions of Religious Authority in Christianity, edited by Robert L. Millet (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2010)

It appears that I have stumbled upon the answer to Juliet's timeless question, "What's in a name?" (*Romeo and Juliet*, act 2, scene 2). While a rose, by any other name, may have smelled as sweet to Juliet, the name of a book can make a significant difference for a reader.

By What Authority? is a compilation of papers delivered at a 2006 Brigham Young University conference on religious authority. The subtitle of the book (*The Vital Questions of Religious Authority in Christianity*) and the preface (authored by Robert L. Millet) imply that the text is an ecumenical examination of how various traditions—Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Seventh-day Adventist, and Latter-day Saint (to name a few)—perceive authority, priesthood, hierarchy, and the like. As evidence of what appears to be the book's intended goal, one chapter's author writes: "For nearly two millennia, meetings have convened to discuss authority in Christian traditions" (124). Another chapter indicates: "In one way or another, most of the theological issues that divide Christians today end up reflecting our different conceptions of authority" (36). Consequently, I was initially drawn to this text because I had hoped that through reading its pages I would come to a clearer understanding of how various Christian traditions answer "the vital questions of religious authority." Certain chapters accomplished that goal—although others have as their purpose something different.

The book's strength lies in Millet's ability to pull together the *who's who* of a subject so that the reader can learn

from the brightest and the best in the field. This volume is no disappointment in that regard. Gerald McDermott, Roger Olson, and the late Richard John Neuhaus are but a few of the significant theological minds of our era who contributed a paper to this volume.

By What Authority? also offers some important points of clarification on matters often misunderstood. For example, in Peter Huff's article on "Authority in the Catholic Tradition," the text points out that Catholic authority rests *not* in the two-dimensional model of scripture + tradition (as it is so often explained) but, rather, in a four-dimensional model combining tradition, scripture, episcopal authority, and the influence of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, in Bradley Nassif's article "'Authority' in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition," an important point of clarification is made regarding the sense in which Eastern Orthodox Christians believe in "apostolic succession"—namely through "communion ecclesiology" or the "succession of communities" rather than the succession of "apostles" or "bishops" (42–43, 44–45). These are important points of clarification, establishing why a book on this topic is important.

However, readers expecting an ecumenical exploration of religious authority may be somewhat frustrated with parts of the book. Several chapters have almost nothing to do with what appears to be the intended subject: for example, Robert Randolph's article on the Church of Christ (96–107), and David Neff's paper on reading the Bible for application (162–79). While these articles were well written and interesting, they strayed from the subject of authority.

Likewise, some of the articles break from the ecumenical spirit that prevails in much of this book. For example, Richard John Neuhaus's article sought to explain the dichotomy between papal infallibility and the individual Christian's need for autonomy. However, as a convert to Catholicism, Neuhaus seemed more interested in defending the Catholic position than he was in simply explaining it. Likewise, I felt that Stephen Ricks's article did little to establish what the orthodox LDS position is on authority. Rather, the article felt more like a polemic designed to gently debunk the contemporary Roman Catholic doctrine of apostolic succession through bishops.

While the inevitable typos and a somewhat inconsistent tone cause some chapters to feel very academic while others feel rather folksy, overall this book is well worth reading. For Latter-day Saint readers, one of the benefits they will gain from reading this book is an awareness that many people in other Christian traditions see some of the questions posed by Mormons on the subject of religious authority as nonissues.

—Alonzo L. Gaskill

Days Never to Be Forgotten: Oliver Cowdery, edited by Alexander L. Baugh (BYU Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book, 2009)

Days Never to Be Forgotten presents the fruits of the 2006 BYU Church History Symposium on the life and work of Oliver Cowdery in honor of the two hundredth anniversary of his birth. Eleven scholars of Mormon history contributed essays about various aspects of Cowdery's life and involvement in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Ultimately, the contributors have two goals: to honor Cowdery's memory and to inform believers who

may not be aware of Cowdery's importance in the founding of the Church.

This book gives a good sense of Cowdery's extensive presence and activities in the earliest days of the Church. His conversion, his roles in the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods, and his participation in the transcription and publication of the Book of Mormon are covered in detail. Cowdery was also centrally involved in disseminating Church doctrine by editing the Book of Commandments, by writing the earliest known version of Joseph Smith's initial visions, and by serving as editor of the *Messenger and Advocate*. Underscoring Cowdery's significance, authors in this book declare: "No one was more involved in the key events of the restoration than Oliver Cowdery" (15), and "excluding Joseph Smith, no other person is mentioned more often in the Doctrine and Covenants than Oliver Cowdery" (91). Cowdery's importance to Mormon history could not be clearer.

This book also addresses a number of events and experiences in Cowdery's professional and personal life. Significant new information is presented about Cowdery's involvement with the financial affairs of the Kirtland Safety Society and the Bank of Monroe, as well as facts about his life working as a lawyer during the 1840s in Tiffin, Ohio. The allegation that Cowdery practiced polygamy is discussed and rejected. Two additional essays provide information about Cowdery's wife, Elizabeth Ann Whitmer Cowdery, and about the monument built in honor of Cowdery at Richmond, Missouri, in 1911.

Because this book was produced near the same time as a second bicentennial collection, entitled *Oliver Cowdery: Scribe, Elder, Witness* (published in 2006 by the Neal A. Maxwell

Institute for Religious Scholarship), it is recommended that these two books be used in tandem. The 2006 volume contains seventeen additional, previously published studies. Between these two anthologies, a fairly full biography of Cowdery emerges. For example, Cowdery's excommunication from the Church in 1838 is mentioned only in passing in the Religious Studies Center volume (because it did not happen to be examined by any of the presenters at its conference), but readers can find that event covered in the Maxwell Institute volume (282–83, 322–23). Readers can also consult Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook's *Far West Record* (Deseret Book, 1983, pages 162–71) if they wonder about the details of Cowdery's excommunication or about how best to reconcile this odd situation with one who could be considered "the co-founder of Mormonism" (15). These welcome publications give readers a better appreciation for Cowdery's personality and his many crucial contributions to the Church. He is a fascinating figure, central to a full understanding of the earliest history of the Latter-day Saints.

—Rachel Ozanne

When the Saints Came Marching In: A History of the Latter-day Saints in St. Louis, by Fred E. Woods and Thomas L. Farmer (Orem, Utah: Millennial Press, 2009)

Most of our histories about Mormons in Missouri speak of dramatic events in the 1830s in the western region of the state. Congratulations to Fred Woods and Thomas Farmer for writing a history of the Latter-day Saints in St. Louis. Woods, a professor of Church History and Doctrine at BYU, and Farmer, a lifetime St. Louis resident, wrote of the LDS presence in St. Louis beginning with early missionaries in

1831 and ending with the St. Louis Stake jubilee in 2008. This book is essential reading for scholars of Mormonism seeking to understand the experience of the Latter-day Saints in St. Louis.

By using a chronological, encyclopedic approach, the authors tell of St. Louis being more than a trailhead for Latter-day Saints. They explain that the town was a refuge for Saints fleeing from Governor Boggs's extermination order. They tell of fundraising meetings held by St. Louis citizens to aid Mormon exiles seeking relief from persecution. They describe the experience of LDS British converts in St. Louis on their twelve-day trip from New Orleans to Nauvoo. The authors include information about three to four thousand Latter-day Saints who made St. Louis their home by 1849 and of the first St. Louis Stake organized with Elder Erastus Snow presiding in 1854. They write of Snow and his successors publishing the *St. Louis Luminary* (November 22, 1854, to December 18, 1855) in an effort to keep the Saints informed of local news and emigration plans.

Woods and Farmer relate many instances of a Church presence in the city throughout the remaining nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The authors tell of Brigham Young sending missionaries in 1866 to reestablish the St. Louis District and reorganize a St. Louis Branch. They write of the St. Louis World's Fair and of LDS officials featuring Utah in their displays. They describe in detail the creation of the St. Louis Stake in 1958 and the St. Louis Temple dedication in 1997. Another valuable contribution of this work is an alphabetical index of early Latter-day Saints in St. Louis.

—Susan Easton Black

Utopian Communities of the Ancient World, by Brent James Schmidt (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010)

It is often said, and not only by classicists, that in order to understand the modern world a person must learn to understand the ancient world. Fascination with antiquity has not diminished in the digital postmodern age, perhaps because people are wondering more and more what life is really all about and what chance there might now be in the age of instant worldwide communication and interdependent global economies to achieve a truly cooperative state of affairs among all peoples of the earth.

Into this picture comes the work of Brent Schmidt on the use of covenantal rituals and practices by several groups in the ancient Mediterranean and the formation, organization, and actualization of their communal or utopian societies. Seeing the roles that sacred rituals played in the life of these utopian groups opens new perspectives on these ancient groups and will be of interest to many readers. The experiments of these groups were not limited to the ivory towers of philosophy. Their members moved heaven and earth to carry out their devout plans and lofty dreams.

This book begins with a lengthy and engaging discussion of modern utopian communities, their successes, and failures. A former Hugh Nibley fellow, Schmidt shows that the fundamental challenges which have faced all of these societies are essentially the same, and remain the cause of basic problems and pressures still today: property, food, sex, social distinctions, political power, and religious leadership.

Most significant and original is this book's collection of ancient sources regarding the leadership and practices of these ancient utopian groups.

Substantial quotes from original sources bring modern readers close to the revered teachings of these charismatic leaders.

The roots of Western civilization run deep in the soils of Jewish, Greek, Roman, and Christian civilizations. This book probes some of the most remarkably idealistic experiments in the annals of history. It exposes the debt that many people today still owe to these traditions for setting the high moral tone and lifting the visionary gaze that inspires some of their most cherished personal and social aspirations. While utopia will always remain beyond human reach, even a dim and distant view of such ideals can keep communities pointed in an optimistic and desirable direction.

—John W. Welch

NEW PUBLICATION



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Robert K. Thomas (1918–1998) served the BYU community for thirty-two years as an English professor, founder and director of the Honors Program, and academic vice president. He received the distinction of becoming the first BYU Presidential Fellow. In 1961, students selected him as Professor of the Year, and in 1966 he received the Karl G. Maeser Award for Teaching Excellence. He taught American literature, the Bible as literature, and Book of Mormon religion classes. With Bruce B. Clark he co-authored the five-volume compilation *Out of the Best Books*, designed for study by the Relief Society. He served as a Latter-day Saint bishop, stake president, and president of the Australia Melbourne Mission.

Through these speeches, Thomas offers his insight into many facets of wisdom and Christian discipleship. He inspires scholars, students, and all people seeking a self-examined life to find joy and fulfillment through faith and study.

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